

# Imagine Halton Hills



## Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy

March 2013

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This document was prepared by Lura Consulting, in association with Grant Consulting, under the direction of the Steering Committee of the Town Sustainability Advisory Committee, at the Town of Halton Hills.



# Executive Summary

## What is Imagine Halton Hills?

Imagine Halton Hills is a Strategy for our entire community to guide us on our journey towards sustainability and to achieve a higher quality of life. Also known as an Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy (ICSS), Imagine Halton Hills captures what we value about our community today and what we hope and dream our future will achieve. This Strategy has been collectively defined by our community as a call to action that celebrates the strengths of our community and envisions a vibrant and sustainable future. That is what makes Imagine Halton Hills unique. Together, we – our residents, our businesses, our organizations, groups, and institutions – will work to ignite our shared Vision of sustainability to produce meaningful actions.

Our community envisions a future where we are economically prosperous, environmentally healthy, socially equal, and culturally vibrant. Our Strategy establishes a long-term Vision and acts as a blueprint to the year 2060. It provides our community with direction and allows us to set priorities, and guide future planning and decision-making.

Imagine Halton Hills is so much more than just a strategy. Over the course of about 2.5 years while developing this Strategy, many residents, businesses, community and regional organizations, Town Councillors and staff, and other interested stakeholders, were engaged in sharing their hopes and dreams for Halton Hills. This Strategy is about strengthening and empowering our community and building our future together. It is deeply rooted in community volunteerism and involves long-term commitments to successful implementation by all members of our community.



Vibrant communities.



# Our Vision for 2060

Our Vision describes the overall future we would like to see for our community by the year 2060. It provides direction to all future decisions and actions and moves our community closer to sustainability and a higher quality of life for all. It will also help guide the completion of future Town plans, policies, studies, and initiatives. Our shared vision is that:

***In 2060, the urban and rural communities of Halton Hills balance economic prosperity with a deep commitment to the natural environment, while retaining viable local agriculture and small-town feel, and being socially equitable, culturally vibrant and strongly connected.***

## The Four Pillars of Sustainability

Imagine Halton Hills is an integrated Strategy, organized under the four pillars of sustainability described below. Although the pillars are presented separately, they are interconnected and interdependent, and should be considered simultaneously.



## How Our Strategy Works

Our Strategy focuses on 32 areas that our community has identified as being important to the long-term wellbeing, sustainability, and a high quality of life in Halton Hills. Each one of these Focus Areas supports the achievement of our overall Vision.

Each Focus Area in our Strategy describes what our community wants the future to be (“Our Hopes and Dreams”) and defines several Goals which provide strategic direction on how to achieve our desired future.

In the future, our decision-making and actions as a community should support and align with one or more of our Goals. Residents and community partners (including the Town of Halton Hills) will be able to participate in the identification of special actions to best support the Vision, Focus Areas and Goals of Imagine Halton Hills.

## Measuring Our Progress

Monitoring and measuring of our progress will tell us how well we are doing on our journey towards community sustainability and demonstrate activities that contribute to the community’s Vision of a sustainable future. A set of “big picture” indicators will be used to monitor and track progress over time.



Assorted vegetables and local food in the thriving Acton Community Garden.



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Georgetown Farmers' Market



We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations that contributed their time, energy, and/or ideas to create the Imagine Halton Hills Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy. Without their contributions, this Strategy would not be possible.

### Imagine Halton Hills Steering Committee

Robert A. Knox	Chair, Steering Committee
David Clayton	Co-Chair, Social Sub-Committee
Denise Dilbey	Co-Chair, Economic Sub-Committee
Nancy Heinmiller	Co-Chair, Social Sub-Committee
John Linhardt	Director of Planning, Development & Sustainability, Town of Halton Hills
Chris Macewan	Co-Chair, Cultural Sub-Committee
Carolyn Martin	Co-Chair, Environmental Sub-Committee
Councillor Joan Robson	Ward 2 Councillor, Town of Halton Hills
Beatrice Sharkey	Co-Chair, Cultural Sub-Committee
Damian Szybalski	Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Halton Hills
Laurent Thibault	Co-Chair, Economic Sub-Committee
Eleanor Young	Co-Chair, Environmental Sub-Committee

### Cultural Sub-Committee

Chris Macewan (Co-Chair)	Canadian Federation of University Women/Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable
Beatrice Sharkey (Co-Chair)	Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable
Bruce Andrews	Halton Hills Sports Museum
Tom Bentley Doug Brock	Rotary Club/Architect Heritage Halton Hills Committee/Williams Mill
Mark Rowe	Halton District Catholic School Board/Heritage Halton Hills Committee
Susan Wakefield	Artist

### Economic Sub-Committee

Denise Dilbey (Co-Chair)	Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce
Laurent Thibault (Co-Chair)	Town Tourism Committee/ Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable
Councillor Jane Fogal	Town of Halton Hills
Brian Herner Councillor Ann Lawlor	Resident Town of Halton Hills
John Linhardt Doug Penrice	Town of Halton Hills Town of Halton Hills
Dennis Perlin Gordon Smith	Town of Halton Hills Resident

## Environmental Sub-Committee

Carolyn Martin (Co-Chair)	Town Environmental Advisory Committee
Eleanor Young (Co-Chair)	Town Environmental Advisory Committee
Leslie Adams	P.O.W.E.R.
David Beaton	Credit Valley Conservation
Bryan Boyce	Town Environmental Advisory Committee
Suzanne Burwell	Halton District School Board
Harnoor Gill	Youth Representative
Erin Wilson	Halton Catholic District School Board
Joan Robson	Town of Halton Hills Councillor
Art Skidmore	Halton Hills Community Energy Corporation

## Social Sub-Committee

David Clayton (Co-Chair)	Citizen Representative
Nancy Heinmiller (Co-Chair)	Citizen Representative
Brian Clark	United Way of Halton Hills
Lisa Crawford	Citizen Representative
Cathy Gerrow	Links2Care
Simon Hickson	Seniors Centre
Amanda Kostjuk	Links2Care
Alistair Macewan	Rotary Club

## Town Sustainability Advisory Committee (TSAC)

Mayor Rick Bonnette (Chair)	Mayor, Town of Halton Hills
Leslie Adams	P.O.W.E.R.
Gena Ali	Halton Region
Ron Ballentine	Halton District School Board
David Beaton	Credit Valley Conservation (CVC)
Suzanne Burwell	Halton District School Board
KC Carruthers	Georgetown Hospital Foundation
Brian Clark	United Way of Halton Hills
David Clayton	Citizen Representative
Denise Dilbey	Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce
Nancy Heinmiller	Citizen Representative
Simon Hickson	Town of Halton Hills Seniors Centre Representative
Robert Knox	Citizen Representative/Chair of Steering Committee
Councillor Ann Lawlor	Ward 4 Councillor, Town of Halton Hills
John Linhardt	Director of Planning, Development & Sustainability, Town of Halton Hills
Chris Macewan	Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable/Canadian Fed. of University Women
Carolyn Martin	Town Environmental Advisory Committee
Dennis Perlin	Chief Administrative Officer (retired), Town of Halton Hills
Ken Phillips	Halton Region Conservation (via CVC)
Councillor Joan Robson	Ward 2 Councillor, Town of Halton Hills
Don Rowntree	Halton Region Federation of Agriculture
Beatrice Sharkey	Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable
Art Skidmore	Halton Hills Community Energy Corporation/Halton Hills Hydro
David Smith	Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Halton Hills
Gordon Smith	Citizen Representative
Lucy Stocco	Building Industry and Land Development Association
Damian Szybalski	Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Halton Hills
Jessica Tarka	Student/Youth Representative
Laurent Thibault	Town Tourism Committee
Christine Upton	Sustainable Halton Hills
Erin Wilson	Halton Catholic District School Board
Eleanor Young	Town Environmental Advisory Committee

## Public Participants

- Imagine Halton Hills Community Survey – Summer 2011
- Youth Engagement through Classroom Presentations and Surveys – 2011 - 2012
- Places & Spaces Community Conversations – Summer 2012
- Imagine Halton Hills Sustainability Forum – May 30, 2012
- Imagine Halton Hills Facebook and Twitter pages – 2012
- Community Sustainability Celebration – November 22, 2012

## Town of Halton Hills Staff Sustainability Team

Damian Szybalski	Sustainability Coordinator
Jennifer Spence	Sustainability Outreach Officer
Steve Burke	Manager of Planning Policy
Ted Drewlo	Manager of Engineering Services
Slavica Josipovic	Manager of Building Services and Chief Building Official
Simone Gourlay	Manager of Purchasing
Peter Atkinson	Inventory Control Clerk
Marie Vickery	Information Services, Library
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Linda Boyer	Conservation and Demand Management Officer, Halton Hills Hydro

## Consulting Team Members

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- Susan Hall, Project Manager
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- James Knott, Community Engagement
- Ariana Cancelli, Graphic Design

### Grant Consulting:

- Don Grant, Strategic Advisor and Facilitator

## Artwork

Artwork for Imagine Halton Hills was created by local Halton Hills artist, Rasa Morrison.





Eco Parking Lot, Edith Street, Georgetown



2010-2014 Town of Halton Hills Council. Front row (from left to right): Councillor Joan Robson, Regional Councillor Jane Fogal, Mayor Rick Bonnette, Councillor Moya Johnson, Councillor Ann Lawlor. Back row (from left to right): Councillor Mike O'Leary, Regional Councillor Clark A. Somerville, Councillor Bryan Lewis, Councillor Bob Inglis, Councillor Jon Hurst, Councillor David Kentner.

In 2007, Council made a commitment to become a leader in local action in response to global challenges such as climate change and the growing public concern over a deteriorating planet. Through the Green Plan, we demonstrated leadership in creating a Plan that meets the 'PAREE Principle,' and hence is practical, affordable, reasonable, enforceable and educational.

Since 2007, Council, Town staff, residents, schools, businesses, institutional partners, and other levels of government have made significant strides on our sustainability journey and the creation of an even higher quality of life. Along the way, we have already acted upon 91 percent of the Green Plan's 70 recommendations. This has translated into reduced

operating costs, more efficient resource use, water conservation, cleaner air and strong community partnerships.

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” (Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*) has been the ongoing theme for successful implementation of the Green Plan since Council recognized that a lack of action will hinder progress.

Building on the momentum created by the Green Plan, it is now my pleasure to present “Imagine Halton Hills” – Halton Hills’ Community Sustainability Strategy. This Strategy captures the hopes and dreams of our community for the next 50 years. It demonstrates our commitment to the future and to ensuring a sustainable and high quality of life for everyone in Halton Hills.

As Chair, I offer my sincere thanks to all members of the Town Sustainability Advisory Committee and its Steering Committee. Without their remarkable dedication and effort over the past two years, we would have not been able to deliver Imagine Halton Hills. As a result of their efforts, we now have an effective and practical blueprint for a sustainable future.

Our immediate task is to continue to demonstrate leadership and swiftly move ahead with the Strategy’s implementation by forming partnerships. The Strategy will guide the Town’s many plans, projects, polices and many other initiatives.

Like the Green Plan, Imagine Halton Hills is a living document that will evolve over time in response to our community’s priorities, hopes and dreams. It is also a practical articulation of what our community desires for its future. The PAREE Principle underpins the success of the Green Plan and is the foundation for Imagine Halton Hills.

I look forward to working with you on our path to sustainability and a high quality of life.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Bonnette". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Mayor Rick Bonnette,  
Town of Halton Hills



I am proud and delighted to present Imagine Halton Hills – Halton Hills' Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy. By capturing the hopes and dreams of our community for the next 50 years, Imagine Halton Hills is our commitment to a future shaped by a prosperous and diversified economy, thriving natural areas, healthy and safe neighbourhoods, and plenty of opportunities to participate in a wide variety of cultural, heritage, recreation, sports and arts activities. In 50 years, the Halton Hills community will enjoy an even higher quality of life and an enviable standard of living.

Our Strategy is unique. It is not just a strategy for the Town of Halton Hills – it is a Strategy for our entire community. It is “owned” by each and every one of us, including businesses, organizations, institutions, and residents. The Town is one of many community partners that have a role to play in implementing our sustainable future. This Strategy is the community’s Strategy. We have come together to articulate our ideas and inspirations for the future. Together, we have a joint responsibility for the Strategy’s successful implementation.

As Chair of the Steering Committee of the Town Sustainability Advisory Committee (TSAC), I am confident that it will act as an effective blueprint to lead us towards a future where our economy is prosperous, our natural environment is healthy, our communities are socially inclusive and caring, and where we take pride in and enjoy a wide variety of cultural, arts, heritage, sports and recreation opportunities. Such a future is possible.

Achieving success will require a long-term commitment and effort from our whole community, including us, as residents, the Town, businesses, schools and other institutions. As a sign of our commitment to Imagine Halton Hills, members of the Steering Committee have signed their name on the following page. These individuals, along with the entire TSAC, sub-committees, and many others have provided invaluable insight and have worked relentlessly to produce Imagine Halton Hills. Without them, Imagine Halton Hills would not be possible. We thank everyone who has contributed for their efforts and look forward to continuing collaboration as we begin to implement this Strategy.

Respectfully,



Robert A. Knox  
Chair, Steering Committee of TSAC



*David Clayton*

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**David Clayton**  
Resident  
Co-Chair, Social Sub-Committee



*Denise Dilbey*

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**Denise Dilbey**  
Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce  
Co-Chair, Economic Sub-Committee



*Nancy Heinmiller*

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**Nancy Heinmiller**  
Resident  
Co-Chair, Social Sub-Committee



*Robert A. Knox*

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**Robert A. Knox**  
Resident  
Chair, TSAC Steering Committee



**John Linhardt**  
Director of Planning, Development  
& Sustainability  
Town of Halton Hills



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Co-Chair, Cultural Sub-Committee



**Carolyn Martin**  
Town Environmental Advisory Committee  
Co-Chair, Environmental Sub-Committee



**Councillor Joan Robson**  
Councillor, Ward 2  
Town of Halton Hills



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**Beatrice Sharkey**

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*Laurent Thibault*

**Laurent Thibault**

Town Tourism Committee  
Co-Chair, Economic Sub-Committee



*Eleanor Young*

**Eleanor Young**

Town Environmental Advisory Committee  
Co-Chair, Environmental Sub-Committee

# 1 Our Halton Hills

## About Our Community

Many of us choose to live in Halton Hills because the Town is unique. While the Town is located on the outer edge of the rapidly growing Greater Toronto Area (GTA), much of the municipality remains rural in character, with significant portions protected by the provincial Greenbelt Plan as well as the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Our community is made up of several interconnected smaller towns, villages and rural settlements with a distinctive and enviable identity that comes from the beauty and tranquility of the rural setting, rolling hills, rivers and valleys.

Halton Hills is one of four municipalities that make up the larger Halton Region (Halton Hills, Milton, Oakville, and Burlington). In 2011 Halton Region was home to approximately 502,000 people (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Halton Hills is a community where we enjoy safe family living, scenic beauty and active community life. Our community recognizes the attributes that set it apart from other places and is passionate about preserving its small-town character and rural feeling. The preservation and enhancement of these features, while keeping pace with the diverse needs of our community, is at the forefront of our Vision for a sustainable future.

Bordering the Town to the south and east are two of Canada's fastest growing municipalities, the Town of Milton and the City of Brampton. In light of our geographic location, Halton Hills faces significant growth pressures. Between 2001 and 2011, our Town experienced significant population growth of over 22%. Now in 2011, approximately 59,000 of us call Halton Hills home (Statistics Canada, 2011). By 2031, the Town's population is anticipated to reach 94,000 residents (Town of Halton Hills).

“ Halton Hills is a community where we enjoy safe family living, scenic beauty and active community life. ”



Georgetown Fall Fair.

# Halton Hills is Not an Island

Halton Hills is not an island. Our community is constantly influenced by external forces. Decreasing non-renewable resources, shrinking natural habitats and biodiversity, rising energy costs, climate change, global economic uncertainties, increasing natural resource scarcity, declining food security, and the loss of productive agricultural lands will continue to place increasing pressure on the health and prosperity of our community. These and other challenges present obstacles to reaching a more sustainable future.

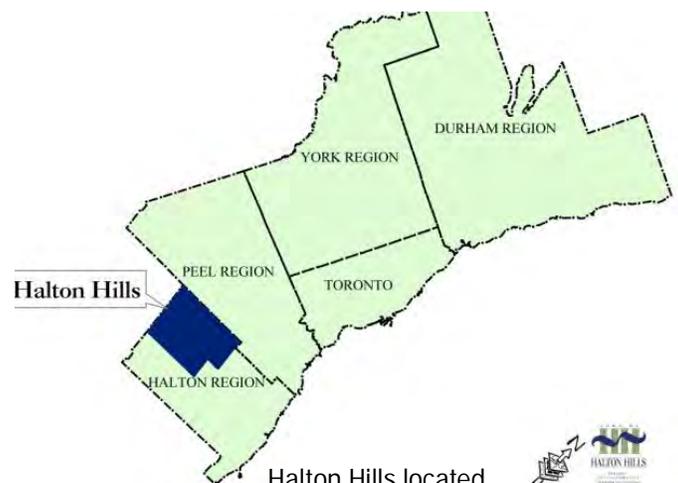
Although we are not immune to these changes and have limited influence over global conditions, this Strategy is an opportunity to take a proactive stand in voicing our community's desires for the future. Similar to the Town's Green Plan, Imagine Halton Hills is also an opportunity to demonstrate local leadership by acting locally, while thinking globally.

Maintaining the status quo will hinder progress. While change will not be easy, it will result in a healthier environment, prosperous economy, and a culturally and socially vibrant and thriving community, while lowering operating costs.

## At a Crossroads

Looking forward 50 years, our community stands at a critical crossroads with key decisions to be made about our future. These decisions will strongly influence the likelihood of us achieving our hopes and dreams for 2060, as outlined in our Imagine Halton Hills Vision.

// Imagine Halton Hills is also an opportunity to demonstrate local leadership by acting locally, while thinking globally. //



Halton Hills located within the Greater Toronto Area.  
Source: Town of Halton Hills



On the horizon, there are a number of particularly pivotal decisions with respect to community development and major infrastructure. These decisions will 'test' the durability of the Vision set out in our Imagine Halton Hills Strategy.

Among other matters, Halton Hills will be influenced by decisions pertaining to the following:

- The quality of new development, both residential and commercial, that will be accommodated in the new urban area of Georgetown.
- Appropriate water servicing to support existing and new urban growth proposed for Halton Hills.
- Continued support for efficient land use within the Town's existing urban areas, such as the Georgetown GO Station Area/Mill Street Corridor Secondary Plan area.
- Strategic decisions as to the type of development within the Highway 401/407 employment area and its impact on the future sustainability of our local economy.
- The viability of the agricultural economic cluster in Halton Hills.
- Recognition of the fact that traditional approaches to growth and development patterns can no longer be sustained, especially in an era of rising energy prices, changing community priorities and economies, and climate change.

**// On the horizon, there are a number of particularly pivotal decisions that will likely need to be made with respect to community development and major infrastructure. //**

## Our History of Sustainability

Our community has a long history of sustainability. Numerous community groups and organizations, such as Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (P.O.W.E.R.), Willow Park Ecology Centre (WPEC), Healthy Options for People and the Environment



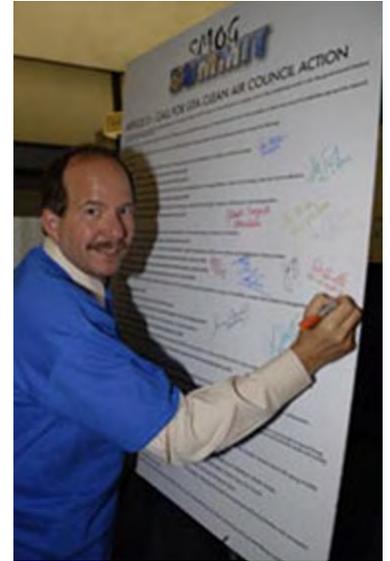
Great ideas being discussed at the 2012 Community Sustainability Forum.

(H.O.P.E.), Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, BIAs, Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable, and Conservation Authorities, amongst many others, have been working on sustainability initiatives for many years in Halton Hills. Community groups have been active in encouraging education about sustainability, and have built momentum around sustainability in the community.

Our sustainability journey gathered further momentum in 2007 when Mayor Bonnette and Council established a multi-stakeholder Mayor's Green Plan Task Force. Through dedication and discussions with key community stakeholders, the Task Force prepared the Town's first Green Plan in 2008 to demonstrate local leadership on the environment. In preparing the Green Plan, the Task Force and Council recognized local governments and communities as the true leaders in sustainability. In developing the Green Plan, they were mindful of escalating public concern over a deteriorating planet, growing evidence that the planet is changing, and associated health impacts.

The Green Plan is an ambitious, yet practical document. It is based on the "PAREE Principle", coined by Mayor Bonnette. Thus, the Green Plan's 70 recommendations are practical, affordable, reasonable, enforceable and educational. Through its recommendations, the Green Plan outlines actions that can be taken by residents, businesses, schools, Halton Hills Hydro, the Town of Halton Hills and other levels of government. These recommendations provide an effective guide for action that supports a thriving natural environment and a higher quality of life. The Plan also engages and inspires the community to adopt more environmentally-responsible practices. It established Halton Hills as a community of leaders, not followers.

Since its approval, the Green Plan has been widely distributed, and has remained an active and living document. To date, action has already been taken on 91 percent of the Plan's 70 recommendations.



Mayor Rick Bonnette at the GTA Clean Air Council signing the Smog Summit Declaration.

// Through dedication and discussions with key community stakeholders, the Task Force prepared the Town's first Green Plan in 2008...



Building on the Green Plan, in 2008, Halton Hills Council created the Office of Sustainability to champion sustainability. Located within a newly named and organized Planning, Development and Sustainability Department, the Office of Sustainability leads the development, promotion and implementation of a broad range of community and municipal initiatives.

The Mayor's Green Plan Task Force foresaw the need to build on the Green Plan's strong environmental focus by identifying the economic, social and cultural priorities that will lead to a healthier community and a high quality of life. In doing so, the Task Force intentionally titled the last chapter of the Green Plan: "The Ending Marks the Beginning." This recognized the Green Plan being just the beginning of a long journey ahead.

In late 2009, with a focus on community sustainability and engagement, Council established the Town Sustainability Advisory Committee (TSAC). As a community champion of sustainability, TSAC has led the preparation of Imagine Halton Hills. Imagine Halton Hills is a critical and significant next step along our journey to a thriving future where everyone enjoys a high quality of life.

// As a community champion of sustainability, TSAC has led the preparation of Imagine Halton Hills over the past two years. //

## What We Value

At the onset of developing our Strategy, TSAC engaged in an exercise to identify what we value about Halton Hills. These values express who the community of Halton Hills is and what we treasure today. These values have provided direction for the development of our Strategy and will act as "guide-posts" or beacons as our community moves towards our long-term Vision. Importantly, our values provide cohesion across the Strategy by connecting the four sustainability Pillars and the 32 Focus Areas.



Acton Community Garden.

<p><b>The things we value that make us unique are ...</b></p>	<p><b>Some Examples</b></p>
<p>Our Community Spirit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our strong sense of community</li> <li>• The safe and caring environment</li> <li>• Family-oriented community</li> </ul>
<p>Our Engaged Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ownership and responsibility we have for our community</li> <li>• Our active involvement in decisions and in community activities</li> <li>• Strong spirit of volunteerism</li> </ul>
<p>Our Welcoming and Caring Nature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way we are friendly and supportive of each other</li> </ul>
<p>Our Inclusiveness and Social Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our openness</li> <li>• How we encourage equal opportunities</li> </ul>
<p>Our Health and Active Living</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The opportunities we have for activities such as walking and cycling</li> </ul>
<p>Our Connectedness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The easy access we have to everything we need nearby</li> <li>• Our proximity to nature</li> <li>• Our personal connections</li> <li>• Moderate and well-managed pace of growth</li> </ul>
<p>Our Diversity in Nature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The beauty and function of our natural green space system</li> </ul>
<p>Our Cultural Identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our vibrant and diverse culture</li> <li>• Our small-town feel</li> <li>• Vibrant traditional downtown areas</li> </ul>
<p>Our Rural Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our countryside</li> <li>• Our rural and agricultural lifestyle</li> </ul>
<p>Our Economic Vitality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our diverse economy</li> <li>• Our resilience</li> <li>• Our investments</li> </ul>



Farmer's Corn Fields

## Our Community Sustainability Strategy

Our Halton Hills community has begun a long, but exciting journey towards sustainability and a higher quality of life through the development of an Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy (ICSS) – Imagine Halton Hills. Building on the efforts of the Town of Halton Hills and the Green Plan, Imagine Halton Hills is a crucial and significant next step to achieving cultural vibrancy, economic prosperity, environmental health, and social equity in our community.

Imagine Halton Hills establishes a long-term Vision and acts as a blueprint to the year 2060, providing us with guidance and direction for a future based on the hopes and dreams voiced by our community.

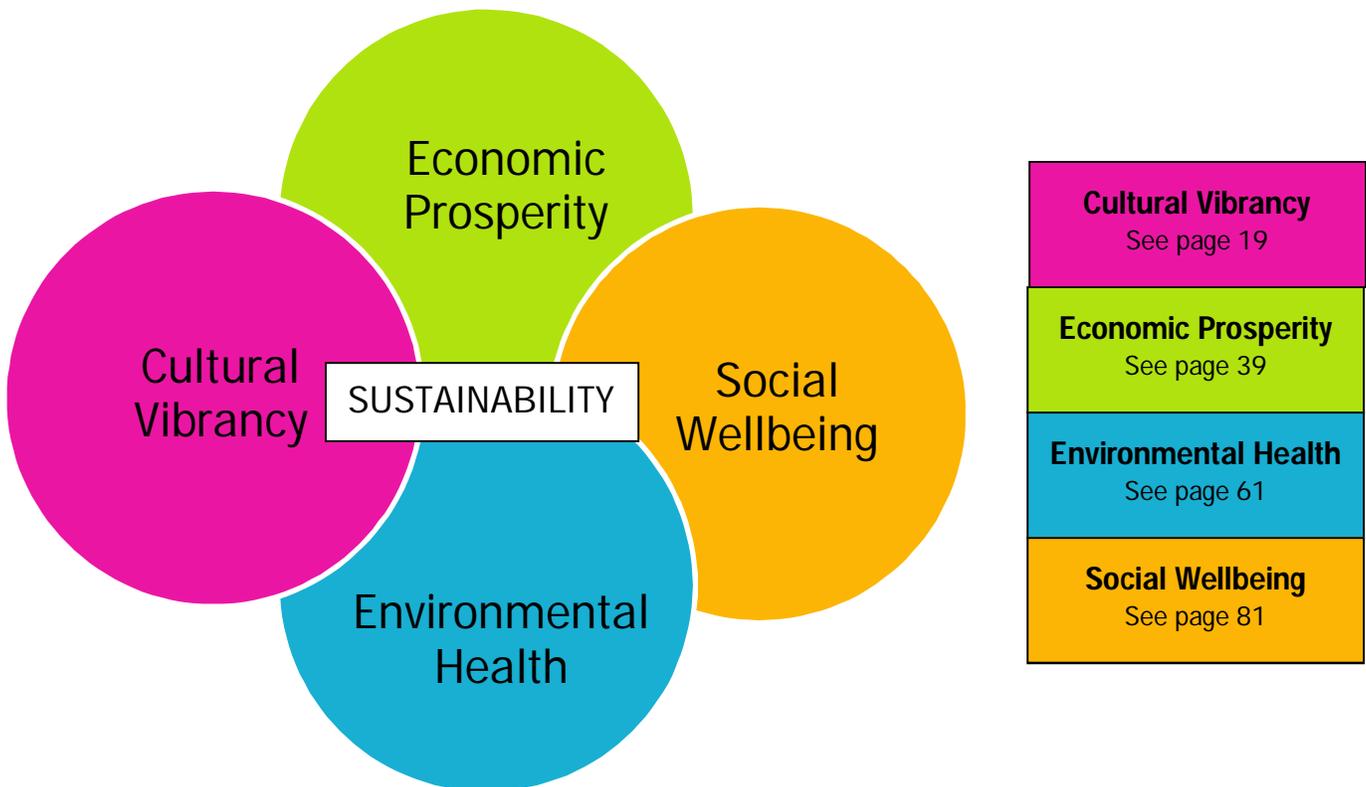
## Why Sustainability?

To some, the word “sustainability” conjures up images of polar bears; to others it means a thriving and diversified economy. To others, it means safe communities and quality healthcare, while some argue that a community is sustainable only when it offers a wide range of cultural, arts and heritage opportunities, and is built around a traditional vibrant downtown. Sustainability, in fact, is all of these. Sustainability is not a new concept. However, it has been within the past few years that communities from coast to coast have begun to plan for a more sustainable future for themselves, their children, grandchildren, and for generations to come.

Although there are many definitions of sustainability, the common theme among them tends to be a consideration of the balance between meeting the needs of today with those of future generations. Perhaps the most often cited definition of sustainability is the one popularized by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 which defines sustainability as:

**“...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”**

Sustainability seeks to find a balance between cultural vibrancy, economic prosperity, environmental health, and social wellbeing. It is often depicted as four overlapping circles. Each circle represents one of the main pillars of sustainability where a given decision or action should benefit one or more of the four pillars.



# The Value of Sustainability to Our Community

## Sustainability...

- ✓ Allows us to plan proactively over the long-term to prepare for and address challenges.
- ✓ Helps us identify and avoid long-term risks.
- ✓ Provides an opportunity to envision our future without being constrained by current and short-term trends, priorities, and ways of thinking.
- ✓ Allows us to shape shorter-term plans and strategies.
- ✓ Focuses on improving quality of life.
- ✓ Improves the health of our natural environment, our society, our culture, and our economy.
- ✓ Empowers our municipality to address current and future needs and to shape the future.
- ✓ Establishes a shared Vision, Focus Areas, and Goals that can guide individuals and businesses in their behaviours and operations.
- ✓ Reduces operating costs for our municipality and businesses.
- ✓ Better positions our community to access external funding sources.

# A Strategy for the Community, By the Community

Our Imagine Halton Hills Strategy is like no other! At its core is robust community ownership and long-term commitment to successful implementation by various stakeholders of the Halton Hills community – residents, local businesses, organizations and institutions. It is deeply rooted in community volunteerism and dedication to successful implementation – many<sup>1</sup> residents, businesses, community and regional organizations and others have shared their hopes and dreams for Halton Hills. Our community, in partnership with the Town of Halton Hills, will champion sustainability and this Strategy in order to inspire all members of our community to join the sustainability journey.

Often sustainability strategies or plans are “owned” by a municipal government and are largely prepared by the municipality, complemented by community consultation. Our approach in developing this Strategy was different right from the outset! Halton Hills Town Council committed to a Community Sustainability Strategy that is led by our community, in close partnership with the Town, and is underpinned by the community’s hopes and dreams for the future. Rather than the Town, our community has led the preparation of this Strategy, including its Vision, Focus Areas, Goals and Indicators.



Group work at the very successful Community Sustainability Forum 2012.

<sup>1</sup> Effective, meaningful and widespread community engagement was at the core of this project. In the course of preparing the Community Sustainability Strategy many individuals, businesses and organizations connected with Imagine Halton Hills. They did this through a wide array of communication channels, including about 11,000 unique visits to the Town’s sustainability webpages (December 2011-2012), in-person conversations, highly successful community events such as the Community Sustainability Forum, Sustainability Celebration Event and Cultural Symposium, presentations to stakeholders, e-mail, e-newsletters, surveys, phone, social media, media releases, Mayor’s Announcements, newspaper articles, attendance at various community events/festivals, countless meetings, posters and school presentations. Since there is duplication, the number of persons engaged via the individual communication channels has not been totalled.

To achieve this monumental grassroots effort, the development of our Strategy was led by the Town Sustainability Advisory Committee and its Steering Committee, composed of community experts and champions from all areas of sustainability. Imagine Halton Hills is founded upon countless meetings, workshops, community events, expert presentations, research, and the dedication of our residents, businesses and institutions.

For a full overview of our journey towards developing our strategy and what our community told us about the future of Halton Hills, please see the *Our Journey to Sustainability – Summary of Community Collaboration* report attached to the Strategy as the appendix.



Public engagement at the 2012 Earth Day Fair.



Town Sustainability Advisory Committee (TSAC) meeting.

# How the Strategy Works

The following is an overview of how the Imagine Halton Hills Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy works. Each component has been defined by our community and is explained further below.



<p><b>Vision</b></p>	<p>This is our overall desire for community sustainability by the year 2060. All decisions and actions taken in the future should move the Halton Hills community closer to our Vision.</p>
<p><b>Pillars and Pillar Statements</b></p>	<p>Four Pillars of sustainability (cultural vibrancy, economic prosperity, environmental health, and social wellbeing) are used as a framework for organizing Imagine Halton Hills. They should not, however, be viewed in isolation. Decision-making should be considered from the perspective of all Pillars and take into consideration the implications of an action on all the pillars. The Pillar Statement describes what each Pillar would look like when our overall Vision is achieved. Each Pillar Statement describes what success looks like in a sustainable future, aligned with our Vision. Each Pillar is supported by a number of Focus Areas and long-term Goals that provide further detail.</p>

<b>Focus Areas</b>	A Focus Area represents an area of importance to our community and supports the achievement of our overall Vision. Examples of Focus Areas include: energy, biodiversity, transportation, arts, housing, parks and trails, and the green economy. Although our Focus Areas are organized under a single Pillar, there is often overlap and interconnectivity between them.
<b>Our Hopes and Dreams</b>	This statement describes what we want each Focus Area to look like when our overall Vision and Pillar Statements are achieved. It answers the question of “where do we want to be in 2060?”
<b>Goals</b>	Goals provide us with strategic guidance on moving from where we are now to achieving Our Hopes and Dreams. All our future decision-making and actions should support and align with one or more of our Goals.
<b>Indicators</b>	Indicators provide a mechanism to monitor and track progress over time by measuring a representative sample of information. They allow us to measure several key areas that are representative of the bigger picture and provide an indication of where we stand with respect to sustainability. When tracked over time, indicators can summarize the trends in the economic, environmental, social, and cultural health of our community.

Specific actions required to implement Imagine Halton Hills are not included as part of this Strategy. Instead, as part of the implementation phase, residents and community partners (including the Town of Halton Hills) will be involved with the identification of specific actions to best support the Vision, Focus Areas and Goals of Imagine Halton Hills. More detailed plans, strategies, policies and initiatives undertaken by the municipality and community partners will be used to operationalize Imagine Halton Hills.

## Our Vision

Our Vision of what we want Halton Hills to be in 50 years forms the basis of Imagine Halton Hills. A wide spectrum of the community expressed their hopes and dreams for a more sustainable Halton Hills. Our Vision for a sustainable future is...

***In 2060, the urban and rural communities of Halton Hills balance economic prosperity with a deep commitment to the natural environment, while retaining viable local agriculture and small-town feel, and being socially equitable, culturally vibrant and strongly connected.***

Our Vision is a framework to guide decision-making. It consists of a number of recurring elements that are important to our community:

- The recognition of the value of Halton Hills' small-town charm and its unique blend of interconnected urban and rural communities;
- The constant need to balance economic prosperity with the need to protect the natural environment on which all life depends;
- The need to retain the tremendous value of local agricultural lands; and
- The importance of Halton Hills striving to be a community that is equitable, vibrant and that has a tangible sense of complete communities and neighbourhood relationships.

## Four Pillars of Sustainability

Imagine Halton Hills is an integrated Strategy. It has been organized into four Pillars of sustainability: Cultural Vibrancy, Economic Prosperity, Environmental Health, and Social Wellbeing. The Pillars are presented in alphabetical order. No Pillar is any more important than another. To achieve our Vision, all four Pillars must be advanced.

Although the Pillars are presented separately, they are interconnected and should be considered simultaneously.

In most cases, advancing one of the pillars will benefit others. For example, by taking action to foster a culturally vibrant community, we will be able to attract tourism revenue and hence support the local economy. Similarly, by preserving our small-town charm and abundant greenspace on the fringe of the heavily urbanized Greater Toronto Area, we will maintain our distinctive character and attract tourism and investment, further benefiting our local economy.



To demonstrate the interconnectivity of the Pillars, the 32 Focus Areas of our Strategy are presented in the table below, showing how each Focus Area integrates into the four Pillars of sustainability. The table shows that each of the focus areas influences one or more of the four pillars. For example, “Diversified and Resilient Economy” influences all four of the Pillars.

Focus Area	PILLAR			
	Cultural Vibrancy	Economic Prosperity	Environmental Health	Social Wellbeing
Strong Sense of Community	✓	✓	✓	✓
Highly Engaged Citizens	✓	✓		✓
Inclusive to Youth	✓	✓		✓
Vital Arts and Culture Sectors	✓	✓		✓
Inviting Parks and Trails	✓	✓	✓	✓
Diverse Recreation and Sports	✓			✓
Valued Heritage Legacy	✓	✓		
Leading Edge Libraries	✓	✓		✓
Diversified and Resilient Economy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vibrant Food and Agricultural Sector		✓	✓	✓
Tourism	✓	✓	✓	✓
Balanced Tax Base		✓		✓
Knowledge-Based Industry & Research and Innovation		✓		✓
Active and Vibrant Creative Sector	✓	✓		✓
Live-Work Opportunities		✓	✓	✓
Green Economy		✓	✓	✓
Infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓
Natural Heritage	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water	✓	✓	✓	✓
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions		✓	✓	✓
Land Use	✓	✓	✓	✓
Biodiversity		✓	✓	
Natural Resources		✓	✓	
Consumption and Waste Management		✓	✓	✓
Energy		✓	✓	✓
Housing		✓		✓
Transportation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Poverty	✓	✓		✓
Social and Health Services	✓	✓	✓	✓
Seniors	✓			✓
Comfort, Safety, and Inclusion	✓			✓
Learning	✓	✓	✓	✓

# 4 Cultural Vibrancy



# Thoughts from Our Cultural Vibrancy Champions

Our Vision for Halton Hills is a community where culture: 1) is fully integrated into and has a visible, positive impact on the lives of individuals and the community as a whole; and 2) offers the opportunity for individual fulfillment through access to sports, recreation, arts, culture and heritage. The Cultural Sub-Committee focuses attention on those facets of our community life which allow everyone to have access to and participate in a wide variety of cultural activities, resources, services and organizations.

We are very fortunate in Halton Hills to have a strong base to support our vibrant culture. While there is a strong foundation upon which to build, there are also evident gaps in planning and capacity, as well as the need to accommodate an increasing population. The Cultural Sub-Committee has taken seriously the need to work to both maintain and strengthen citizens' wishes to live in a community with "small-town feel", and sees much of this Pillar's work as focusing on that outcome.

Having reviewed many other examples of sustainability planning, we realize that maintaining and enhancing community culture is not easily achieved. Typically, culture is compromised by short-term goals, limited resourcing and minimal cross-connections to other pillars of sustainability. As a result, we are particularly keen to:

- Integrate and cross-reference sports, recreation, arts, culture, and heritage into plans for our community's future social wellbeing, economic prosperity, and environmental health, to ensure that systems and mechanisms are in place for the future;
- Shore up formal planning for components of culture not previously included in local planning exercises;
- Clearly demonstrate how culture is a strong driver of economic wealth within our community and find ways to strengthen and expand this effect;
- Ensure our community's high rate of volunteerism and resulting cultural activity continues;
- Identify and address the needs of the numerous community groups which are leading cultural programming within our community; and
- Articulate a community brand which captures the essence of our current community strengths and motivates us to build towards this common future.

There is much work to do and we are ready to work...so let's take our places, dim the lights and cue the music!

*Chris Macewan Beatrice Sharkey*

Respectfully,

Chris Macewan and Beatrice Sharkey

Co-Chairs, Cultural Vibrancy Sub-Committee



*Georgetown, Ontario*

# Cultural Vibrancy in 2060

*A culturally vibrant community where culture is integrated with our economic, social and environmental lives and offers the opportunity for individual fulfillment through access to sports, recreation, arts, culture and heritage.*

## Our Themes

- Strong Sense of Community
- Highly Engaged Citizens
- Inclusive to Youth
- Vital Arts and Culture Sectors
- Inviting Parks and Trails
- Diverse Recreation and Sports
- Valued Heritage Legacy
- Leading Edge Libraries

## Our Indicators of Cultural Vibrancy

- Total kilometres of trails
- Library uses
- Annual survey of the variety of participation in cultural activities and organizations
- Total participant hours for recreation programs per 1,000 persons
- Hectares of municipally owned open space
- Number of accessible facilities available for use by many community groups
- Number of designated heritage properties and districts

# Strong Sense of Community



## Our Hopes and Dreams

How people experience their community contributes greatly to their overall wellbeing and satisfaction. It is the sense of belonging and connectedness of a shared group that allows individuals to call themselves a community. In 2060, despite the certain GTA expansion as well as our own inevitable population growth, Halton Hills maintains its “small-town feel” for those who live, work and play here, including a wide variety of opportunities to meet, connect and create.

## Where We Are Now

Along with its unique combination of geographical features, Halton Hills has always been valued by its residents for its location: close enough to Toronto to travel there for work or play, yet distant enough to maintain its small-town feel. This community spirit is evident in many ways, from the friendliness of the shopkeepers and seeing your child’s name in the sports section of the local paper, to the supportiveness of neighbours in both good and bad times. There is a sense of pride and connection that speaks of embedded old-fashioned values as well as movement toward a promising future. All are symptomatic of a great place to live for young and old. The 2011 Imagine Halton Hills sustainability survey showed maintaining “small-town feel” as a key priority for both local residents and visitors.

### Sustainability in Action

- In 2011, our community refused to wait any longer for adequate hospital services and launched a major fundraising and municipal funding program.
- Our local cable and newspaper have partnered to provide twice weekly newspaper readings to ensure residents with visual impairments are kept “in tune” to local news.

Norval, one of the many settlement areas that make up Halton Hills.



# Our Goals

- Ensure “maintaining a small-town feel” is a priority for our community.
- Establish a strong sense of what it means to be part of the Halton Hills community that people can relate to and are proud to be part of.
- Continuously support and promote the Halton Hills brand through our tourism, economic development, secondary planning, businesses, downtowns and non-profits.
- Maintain existing and foster new cross-sector relationships that strongly benefit our community through partnerships and working together, including connections between rural and town neighbourhoods.
- Recognize the significant contribution of faith groups to our community.



Some of the many popular festivals that take place in Halton Hills, including Light Up the Hills, Big Daddy Festival, the Georgetown Highland Games, and the Acton Leathetown Festival.

# Highly Engaged Citizens



## Our Hopes and Dreams

In Halton Hills we are blessed with an extensive and varied range of activities, events and opportunities that without volunteers and community-based organizations either would not exist or would not be affordable. It is essential for this level of vital community service and social capital (and our resulting high quality of life) to continue and grow in step with our increasing population. In 2060, our community will have strong non-profit organizations and a continuing community ethic of volunteerism. Many citizens will be involved in decision-making processes and political practices.

## Where We Are Now

While we are currently blessed with the contributions of volunteers and community-based organizations there is also growing concern on this dependency as:

- Attracting and retaining volunteers is becoming more competitive and challenging;
- Fewer volunteers want to take on administrative/longer-term commitments;
- Funding for the non-profit sector is diminishing and becoming harder to access;
- Local resources are strained (e.g. meeting spaces, potential leaders); and
- The complexity of running a non-profit organization is steadily increasing (e.g. financial reporting).

### Sustainability in Action *Earth Day Clean Up*



Volunteerism starts at a young age in Halton Hills! All of the schools in Halton Hills participate in the 22 Minute Makeover as part of the annual Earth Day activities.

## Our Goals

- Maintain proportional volunteer rates as our population grows.
- Foster a pro-volunteer culture by increasing the opportunities and the attractiveness of volunteerism.
- Recognize volunteer contributions and achievements.
- Support the growth of effective, efficient, and skill-rich, community organizations that are able to adapt to changing community needs/demographics and exist within a barrier-free climate.
- Investigate feasible alternative service delivery methods as needed.



Georgetown Choral Society continues its tradition of community service by donating the proceeds of \$5,140 from a concert and silent auction to the Georgetown Hospital Capital Campaign.

# Inclusive to Youth



## Our Hopes and Dreams

The Town of Halton Hills' overall 2011 population was about 59,000 residents and is projected to reach 94,000 residents by 2031. Within this growth, the number of youth is projected to increase by 64% by 2031 from 6,600 to 14,150 residents (Halton Hills Youth Needs Study, 2011). This significant portion of our population has different needs and concerns that need to be considered in the future. In 2060, Halton Hills will continue to be committed to youth, being a community where the potential and passion of youth are supported so that they can lead meaningful lives and contribute to our community.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has a range of service providers for youth, including services provided by multiple levels of government, those located in southern Halton Region, and those provided within some but not all of our small communities. Transportation to these services is often an issue as we do not have local transit.

A Town Youth Needs Study was conducted during 2011, including best practice research, community engagement and priority setting. The study had five focus areas: Connecting Services for Youth, Youth Engagement, Access to Services & Facilities, Youth-Friendly Education & Training, and Dedicated Youth Space. The report was adopted in principle by Town Council in December 2011 and an Action Plan has been developed and approved, identifying potential partners and available resources.

### Sustainability in Action *Youth Crew*



A Youth Crew supported the 2011 Youth Needs Study by participating on the Advisory Council and seeking youth input at various youth friendly community locations.

# Our Goals

- Ensure youth needs are known and continuously being addressed.
- Find structured ways (e.g. a renewing youth pool) to include youth needs within all community and municipal planning.
- Increase the overall positive profile of youth within our community (e.g. expansion of intergenerational learning opportunities).
- Increased connectivity of youth service providers.
- Ensure key infrastructure elements are in place to support youth (e.g. transportation).



Skateboarders enjoying the Three Musketeers Skatepark.

# Vital Arts & Culture Sectors

## Our Hopes and Dreams

Comprehensive planning for the arts and culture sectors is increasing globally as communities begin to realize their potential economic impact. Halton Hills is already home to an impressive array of arts and cultural services, activities, events, businesses and organizations. At this point in our community's history there is a recognized need to set a common direction to ensure we maximize culture's impact. In 2060, Halton Hills will have community-integrated arts and cultural sectors, including adequate cultural spaces and facilities and a lead role in contributing to our local economy. Cultural information will be accessible. A range of cultural education opportunities will exist. Because of ongoing consideration within community planning, many residents will be involved in local arts and culture.



## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has a large number of individuals involved in visual art production, collection and distribution. Arts and culture resources in Halton Hills include the 267-person John Elliott Theatre that welcomes professional, amateur and school-related performances as well as other community events, an online ticketing system (TIXHUB), the Mayor's Art Showcase and annual Youth Art Competition, and a wide range of cultural events, organizations, and businesses. The Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable is an arts and culture planning non-profit group formed in 2009 that hosts an annual Symposium and is funded in part by the Town. A Community Cultural Master Plan is currently being developed.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Williams Mill Visual Arts Centre*



The Williams Mill Visual Arts Centre is home to over 30 world class professional artists in the mediums of ceramics, drawing, fibre, glass, jewellery, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and other media. The Centre includes a Gallery, Educational Centre, amateur and professional level classes and events.

## Our Goals

- Support public art collection, donation, display, and storage.
- Integrate a cultural pillar into ongoing community planning.
- Enhance the prominence of a visual arts professional community within Halton Hills.
- Ensure high quality community cultural events and accessible facilities.
- Integrate culture into business practices similar to green planning.
- Increase availability of cultural information.
- Create a comprehensive Cultural Master Plan to guide sector development.



Some of the many examples of the arts and cultural sector in Halton Hills.



# Inviting Parks and Trails



## Our Hopes and Dreams

In keeping with our community's unique location partially on the Niagara Escarpment and its extensive green space, significant planning and funding have been spent to date on developing parks, building walkable trails, and promoting healthy outdoor living for leisure as well as our environmental ecosystem and the community's vibrancy. In 2060, as our community continues to grow, we will maintain our commitment to having an abundant and varied number of parks, trails and green spaces available to residents and tourists alike.

## Where We Are Now

With about 55 park sites and open spaces to choose from, the residents of Halton Hills enjoy a wide range of outdoor recreation activities (Town of Halton Hills data). Municipally-run and/or community-supported assets include:

- Destination parks;
- Connected trail system;
- Outdoor spaces;
- Sports fields;
- Sports parks;
- Splash pads; and
- Leash-free zones.

### Sustainability in Action *Bruce Trail*



There is an active local Bruce Trail group in the area that promotes hiking activities, as well as downloadable cycling, farm tours and trail maps. The Town has a Cycling Master Plan to guide future development of cycling infrastructure.

## Our Goals

- Designate, provide and promote a wide range of inviting parks, trails and green spaces through cross-sector partnerships and resource models.
- Integrate the principle of maintaining green space for leisure and ecosystem purposes into our community's planning exercises.
- Sustain local elements of the Bruce Trail and other trails.
- Connect the planning of municipal amenities to those of the Niagara Escarpment Commission and Credit Valley Conservation.



One of the countless trails that contribute to the diversity of recreational opportunities in Halton Hills.

# Diverse Recreation & Sports

## Our Hopes and Dreams

Halton Hills has a proud history of active and healthy living including many sports and recreation opportunities. Residents now enjoy and continue to want improved access to a wide variety of local, affordable, and accessible recreation and sports programs and opportunities ranging from senior centres to youth skate parks. The importance of the availability of diverse recreation and sports opportunities cannot be overstated as this availability directly correlates to improved quality of life and healthy community indicators. In 2060, our community will continue to boast a wide range of local, affordable and accessible recreation and sports opportunities that grow and adapt to our changing demographics and resident wishes.

## Where We Are Now

In 2012 Halton Hills has a wide variety of community and municipally-run programs, services, and facilities (see [www.haltonhills.ca/recandparks/guide.php](http://www.haltonhills.ca/recandparks/guide.php)). As more young families move into our community, it is difficult to manage the increasing demand on both services and facilities. In 2011, due to significant pressure on the arenas to meet demands for increased ice time, an arena user group was formed to lobby for expanded capacity and as a result, fundraising and planning has taken place for three new local ice surfaces.

In 2012, 182 participants were financially helped to participate in local programs by Jumpstart and Town of Halton Hills fee subsidies (Town of Halton Hills data).

### Sustainability in Action *Universally Accessible Playground*



A universally accessible playground has been completed in 2012 at Dominion Gardens Park. The Town of Halton Hills, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Georgetown, and supported by an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant and local fundraising, have made the accessibility possible and this playground is the first of its kind in Halton Hills.

## Our Goals

- Continuously plan for, provide and extensively promote affordable and accessible recreation and leisure opportunities that support a healthy and active lifestyle for all ages, abilities and interests.
- Continue to maintain high quality of recreation and sports services and opportunities through innovative cross-sector approaches.
- Ensure access to local recreational and leisure opportunities for those without access to a private vehicle or financial means.



2011 National Cycling Championship in Downtown Georgetown.

# Valued Heritage Legacy



## Our Hopes and Dreams

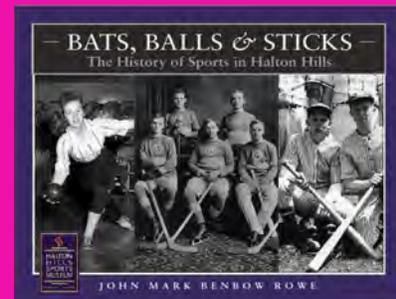
In Halton Hills, heritage resources are identified, used, preserved and celebrated. Citizens understand the heritage assets of our local community and are active participants in maintaining an integrated heritage focus. Experts lead this focus on heritage in ways that are practical, inclusive and respectful of our history and its artifacts. In 2060, our community will have preserved our significant heritage assets and have mechanisms in place to continue this tradition.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has significant resources and mechanisms in place to encourage the preservation and recognition of significant community heritage assets including:

- A municipal Heritage Committee, Heritage Registry and programs relating to Heritage Property Tax Refunds, Heritage Property Grants and Heritage Property Signage;
- The Halton Hills Heritage Foundation;
- Heritage aspects within municipal plans;
- Numerous active community-based heritage groups (e.g. Esquesing Historical Society, Heritage Acton, Barber Mill, Georgetown Hockey Heritage Council, and North Halton Celtic Historical Society);
- Many heritage community sites including the Devereaux House, the Limehouse Kiln, the Halton Hills Sports Museum, the Lucy Maud Montgomery Garden, and the Acton Town Hall Centre;
- A significant collection of local history resources at the Halton Hills Public Library and a dedicated local history room in the renewed Georgetown Branch Library; and
- Local historical writers John Mark Benbow Rowe and John McDonald.

### Sustainability in Action *"Bats, Balls and Sticks"*



In 2011, the Halton Hills Sports Museum commissioned local historian John Mark Benbow Rowe to research and write "Bats, Balls and Sticks", a historical look at sports in Halton Hills.

## Our Goals

- Continue to identify and protect significant heritage buildings, resources, and development including natural heritage assets.
- Promote and celebrate our significant heritage resources including linkages to school curriculum and readily available local resources.
- Ensure current and future residents understand and act on the importance of preserving our community's heritage resources.
- Increase the prominence of heritage preservation and the number of community heritage partners (e.g. libraries).



Having been restored, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Devereaux House preserves more than just history by incorporating many green building technologies that reduce energy and water use.

# Leading Edge Libraries



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Libraries across Canada are increasingly becoming much more than book warehouses. They support entrepreneurs and job seekers, build literacy skills, provide access to and training in new technology, collect and disseminate community information, preserve local history, and host cultural events and programs. The Halton Hills Public Library is a vital community hub where people of all ages and abilities are encouraged to explore, learn and interact. It is essential to maintain this level of service for our growing population and maximize the role that the Halton Hills Public Library can play in our community's economic, social, educational, and cultural development. In 2060, our community will have a multi-use public library system and facilities proportional to its population. It will have the capacity and resources to meet community needs resulting in a well-informed, productive and healthy citizenry.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills Public Library has undertaken two extensive projects including building a new Acton Branch Library and extensively renovating and expanding the Georgetown Branch Library. Both of these projects have resulted in state-of-the-art legacy buildings which are quickly becoming important partners in personal and community development. The new buildings designed to LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards, are universally accessible and showcase user-friendly technology to facilitate discovery.



## Sustainability in Action *Acton Branch Library*

Opened in March 2011, the new Acton Branch Library is designed to conserve water and energy, mitigate air pollution, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and elevate public awareness of energy conservation. As a LEED® Gold certified facility, the Acton Branch is the Town's greenest building. The library is expected to have a net positive environmental impact on the surrounding area, with 46% energy savings. From a social cultural perspective, the new library acts as a vibrant community hub, where people can meet and interact creating a sense of cohesiveness and cooperation.

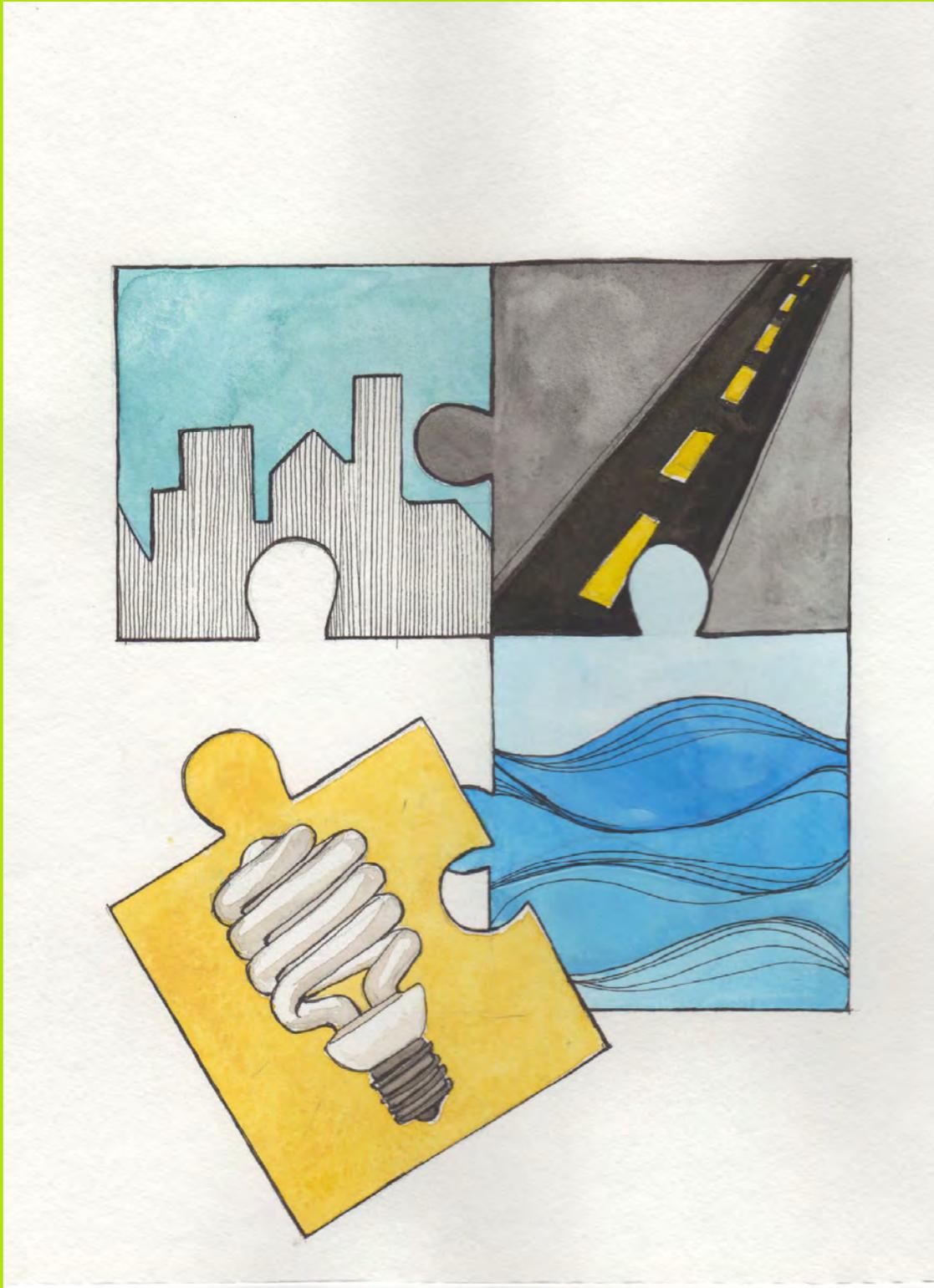
# Our Goals

- Ensure that our library branches are seen and used by residents, businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies as their primary information resource.
- Celebrate library branches as community gathering places that reinforce connections and promote collaborative and creative activity.
- Ensure our libraries have the range of resources, up-to-date technology and highly skilled staff necessary to contribute to our social, economic and cultural wellbeing.
- Embed in our municipal government's planning an ongoing commitment to review operational and capital funding as our population increases.



The Acton Branch Library is now LEED® Gold Certified, making it the Town's greenest facility!

# 5 Economic Prosperity

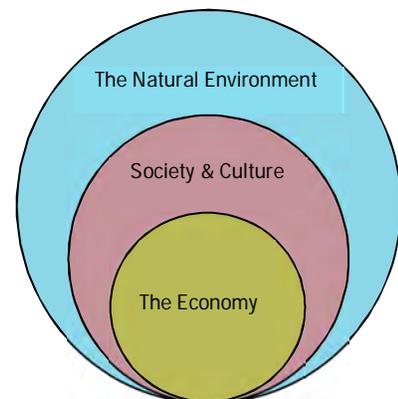


# Thoughts from Our Economic Prosperity Champions

Our purpose within the development of Imagine Halton Hills was to develop a Vision of a truly sustainable local economy over the long-term, 50 years into the future. It has proven difficult to stretch our thinking to imagine five decades ahead, and to question long-held assumptions about growth, consumption and land-use. It has also been challenging to evaluate broad trends and the many unknowns and risks associated with such a long-term horizon, while realizing that many important determinants of economic performance are beyond the direct control of the Town of Halton Hills.

We believe that, at the core of discussions of sustainability, the fundamental idea is the need to address the interrelationship between the rapid growth of the human footprint on our planet and its finite natural resources. It is getting this balance right that will ensure that future generations enjoy the standard of living that we do today. There is plenty of evidence such as exhausted fisheries and soil depletion that this challenge is very real at the global level. However, as stewards of a small community on the northwestern edge of the Greater Golden Horseshoe, we can do our part by addressing this challenge locally.

In a sustainability context, "the economy" cannot be looked at as an independent agent, but rather as a component of our society that can only function within the framework of a healthy natural environment and a strong society with cultural vibrancy. Achieving true sustainability requires delving deeper into more fundamental issues such as food security, the design and density of our neighbourhoods, and how we will need to live and work in order to achieve greater harmony with the natural environment.



Interrelation of the three components of sustainability.

From the perspective of economic sustainability, we concluded that:

- One of Halton Hills' unique assets is that the great majority of its land area is either protected by the Greenbelt and the Niagara Escarpment Plan and/or classified as prime agricultural lands. This sets our community apart from others that are already heavily urbanized to the south and east.
- Recent studies on planning confirm that sprawling low-density development is not sustainable over the longer term for a wide variety of well understood reasons, including environmental degradation, energy and water inefficiencies, human health impacts and strained government budgets.

- Food is a necessity. Rapid global population growth and the corresponding urbanization take agricultural land near cities out of food production. In the future, much greater attention must be paid to being resilient and adapting to the increasing vulnerable global food production system. This is particularly relevant to Halton Hills which is a custodian of large areas of prime agricultural lands on the edge of a great metropolis, which can be expected to have much greater value in the decades ahead.
- Intensification and the multi-use of land within the existing urban footprint of Halton Hills must be vigorously promoted and supported as a key tool to absorb future population growth without further encroaching on prime agricultural lands.
- Since the quality of human life in terms of health, happiness and prosperity, and indeed human survival, is directly related to the health of the natural environment, protecting this critical asset should be given much greater priority.
- Lastly, in the decades ahead, Halton Hills must sustain a strong, diversified and viable tax base to generate revenues that will finance the infrastructure and amenities that residents need and desire in order to fulfill their hopes and dreams for the future.

Respectfully,



Laurent Thibault and Denise Dilbey  
Co-Chairs, Economic Sub-Committee

# Economic Prosperity in 2060

*A community where economic prosperity is based on a green, diversified and resilient economy, and the strengthening of the existing industrial base.*

## Our Themes

- Diversified and Resilient Economy
- Vibrant Food and Agricultural Sector
- Tourism
- Balanced Tax Base
- Knowledge-Based Industry & Research and Innovation
- Active and Vibrant Creative Sector
- Live-Work Opportunities
- Green Economy
- Infrastructure

## Our Indicators of Economic Prosperity

- Employment participation rate in all sectors , 15 years and over
- Number of jobs classified as being “green” in Halton Hills
- Number of business sectors accounting for 50% of all economic activity
- Average Halton Hills’ family income
- Number of hectares of land re-designated from agricultural purposes to other uses
- Total gross farm receipts
- Ratio of residential to non-residential property assessment
- Percentage of people that work from home
- Commercial floor space per capita
- Employment density per hectare

# Diversified & Resilient Economy

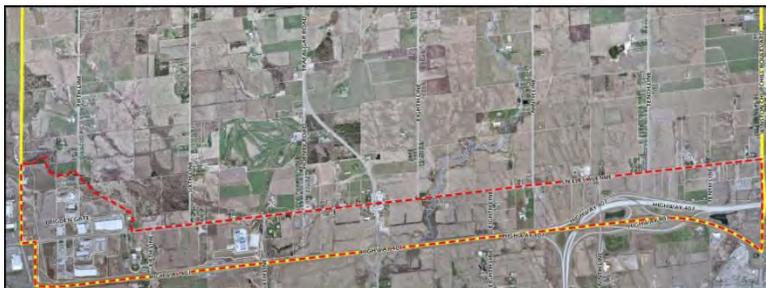


## Our Hopes and Dreams

A diverse economy and sustainability perspective help build economic resiliency to market fluctuations. An economy based on a wider spectrum of sectors also provides more employment opportunities and attracts skilled workers to Halton Hills and provides more opportunity for residents to work and live within Halton Hills. In 2060, the Halton Hills economy will be based on a diversified range of viable businesses across many economic sectors. Halton Hills' economy will be thriving, resilient and able to adapt to changing conditions while remaining competitive.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills is fortunate that it already has a fairly diversified economy with a number of high technology companies and strong clusters of trades, advanced manufacturing, retail, service, infrastructure, logistics, mineral extraction and a number of companies in the food processing industry. Halton Hills will also soon have a major regional destination retail shopping complex along the Highway 401 corridor. Major employment lands are available in this corridor to accept additional industrial growth.



An aerial view of the Town's Highway 401 Employment Corridor, bordered to the south by Highway 401 and to the north by Steeles Avenue.

## Sustainability in Action *Shop Local*

Initiated in January 2009, the Shop Local campaign is a project of the Town, the Acton and Georgetown Business Improvement Associations, the Georgetown Market Place, the Acton Tanner and The Independent & Free Press. The campaign promotes shopping locally in Halton Hills. Reducing trips to out of Town shopping centres not only helps to support the vitality of local businesses, but also reduces associated greenhouse gas emissions.

# Our Goals

- Develop a local economy that is based on a wide range of businesses and is resilient to changing conditions.
- Ensure that a high proportion of businesses endure over time.
- Attract, retain and expand a highly skilled and educated workforce.
- Maximize the industrial benefits from existing and future designated employment lands (such as the Highway 401/407 gateway).
- Ensure that quarries operate in a responsible and sustainable manner and are rehabilitated into a community asset when no longer in use.



Thriving downtown Acton.

# Vibrant Food & Agriculture Sector



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Southern Ontario contains some of the most fertile agricultural lands in Canada. Agricultural lands have quickly disappeared to development and the population is becoming more reliant on food produced further away. In 2060, Halton Hills will have preserved its unique natural and agricultural lands as a beneficial, valuable and permanent feature in support of a vibrant land-based food cluster, in both the urban and rural areas. Local food production will be supported by a vibrant food processing sector, food industry-related research and development, and further supported by institutional and government policies and practices. The horticultural and equine industries will also continue to thrive as an important segment of our agricultural economy.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has valuable agricultural assets that have been well documented in Halton Region's series of "Sustainable Halton" technical background reports. (Agricultural Countryside Vision; Agricultural Countryside Strategy, Report 3.04; Agricultural Evaluation, Report 3.03). Halton Region is initiating a Rural Agricultural Strategy to support the long-term sustainability of the agricultural sector. There is continuing strong pressure to develop agricultural land. While surveys of Halton Hills residents indicate strong support for preserving agricultural land, there is less understanding that this implies reducing urban sprawl by moving from low-density residential developments to more population growth within the current urban boundaries using a mix of densities.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Halton Fresh Food Box*

*To promote affordable and healthy eating, and support local farmers as much as possible, various organizations and individuals participate in the Halton Fresh Food Box initiative. Participants purchase a box of fresh produce once a month. The produce is sourced as locally as possible. During the Ontario growing season, as much as 100% of the produce is sourced locally. On average, in 2012, there were about 55 monthly Halton Hills participants in the program.*

# Our Goals

- Raise community awareness of the importance of viable local food production.
- Protect and enhance the long-term viability of prime agricultural lands.
- Facilitate the growth of a thriving local food production, processing, distribution and retailing sector (e.g. agri-food, horticultural, greenhouses).
- Facilitate the viability of non-food agriculture such as horticulture and equine operations.
- Expand opportunities for food production in urban areas.
- Encourage strong provincial policies to support “near-urban” agriculture and horticulture operations.



Agricultural lands are an important feature of the Halton Hills landscape.

# Tourism



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Travel to and within Halton Hills can be for recreational, leisure or business purposes. Tourists can be from within Halton Hills, visiting and exploring the opportunities in our own community, or from the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario, Canada, or around the world. In 2060, Halton Hills will have a robust and viable tourism sector based on the Town's unique natural countryside, agricultural sector, and recreation opportunities.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills is now recognizing the growing importance of visitors/tourists as an important component of its economy. The Town is developing a branding strategy to help identify the assets it has to offer to its target audiences in the GTA, and to expand the contribution of tourism to the local economy.



The Niagara Escarpment and Bruce Trail attract visitors from across Ontario and beyond to enjoy Halton Hills' recreational opportunities and its natural beauty.

## Sustainability in Action *Promoting Tourism*

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Halton Hills are partners in tourism service and promotion. A newly expanded Visitor Guide, quarterly e newsletters for tourists and tourism operators, events information for Regional Tourism Organization #3 (RT03) and Tourist Ambassadors at community events are all strengthening our tourism services. Town facilities are used for over 100 community events, many of which draw participants from outside the community.

# Our Goals

- Develop tourism opportunities that capitalize on the natural and cultural resources of Halton Hills, while minimizing environmental impacts to biodiversity, natural heritage and habitats.
- Develop historic downtown areas so that they have a diversified offering of boutique, retail and other services and can host social activities such as farmers markets, festivals and other events.
- Develop partnerships with bordering municipalities (e.g. Caledon, Milton, and Wellington) that share similar tourism assets.
- Effectively promote and communicate tourism opportunities in Halton Hills.



Glen Williams Gallery Courtyard.

# Balanced Tax Base



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Municipalities in Ontario are considered “creatures of the province” and rely primarily on the property tax base and development revenues from property development as funding mechanisms to provide services and infrastructure. In 2060, Halton Hills will be a thriving, and complete community supported by a strong tax base of residential and non-residential assessment that enables the municipality to deliver high-quality community services and infrastructure which are fundamental to achieving a high standard of living.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has many of the same financial challenges as other Ontario municipalities. The Town has a lower level of commercial/industrial versus residential assessment than many other municipalities. However, a comparison with other Ontario municipalities in terms of other financial indicators suggests that through good financial management Halton Hills has maintained a relatively sound financial position. In the future, it is important that this be maintained as a valuable underpinning of the overall municipal sustainability strategy.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Strong Economic Activity*

Through proactive business focused promotion, over 800,000 square feet of industrial/commercial construction was commenced in 2012 in Halton Hills. The Town supports expansion of existing businesses through reduced Development Charges for industrial expansions, the Economics Development Manufacturers Fund and strong customer service related to development applications.

# Our Goals

- Achieve a stronger municipal tax assessment base through a substantial improvement in the ratio of non-residential to residential assessment.
- Substantially increase the commercial office space within existing urban areas.
- Demonstrate financial affordability of municipal projects and policies.
- Facilitate greater density and multi-story developments in both commercial and industrial sectors.



Town of Halton Hills Civic Centre.

# Knowledge-Based Industry & Research and Innovation



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Part of a diversified and resilient economy is research and innovation and knowledge-based industries. A knowledge-based economy, including research and innovation focuses on the production and management of knowledge and is not constrained by physical and natural resource limitations. In 2060, Halton Hills will have a business environment that supports the establishment and growth of profitable knowledge-based and innovative businesses. The Halton Hills community will continuously seek innovative partnerships and “venture philanthropy” so that individual, foundational, corporate, institutional and organizational partners can be introduced for the purpose of sharing knowledge, resources and outcomes to elevate the likelihood of success.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills is not generally known as a location for knowledge-based and innovative firms, but a good number have located here in recent years. It is recognized that increasing this base of activity is important to ensuring a sustainable economy in the future.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Supporting Innovation*

The Town was a founding partner in HalTech Innovation Centre, an innovation centre located at Sheridan College in Oakville. HalTech assists Halton Region’s technology entrepreneurs and companies to develop their ideas, commercialize their products, and establish and expand their businesses in Halton Region.

# Our Goals

- Support life-long learning opportunities that contribute to the growth of a robust and viable knowledge-based industry.
- Facilitate the establishment and growth of businesses that thrive on the knowledge gained from educational institutions, and research and innovation activities.
- Become a location of choice for businesses developing novel, collaborative, and transformational ideas with breakthrough potential.
- Be recognized world-wide as a leading hub for research and innovation, supported by a highly-educated and skilled workforce, and the ability to leverage Halton Hills' natural and agricultural base.
- Increase the number of post-secondary education programs that are offered and/or accessible locally.



Renewable energy being generated from a large array of solar panels located on the roof of a local business in Georgetown.

# Active & Vibrant Creative Sector

## Our Hopes and Dreams

Creative sector components are well documented in the themes and the corresponding Goals in the Cultural Vibrancy Pillar. The purpose in referencing it in the Economic Prosperity pillar is to ensure that the “creative sector” is recognized as an important element of a sustainable local economy. In 2060, Halton Hills actively promotes and facilitates local conditions that support a thriving and diversified arts and culture sector, employment growth in this sector, and the broadening of the goods and services delivered by this sector.



## Where We Are Now

In advanced economies such as in Canada, economic growth in recent decades has involved a shift into the service sector and “the creative industries” are an increasingly important component of that shift. It is recognized that those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent are not only important for the vitality of a community, but also have a strong potential for wealth and job creation. In Halton Hills, this sector, while quite vibrant and dynamic, represents only a modest contributor to the overall economy and has the potential to play a growing role in a thriving sustainable economy.



## Sustainability in Action *John Elliott Theatre*



The Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre includes the Helson Gallery and the 260 seat John Elliott Theatre. The Cultural Centre is a hub for arts and culture in Halton Hills and the Theatre welcomes professional, amateur, and school related performances, as well as community events.

Georgetown Choral Society captured on the Bruce Trail on the Niagara Escarpment.

# Our Goals

- Facilitate a dynamic and growing creative sector that creates wealth, income and employment.

(See the Cultural Vibrancy Pillar for other Goals that compliment Active & Vibrant Creative/Cultural Sectors).



Georgetown Branch Library renovation/expansion (Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre).



Green roof under construction at the Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre.



Geothermal piping at the Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre.

# Live-Work Opportunities



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Knowledge work is a large and growing component of Canada's economy. The rapid expansion in the capacity of the communication systems and the increasing sophistication of software means that knowledge workers can function effectively as long as they have a computer and access to the internet. This situation minimizes daily commuting and the resulting travel and human costs. In 2060, Halton Hills will have and continue to actively encourage and support the development of "live-work" developments that provide attractive and high-density, mixed-use facilities to accommodate thriving local businesses that generate employment within the urban and rural areas.

## Where We Are Now

There is little data available about what proportion of the labour force in Halton Hills is able to work in their home community, but increasing this percentage obviously improves the quality of life. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this percentage in Halton Hills is likely comparable to most communities.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Strong Self-Employed Sector*

Halton Hills has a large number of self employed people or firms with less than five employees which have been identified by research as part of developing the Town's Economic Development Strategy (EDS). The EDS explored best approaches for more formal community outreach programs to build links between business owners.

# Our Goals

- Promote the establishment of home based business that are contextually appropriate with the surrounding area.
- Promote the establishment of enhanced live-work relationships to reduce commuting, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Facilitate the development of live-work units in appropriate locations such as Intensification Areas.
- Facilitate the viable operation of knowledge-based business in non-commercial zones while ensuring an equitable and fair approach to business taxation.



Examples of opportunities for live-work arrangements and higher density local development in Halton Hills.

# Green Economy

## Our Hopes and Dreams

The “green economy” refers to businesses that focus on sustainability through improved human wellbeing and social equity, and reducing environmental risks and impacts on ecological systems. In 2060, Halton Hills will be recognized as a leader in green economic development and will be home to a thriving green economy sector that includes many firms that manufacture the products and supply the services needed by a more sustainable society. Business enterprises will see the benefit of using triple bottom line accounting principles to incorporate and advance the principles of sustainability, and generate wealth in a fashion that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



## Where We Are Now

Significant local wealth is undoubtedly generated in Halton Hills from firms that endorse the principles of green economic development, but there is little hard statistical evidence documenting this. Ontario has positioned itself as a green economic leader in recent years. The Green Energy and Economy Act is widely recognized as the best renewable energy policy in North America, and has successfully attracted over 30 green energy manufacturing facilities to the province, led to new business for existing industries, and created over 13,000 jobs with many more anticipated in the years to come (Clean Energy Progress Report 2011, Government of Ontario). The province has also taken additional steps with the Water Opportunities Act, the Greenbelt Act, and the provincial support for electric vehicle manufacturing.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Green Business Pledge*

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce asks local businesses to sign the Green Business Pledge. The Pledge recognizes the fact that life depends on a healthy natural environment which must be protected and conserved for future generations. It also acknowledges that businesses have an important role to play in preserving our natural environment through the protection and conservation of our natural resources. Several businesses have already signed the Green Pledge.

# Our Goals

- Attract and retain businesses which embrace environmental best practices as part of their day-to-day operations and as a basis for viable economic activity.
- Increase the number of local businesses that explicitly adhere to sustainability principles such as triple bottom line accounting.
- Establish Halton Hills as a green economy leader where green-minded businesses are a key driver of local economic development.
- Attract and retain firms that manufacture products and supply services to support a more sustainable society.



Bill Bonnett, owner of McMaster Meats & Deli. A growing number of Halton Hills businesses actively participate in the global Earth Hour event. In 2012, their contribution helped Halton Hills decrease energy use by about 4%.

# Infrastructure

## Our Hopes and Dreams

Infrastructure – both physical and social – provides the backbone of a successful and sustainable community. In 2060, the physical infrastructure, including the basic components of water, energy, power, transportation, waste disposal, communications, and others, is reliable, secure, well maintained and demonstrates sustainability at the highest order. Social infrastructure, including education, healthcare, and recreation will continue to be reliable, secure, well maintained and also demonstrate a high degree of sustainability.



## Where We Are Now

It is recognized that many of the basic components of infrastructure are provided by government and the private sector. Halton Hills is currently well positioned with all the major components of physical and social infrastructure. Community growth and interests have resulted in commitments to the addition of new infrastructure, including two library projects, arena expansions, new park facilities, and hospital expansion.

### Sustainability in Action *Green Parking*

Opened in June 2011, the new downtown Georgetown Edith Street parking lot not only provides much needed parking capacity, but also incorporates many green features. The parking lot provides on site stormwater runoff quality and quantity control through permeable paving stones, includes highly energy efficient LED lighting and provides an electric plug for the future generations of electric vehicles.

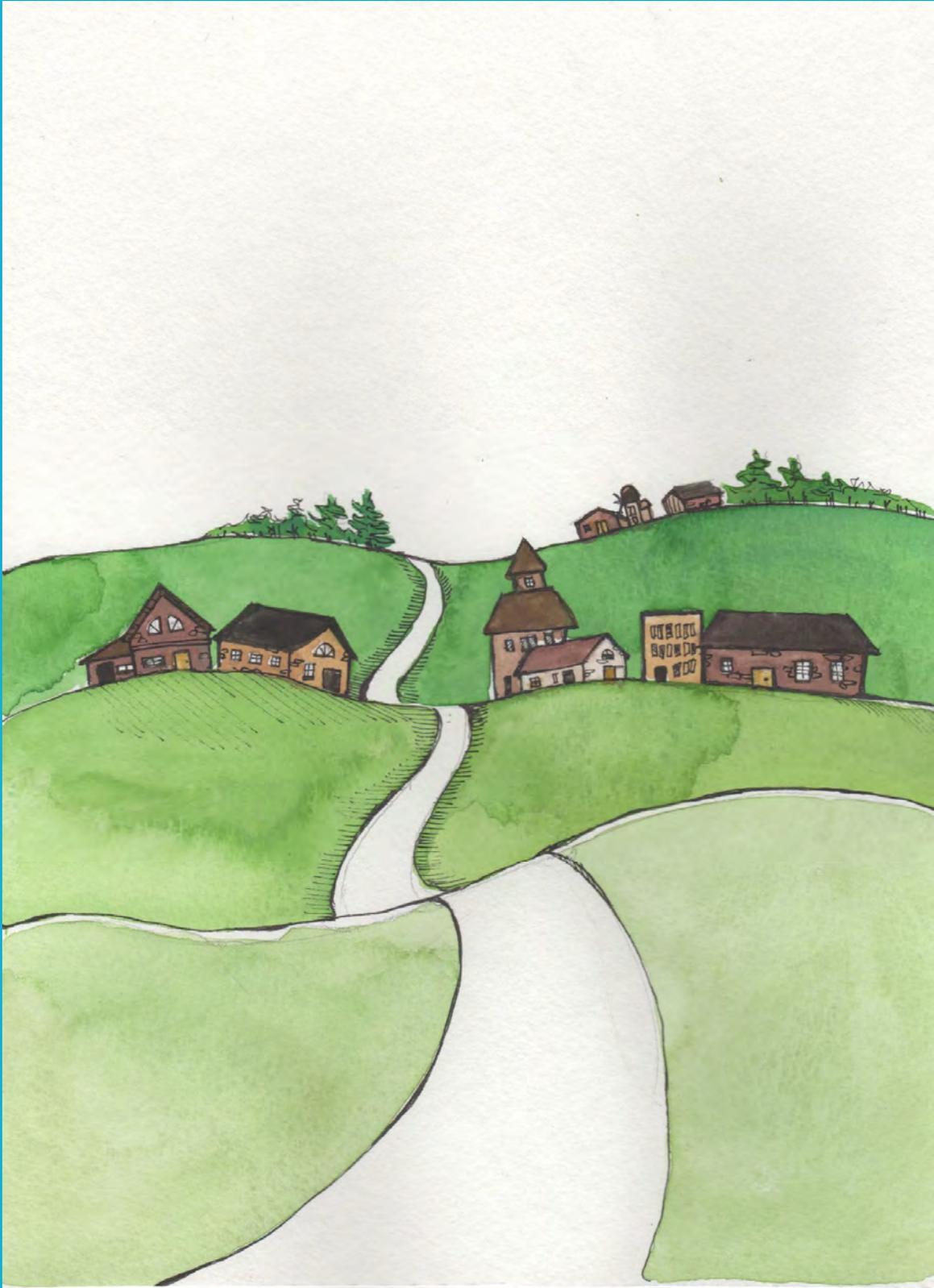
# Our Goals

- Be resilient to climate change and other challenges by regularly updating infrastructure plans.
- Continuously plan for and maintain stable and secure community infrastructure – both physical and social – particularly in light of the future need to upgrade infrastructure to accommodate greater urban density.
- Continuously improve necessary infrastructure to support the other economic prosperity themes.
- Support the development of a transportation network that prioritizes the movement of people and goods over the movement of vehicles.



Light-emitting diode (LED) lights along 10<sup>th</sup> Side Road demonstrate the use of innovative lighting technology while reducing energy use.

# 6 Environmental Health



# Thoughts from Our Environmental Health Champions

The image and ideal of a verdant and fertile earth has been with humanity since our first steps towards civilization, or perhaps even earlier. Unfortunately, too often in the past our urban landscapes have utterly obliterated the natural landscape. Our Environmental Health Vision seeks to rectify this imbalance and ensure that future generations enjoy ready access to healthy natural areas, within both our urban and rural areas. We are fortunate in Halton Hills to be starting from a position of strength on this quest, but we are facing significant population growth pressures. In order to continue building on our strengths, we recognize the importance of the following principles:

- Use physical resources such as land, water and air selectively and sparingly. This allows for preservation in some cases and helps to ensure that resources remain available for future generations. It also reduces human impacts on climate.
- Use renewable energy sources such as hydroelectricity, solar power and wind power to the greatest extent possible. Encourage water and energy conservation and efficiency measures to limit the use of non-renewable energy sources such as fossil fuels. This helps to ensure that resources remain available for future generations and reduce human impacts on climate.
- Monitor environmental quality such as water, air and biodiversity. This allows us to celebrate achievements, minimize permanent degradation, restore damaged habitats and adapt to climate change.
- Communicate our progress toward these Goals. This will help to inspire individuals and groups to help in achieving our Vision over time.

We hope that you share our Vision and will join with us in making it a sustainable reality.

Respectfully,



Eleanor Young and Carolyn Martin  
Co-Chairs, Environmental Sub-Committee



Outside front lawn at the Town of Halton Hills Civic Centre

# Environmental Health in 2060

*A community where integrated, thriving natural systems are valued, actively protected, and enhanced for long-term health and enjoyment.*

## Our Themes

- Natural Heritage
- Water
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Land Use
- Biodiversity
- Natural Resources
- Consumption and Waste Management
- Energy

## Our Indicators of Environmental Health

- Average total daily flow of water per person
- Tree canopy cover as a percentage of Town area – total coverage and urban area coverage
- Number of people/km<sup>2</sup> in the urban areas and rural areas
- Number of buildings certified by recognized green building programs, including construction meeting the Town's Green Building Standard, LEED™, etc.
- Number of renewable energy projects and total capacity of renewable energy output

# Natural Heritage



## Our Hopes and Dreams

The living world requires intact and continuous natural habitat in order to thrive and continue to provide the ecosystem services that all life, including human life, depends upon. No matter your viewpoint – spiritual, scientific or otherwise – it seems clear that people benefit from the opportunity to make contact and connect with nature. In 2060, Halton Hills' natural heritage will be protected, maintained and healthy, with more natural areas that are well connected both in rural areas and integrated within our urban boundaries.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has a rich natural heritage that includes 16 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA), 7 areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI), 10 provincially significant wetlands, and 9 regionally significant wetlands (Halton Region data: Regionally Significant Wetlands 2005 & ESA 2005; Ministry of Natural Resources, Land Information Ontario: ANSI, 2011). Many mechanisms already protect and enhance natural areas in Halton Hills. Land use is protected and controlled in large areas of the Town through the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Greenbelt. In addition, Halton Region and the Town of Halton Hills have identified natural heritage systems in their respective Official Plans and have policies providing for their protection. Activities in floodplain and riparian areas are controlled by Conservation Halton, Credit Valley Conservation and Grand River Conservation. Finally, many grassroots organizations and private individuals give their time and energy to aid in the task of protecting and enhancing our natural areas.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Tree Planting*

Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) administers programs to promote private land reforestation and stewardship amongst landowners in the Credit River Watershed. CVC's experienced staff assists eligible private landowners to restore and improve their property by planting and supplying trees, shrubs and seedlings.

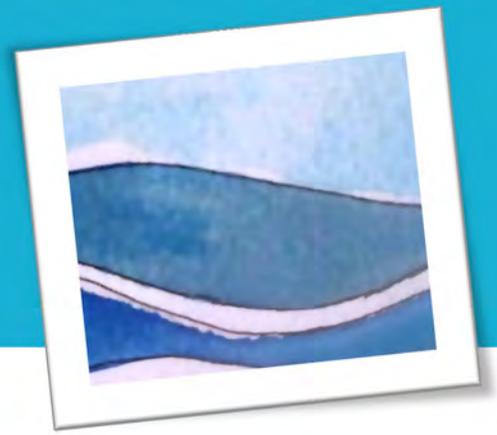
# Our Goals

- Increase the total area and connectivity of natural systems, including natural corridors and significant woodlots.
- Expand the tree canopy and increase the number of trees in rural and urban areas.
- Ensure native species are dominant in Halton Hills.
- Manage parks in their environmental context, so that they more closely resemble fully natural areas.
- Protect and monitor the environmental health of wetlands, riparian (near-shore), and other natural areas.
- Restore and remediate degraded natural areas where possible.



The Niagara Escarpment is a significant natural feature in Halton Hills, covering much of the Town's land area.

# Water



## Our Hopes and Dreams

We are stewards of our groundwater and surface water resources and must accept responsibility for improving and sustaining their quantity and quality over the long-term and in the face of population growth, climate change and other challenges. In 2060, Halton Hills will have an abundant supply of clean water by managing our water resources wisely.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills is blessed with clean water resources including groundwater and surface waters flowing through the Credit River, Sixteen Mile Creek, and Grand River watersheds. Most residents and businesses in Halton Hills use groundwater for drinking and other needs. In the rural areas, groundwater is obtained from private wells, and wastewater is treated with on-site septic systems. Halton Region is responsible for provision of municipal water and wastewater services in urban areas of Georgetown and Acton. Halton Region treats and delivers groundwater from three well fields in Georgetown and three in Acton. Surface water from Lake Ontario is treated at Halton's lake based water treatment plants, and pumped to service the Highway 401 corridor. In 2011, total billed residential consumption in Halton Hills was 3,639,315 m<sup>3</sup> and total billed commercial industrial consumption was 1,841,572 m<sup>3</sup> (Halton Region Water Billing Data). Our community members participate in a variety of water conservation initiatives including Halton Region's Toilet Rebate Program, Rain Barrel Truckload Sales, and Outdoor Water Use Program.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Rain Barrel Sales*

The Town of Halton Hills participates in Halton Region's Rain Barrel program, jointly hosting a rain barrel sale event every year, where residents can purchase a rain barrel at a bulk rate. Town residents purchased 467 rain barrels in 2012, which has the potential to save up to 93,000 litres of water each time all the rain barrels are used. Since 2009, Halton Hills residents have purchased approximately 2,630 rain barrels, which have the potential to capture about 526,000 litres of water during each collective use!

## Our Goals

- Reduce total and per capita water consumption (both potable and non-potable) from all sources.
- Support safe municipal drinking water and wastewater services and facilities as provided by Halton Region.
- Ensure private septic systems and water wells are safe and healthy.
- Minimize pollution and sediment deposits in natural areas from stormwater runoff and development.
- Use municipal water as a healthy and affordable beverage choice.
- Preserve and enhance lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and riparian areas to enhance water quality and provide aquatic habitat.
- Protect groundwater recharge areas.



Halton Hills residents have embraced the use of rain barrels as a practical way of helping conserve water by capturing and reusing rainwater.

# Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Emissions



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Globally, we are facing tremendous challenges as our planet warms and climate patterns begin to shift due to increasing greenhouse gases. This is true locally in Halton Hills as well, where already people have begun to notice changes in the weather we experience. Minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality are important to the overall health of the community and its natural systems, and to reducing our impacts on climate. In 2060, the Halton Hills community will emit minimal greenhouse gases and maintain high air quality, ensuring clean, fresh air for all.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills enjoys high levels of air quality, supporting healthy and active lifestyles. Most people in Halton Region (78%) feel that the air quality is very good or good (Air Quality and Climate Change – A Halton Perspective: Results from the 2009 Air Quality and Climate Change Survey, Halton Region 2009). Air quality across Halton Region is relatively consistent and compares favourably to Ambient Air Quality Criteria and Canada-Wide Standards. Elevated levels of ozone occur occasionally but are not generally restricted to Halton Region. In addition, we recognize that many air quality factors are beyond the direct control of the local community. By now, however, we are probably all familiar with someone whose activities must be curtailed when air quality decreases. A greenhouse gas emission inventory has not yet been completed for the community as a whole, but such information could be used to identify possible opportunities for emission reductions.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Partners for Climate Change Protection*

The Town of Halton Hills is one of over 200 Canadian municipalities that have joined the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program. The PCP program is a network of municipalities that have committed to greenhouse gas emission reductions and action on climate change. In 2011, the Office of Sustainability completed a partial inventory of the Town's corporate greenhouse gas emissions. In 2013, a Mayor's Community Energy Plan is being undertaken, which will include completion of the PCP program.

## Our Goals

- Reduce the emission of pollutants wherever possible.
- Be prepared for and mitigate potential air quality threats.
- Raise public awareness about potential air quality threats and practical actions which can be taken to improve air quality.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions for both the Town corporately and in the community.
- Raise community awareness of the opportunities and threats posed by climate change and inspire action, including efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Be prepared for climate change.



Secure bike lockers are available for use at the Town Civic Centre as part of the Town's Smart Commute program.

# Land Use



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Sustainable land-use planning requires us to think ahead 25 to 50 years to determine how Halton Hills will grow and change over time. Ensuring that parks, schools, other infrastructure, and businesses will support each other in a sustainable manner, requires us to guide these land uses through various policies and land use decisions. In 2060, Halton Hills will be a network of complete communities, where residents can conveniently live, work and play within their own neighbourhoods throughout their lifetimes. These neighbourhoods will reduce suburban sprawl and commute-times while encouraging environmentally-friendly and healthy habits, including walking and cycling.

## Where We Are Now

The Town of Halton Hills has about 59,000 individuals residing within its boundaries. Our population is expected to grow to 94,000 by 2031. Our land uses include urban settlement areas in and around Georgetown and Acton, 618 hectares of employment lands near Highway 401 and 33 hectares in Mansewood, 16,806 hectares under Greenbelt protection, 8,034 hectares of which are under Niagara Escarpment protection (Town of Halton Hills data). Currently, the urban areas of Halton Hills include heritage downtowns as well as typical post-war single-family, car-oriented development. The Town of Halton Hills has recently made or committed to investments in high quality infrastructure such as libraries, fire halls, hospital improvements and expansion as well as additional arenas. Newer neighbourhoods benefit from pedestrian walkways and the implementation of the Trails and Cycling Master Plans.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Green Building Standards*

Buildings are major users of natural resources, and generate a significant amount of landfill waste, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. To help elevate the performance, efficiency and sustainability of new development, the Town of Halton Hills is preparing a new Halton Hills Green Building Standard. The Standard covers such things as energy and water conservation, community design, air quality, natural environment, waste management, innovative and other green features, and communication.

## Our Goals

- Create vibrant, complete, walkable neighbourhoods that demonstrate leadership in sustainable community design and functioning.
- Ensure that all neighbourhoods are served by a wide range of high-quality community services and infrastructure.
- Focus an increasing amount of development in intensification areas, including brownfield redevelopment sites and other appropriately designated infill sites.
- Protect and enhance an interconnected natural heritage system.
- Protect and promote prime agricultural lands for agricultural production.
- Ensure that future urban areas are developed as a complete community, with compact pedestrian friendly neighbourhoods, a mix of housing types, appropriate employment opportunities, community facilities and open spaces.
- Use sustainable building standards (e.g. Town's Green Building Standard, LEED™) for the design, construction and operation of all new development and renovations, including the restoration of heritage buildings.



Thriving and walkable historic downtown Georgetown.

# Biodiversity



## Our Hopes and Dreams

The enormous range of species of plants, animals, microorganisms, ecosystems and genetic diversity on the planet make up our biodiversity and life on earth. All species, no matter how large or small, have an important role to play since greater biodiversity ensures the sustainability of all life forms. Biodiversity includes the diversity of genetics, species and ecosystems, as well as how they interact with each other. In 2060, Halton Hills will support rich biodiversity by maintaining a healthy ecosystem where humans live in harmony with their natural surroundings.

## Where We Are Now

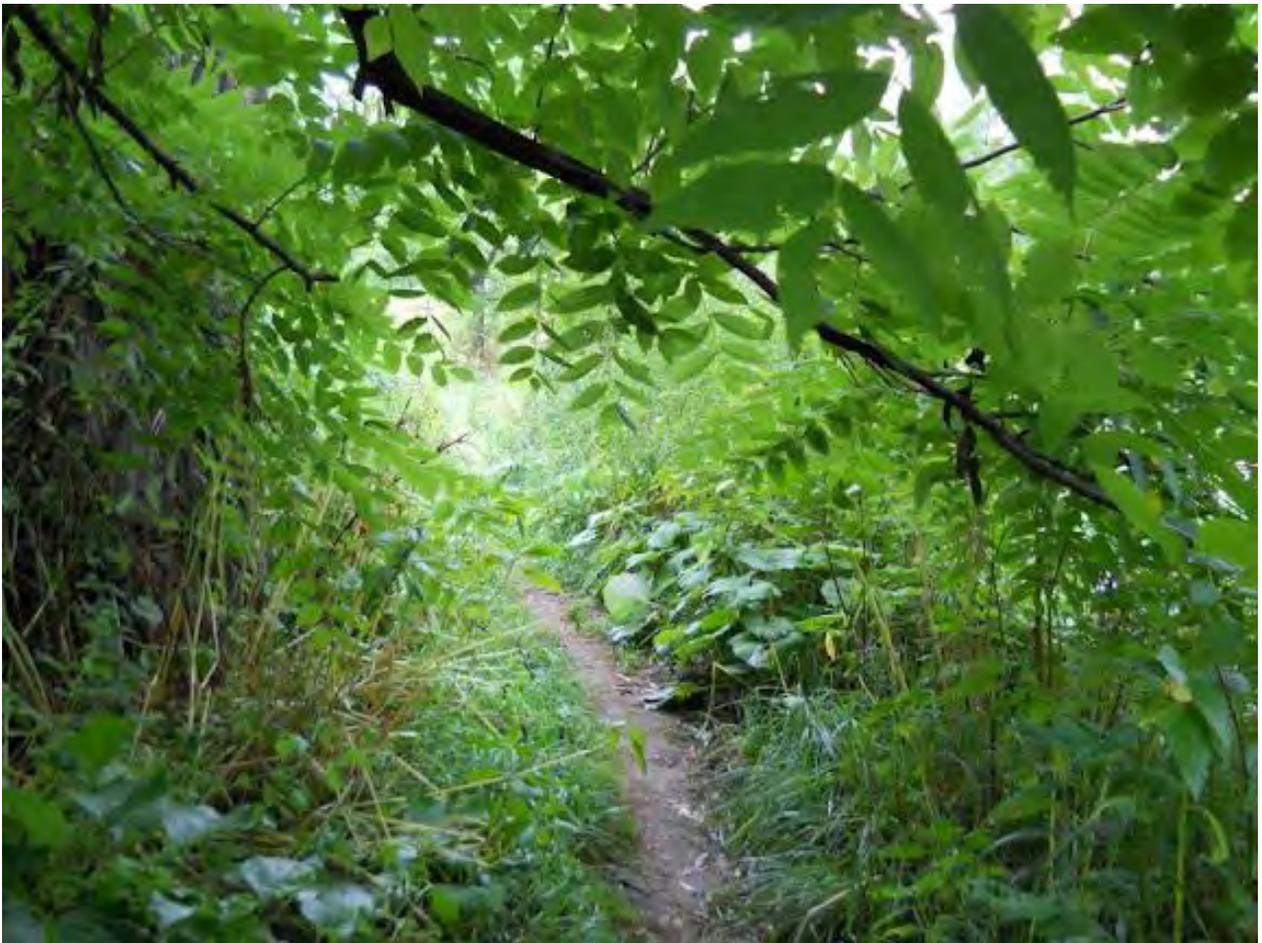
While the importance of biodiversity to environmental health is recognized, work is just beginning to measure biodiversity in natural systems and to monitor it over time. Natural areas in Halton Hills would benefit from efforts to recognize and improve the rich biodiversity that makes up the ecosystem of Halton Hills.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Controlling Invasive Species*

Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) runs an Invasive Species Program where they implement prevention measures, controls, and monitoring in a number of priority natural areas. Residents can also learn what they can do to control invasive species on their own properties through workshops, educational programs, and information resources. People can also report sightings of invasive species to CVC.

## Our Goals

- Recognize and promote the significance of ecosystem services provided by the community's natural assets and resources.
- Improve and maintain healthy biodiversity in all areas of Halton Hills.
- Reduce direct pressures on biodiversity through sustainable land use.
- Safeguard ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity.
- Engage and educate the community about the value and importance of biodiversity.
- Demonstrate leadership in biodiversity initiatives.



The wide variety of native species that thrive in Halton Hills contributes to the variety of life on Earth.

# Natural Resources



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Natural resources are found all over Halton Hills. They are our air, water, sunlight, wind, aggregates, forests, and fish, amongst others. Some are renewable and some are finite. Globally, natural resources are becoming more scarce. In 2060, in Halton Hills, our natural resources will be utilized in an efficient manner, causing the least impact on the environment and sustaining it for the long-term.

## Where We Are Now

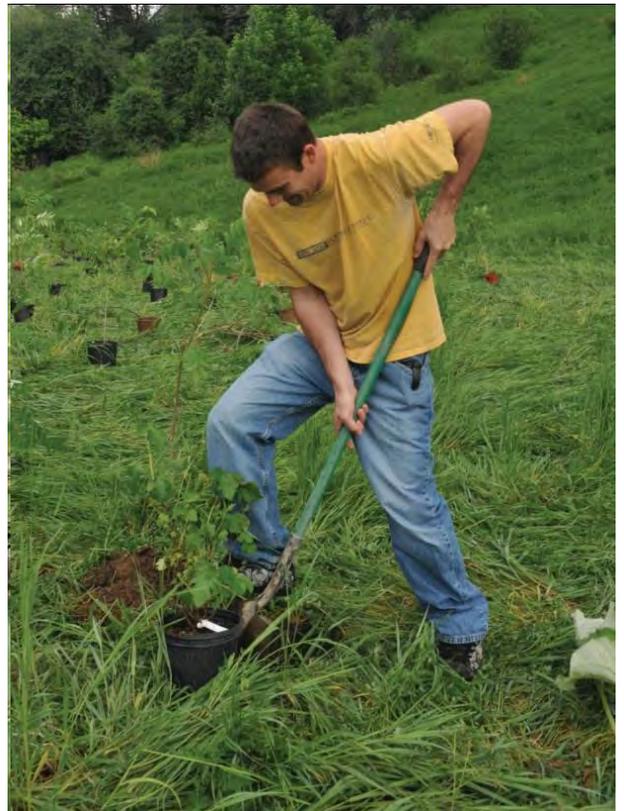
Halton Hills' major natural resources include the forest system, fresh water, and mineral aggregates. Currently, aggregate extraction is the most heavily exploited natural resource in Halton Hills. There are a number of quarries and pits in Halton Hills that provide sand, gravel, and bedrock used for roads, buildings, and other construction. There are 24 pits and quarries in Halton Region, mostly located along the Niagara Escarpment (Halton Region data). Historically, this industry has left its mark on the landscape. It is essential that potentially adverse impacts of aggregate extraction are anticipated and mitigated if this industry is to continue to contribute to the economic prosperity of Halton Hills.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Tree Planting Events*

As part of ongoing rehabilitative efforts, Dufferin Aggregates hosts tree planting events at their local pits and quarries every spring. Volunteers include local schools, as well as the Girl Guides of Canada and Scouts Canada. These tree plantings complement ongoing progressive rehabilitation efforts at the pits and quarries and offer members of the community and Dufferin Aggregate employees the chance to be part of the long term plan for environmental stewardship.

## Our Goals

- Minimize environmental impacts associated with human activity and resource extraction.
- Rehabilitate and restore resource extraction sites to ensure future community uses.
- Maximize the efficient use of aggregates through the recycling of recovered materials to minimize waste volumes and utilize non-aggregate supplements (e.g. shredded tires) to minimize demand for new aggregates.
- Ensure that all resources are well managed, used efficiently, sustained for the long term, and that their use minimizes environmental, social, and economic impacts.
- Transition from a reliance on non-renewable resources to the use of local renewable resources.



Trees offer many benefits including natural habitat, shade and air quality improvements. Community tree plantings are one way to help increase the number of trees and grow our tree canopy.

# Consumption & Waste Generation



## Our Hopes and Dreams

The creation of waste is a fact of life and cannot be avoided. How we see products and how we handle the waste we generate has significant impacts on the social, economic, and physical environment. In 2060, Halton Hills residents and businesses will be leaders in sustainable consumption by following the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle. We will reduce consumption wherever possible, treat waste as a resource with reuse value, recycle and reduce the amount of waste we generate.

## Where We Are Now

We live in a consumer-driven society where marketing teaches us that the answer to all of our concerns always lies in the purchase of a new product or service. Halton Region diverted almost 58% of residential waste in the Region from landfill in 2011 (Halton Region Year End Waste Management Report, 2011) through successful programs such as the Blue Box, GreenCart, and yard waste composting. The Region is now striving to achieve an overall residential diversion rate of 65% by 2016. In Halton Hills, we can achieve more through more mindful consumer choices and broader awareness of waste reduction and reuse alternatives.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Oil & Battery Recycling*

All used fryer oil is collected from the canteen operations at the Town's Acton Arena & Community Centre, and the Mold Masters SportsPlex. Waste oil is refined into biodiesel and sold to local customers. Each year, approximately 1,200 litres of waste oil are generated, lowering carbon dioxide emissions by about 2,400 kilograms.

Through Halton Region's household battery recycling program, since 2009, over 12,000 kg or 27,000 lbs of batteries have been collected in Halton Hills.

## Our Goals

- Reduce non-hazardous and hazardous solid waste in industrial, commercial, institutional and residential sectors.
- Reuse and recycle materials wherever possible.
- Reduce impacts of purchasing products.
- Utilize waste as a resource (e.g., composting, energy from waste, etc.) wherever possible.
- Reduce litter present within our community.



Halton Region's Recycling and GreenCart programs have been highly successful at reducing waste going to the landfill.

# Energy



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Energy is a critical component of the quality of life we enjoy. With increasing concerns over energy consumption, climate change and resource depletion, more and more people are looking at how we produce and consume energy. In 2060, Halton Hills will use minimal energy and produce local, dependable sources of renewable energy to satisfy a significant proportion of our energy needs. This will help to secure our energy future and reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to the burning of non-renewable fossil fuels which in turn will reduce our impact on climate.

## Where We Are Now

At the present time, typical energy use in the community can be attributed to electricity, heating, and transportation. Electricity is distributed by Halton Hills Hydro Inc. (HHH) who purchases wholesale electricity from Ontario Power Generation. The Town of Halton Hills is the sole shareholder of Halton Hills Community Energy Corporation, of which HHH is a subsidiary. Some private property owners have begun to install renewable energy devices – mostly solar panels – with assistance from the Provincial Feed-in-Tariff (FIT) program.

Most buildings, especially within the urban boundaries, are heated using natural gas and are fitted with central or room air conditioning. Heating in rural areas is fuelled by heating oil, propane and/or electricity. There are a number of buildings in Halton Hills that demonstrate leadership in renewable energy use and efficiency, such as the Devereaux House, Halton Hills Fire Station Headquarters, Halton Hills Library in Acton certified LEED™ Gold, Green-Port Environmental, and others.

Most community residents commute using private vehicles to their places of work outside of the Town. The vast majority of vehicles burn non-renewable fossil fuels. However, the overall fleet fuel efficiency is gradually improving over time. The Town is beginning to use hybrid vehicles and biodiesel fuel in its fleet.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Halton Hills Hydro Conservation Programs*

In 2011, Halton Hills Hydro helped its residential and commercial customers save 410 kWh and 7,457,282 kWh, respectively, with its various SaveONenergy conservation programs. Residential programs offered to their customers include the Appliance Retirement Program, peaksaverPLUS, Heating and Cooling rebates, Coupon and exchange events. Programs for commercial customers consist of a Retrofit Program, Audit Funding, Demand Response, Small Business Lighting and others.

## Our Goals

- Demonstrate leadership in local renewable energy generation and conservation.
- Reduce the amount of energy consumed by residential, industrial, commercial, institutional and business sectors.
- Maximize the amount of locally generated thermal and electrical energy from renewable sources.
- Foster a culture of conservation by preparing energy plans focusing on efficiency and renewable power generation.
- Use sustainable building standards (e.g. Town Green Building Standards, LEED®) for the design, construction and operation of new development and renovations.
- Reduce energy consumption through vehicle technologies.



LED lights are an effective way of reducing electricity use.

# 7 Social Wellbeing



# Thoughts from Our Social Wellbeing Champions

Social Wellbeing, as our Vision states, means: “A healthy and safe community based on an ethic of caring and social equity”. Social equity means equal, full access to every aspect of community life for all citizens. The Social Wellbeing Pillar focuses attention on those facets of community life which allow everyone, regardless of age, income, gender or origin to contribute to the social capital of our community. In so doing, a feeling of comfort and inclusiveness is generated, enriching the social fabric in the process. The focus areas included in the Social Wellbeing Pillar will assist the Town of Halton Hills Council, social agencies and residents in raising awareness about social needs, and engaging both citizens and community partners in planning and acting in response to these needs.

Citizens have said very clearly that the “small-town feel” is an essential component of life in Halton Hills. This phrase reflects a family feel where all citizens are equal and have concern and care for each other. Neighbours know and help each other. In looking to the future, we identify three groups of citizens needing special attention: these are youth, seniors and low income citizens.

There are, however, four strings to the “sustainability bow” and it is essential to integrate the efforts and concerns of the four pillars of sustainability. In this way it is assured that our community will be the best place to live and a community where all can achieve their full potential.

The objective of the Social Wellbeing Pillar is to reinforce and highlight aspects of community life that allow each and every one to promote the future evolution and strengthening of the social fabric in a sustainable fashion. It is our dream that within the timeframe of this Community Sustainability Strategy our Vision will become reality.

Respectfully,



David Clayton and Nancy Heinmiller  
Co-Chairs, Social Sub-Committee



McNally Park, Georgetown

# Social Wellbeing in 2060

*A healthy and safe community based on an ethic of caring and social equity.*

## Our Themes

- Housing
- Transportation
- Seniors
- Social and Health Services
- Poverty
- Comfort, Safety, and Inclusion
- Learning

## Our Indicators of Social Wellbeing

- Percentage mode of transportation to work for total employed labour force 15 years and over with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address:
  - Car, truck, van, as driver
  - Car, truck, van, as passenger
  - Public transit
  - Walked or bicycled
  - All other modes
- Number of households spending more than 30% of gross income on shelter per 1,000 households
- Number of households in the low income bracket before taxes per 1,000 households
- Number of citizens dependent on Social Services per 1,000 residents
- Range of services available for Halton Hills seniors who require significant assistance:
  - Average monthly hours of home care available
  - Number of affordable assisted living options with 24/7 in-house care available
  - Percentage of Halton Hills seniors needing long-term care beds who are able to remain in Halton Hills

# Housing



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Adequate housing is a basic necessity of life and an essential component of “good living” for everyone. How and where we live is important to all residents of Halton Hills. In 2060, Halton Hills will be admired for the availability and easy access to a variety of quality and affordable housing throughout the community, ensuring that the housing needs of all residents are met at all stages of life.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills has been growing rapidly. The majority of existing homes are low density housing. The 2011 housing mix is 16,300 low density homes, 2,200 medium density, and 2,100 high density homes in Halton Hills (Town of Halton Hills data). Targets for housing affordability and housing mix in the Regional Official Plan call for 30% of all new housing to be Affordable or Assisted Housing and 50% of all new housing to be in the form of townhouses or multi-storey buildings. For 2011, Halton Region identified an Assisted Housing “Gap” in the Region of between 300 – 700 units and an Affordable Housing “Gap” of between 700 -1,500 units (Halton Region 2011 State of Housing Report, 2013). There is a limited amount of rental housing available in Halton Hills and thus vacancy rates for rental housing are very low. Halton Community Housing Corporation owns and operates six housing facilities located in Halton Hills. Emergency shelter services are provided through local partnerships and Halton Emergency Shelters are available in Oakville (Lighthouse Shelter), Milton, and Burlington (Halton Women’s Place) (Halton Region 2011 State of Housing Report, 2013).

### Sustainability in Action *LIFE House*

Five new units were opened in 2011 in LIFE House, an affordable housing home for youth in Acton. LIFE House is run by Support & Housing Halton and serves youth living with a mental illness, addiction, or who are at risk of being homeless. Support & Housing Halton focuses on providing support and transitional housing, leading to independent living.

## Our Goals

- Facilitate housing that is affordable and accessible to individuals and families in order to meet housing needs at all stages of life and abilities.
- Ensure a sufficient proportion (e.g. 25%) of new development is affordable.
- Reduce the percentage of households spending 30% or more of household income on gross rent.
- Increase the supply of quality affordable housing and emergency units.
- Ensure a greater variety of housing types are available that include rental units, co-operative projects and smaller less expensive homes for downsizing, while paying attention to “green” concepts and community design.
- Utilize intensification areas including brownfield redevelopment sites and other appropriately designated infill sites, in conjunction with greenfield development.
- Increase development densities in appropriate locations to minimize the amount of land required to accommodate growth.



New townhouse development underway in Halton Hills.

# Transportation



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Mobility is a fundamental component of a community. The way people and goods move to and from, and within Halton Hills, makes up our transportation system. In many cases, people's livelihoods depend on how they get around. In 2060, all citizens of Halton Hills, including those without cars, can get around efficiently using a sustainable transportation system. Active transportation, such as walking and cycling, is a viable option for everyone in Halton Hills. As a result of having a sustainable transportation system, there will be a significant reduction in the reliance on non-renewable sources of energy and greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced.

## Where We Are Now

The personal vehicle, in large part, remains the dominant method of choice for travel in Halton Hills. In fact, approximately 84% of Halton Hills residents travel to work as a lone occupant in a vehicle, compared to about 71% in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2006). Our predominant mode of travel is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. It also contributes to road congestion, which impacts our economy and commute times, discourages physical activity, and isolates people from social interaction. GO train service is available in Halton Hills via the Kitchener Line, as well as GO bus services. Some transportation services also exist for those with specific needs, such as Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills (CASHH), Red Cross, Activan, and a taxi scrip program. Halton Hills has designated bike and pedestrian lanes on some roads and a network of hiking trails connecting several ravine and park areas.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Acton GO Train Service*

Beginning in January 2013, GO train service was made available in Acton with the opening of a new Acton GO Station. The additional stop helps meet demand for expanded and more frequent service in the region. This new stop will not only provide a connection between Acton and downtown Toronto, but will also support commuters travelling between Acton, and the Georgetown and Brampton areas.

# Our Goals

- Meet community needs, especially those of seniors, youth, low income households, and those with accessibility issues, to effectively get where they want to go.
- Reduce single occupancy and short distance motor vehicle use.
- Develop transportation infrastructure that encourages pedestrian, cycling and other more sustainable transportation modes.
- Facilitate practical, accessible, and affordable public transportation that meets the needs of all residents.
- Improve the inter-connection of and enhance local trail networks.
- Increase public awareness and use of electric, hybrid and highly fuel efficient vehicles and the required infrastructure to support them.
- Increase public awareness of the need for public transit and its benefits.



The Georgetown and Acton GO Stations provide a convenient connection between Halton Hills and downtown Toronto.



Smart Commute Halton Staff join Town staff in celebrating 'Bike to Work Day'.

# Seniors



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Over the next 50 years the number and proportion of seniors will continue to increase in Halton Hills, at a similar rate as the rest of the province at large. This increase will place additional requirements on all services and facilities for seniors. In 2060, Halton Hills will be an age-friendly community where all seniors enjoy affordable and convenient access to a comprehensive range of services that support and increase their independence and quality of life.

## Where We Are Now

Canada's population is aging rapidly. The steady growth in the senior population group will place pressures on provincial and local facilities and resources as never seen before. This is no different in Halton Hills, which is already seeing growing pressures on senior services with seniors accounting for 11.9% of the Town's population in 2011, up from 10.2% in 2006 (Town of Halton Hills Seniors Centre Space Requirements and Recommendations Report, 2009). Currently in Halton Hills there are eight seniors' social housing sites, three assistive living/supportive housing sites, two long-term care homes, and three domiciliary hostels, as well as retirement homes in Georgetown and Acton (Halton Region, Housing Options for Senior in Halton). The two Long-Term Care Homes in Georgetown provide differentiated facilities for cognitively impaired patients. Lacking preferential access to local facilities, Halton Hills residents needing long-term care are often transferred out of the community away from family and friends. Seniors in Halton Hills have limited access to home services that can lead to more hospitalization, and costs and stresses on healthcare services and resources. The Town of Halton Hills offers a number of active living programs which are provided to seniors at Town Seniors' Centres. A Halton Region Seniors Directory is also available to seniors in Halton Hills.

### Sustainability in Action *Meal Programs*

Link2Care is a multi service community organization which delivers a wide variety of services and programs region wide for children, youth, adults and seniors. Their meal programs – Meals on Wheels, Meals on Ice, Wheels to Meals and Congregate Dining – offer a variety of meals to seniors and disabled adults who are unable to manage food preparation.

# Our Goals

- Ensure older adults are incorporated into active, healthy communities in ways that enhance the quality of life for all Halton Hills residents in a reciprocal way.
- Provide fully accessible social, recreational and educational services for seniors of all abilities and levels of affordability.
- Ensure seniors are served by appropriate and affordable living facilities, such as assisted living and long-term care facilities, and levels of care to meet needs.
- Enable seniors to “age at home” with adequate and accessible home services.
- Increase the amount of accessible and affordable housing available to seniors.
- Ensure transportation is safe, affordable, and accessible for all seniors.
- Improve communication channels so that all information regarding seniors’ needs and services is widely known.



Participants at the 2012 Community Sustainability Forum discuss issues of concern to seniors.

# Social and Health Services



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Health and social services contribute to the overall wellness of the Halton Hills community. In 2060, Halton Hills residents and visitors will enjoy convenient access to high-quality local healthcare facilities that promote, support and enhance the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all.

## Where We Are Now

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term care funds healthcare services in Ontario through the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). Halton Hills is serviced by Halton Healthcare Services (HHS), a healthcare organization that includes three community hospitals and provides health services to more than 300,000 residents of Halton Region. The two hospitals that directly service Halton Hills are the Milton District Hospital and Georgetown Hospital.

Halton Hills is currently serviced by approximately 44 family medicine physicians, or approximately one physician per 1,340 residents (College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, and Halton Region). Most physicians typically carry a patient load ranging from 1000 to 2500 patients (College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, and Halton Region).

Halton Region's Health Department delivers a variety of public health programs and services for residents in Halton, including health and wellness, mental health, and substance abuse. A variety of social support services, such as Links2Care, are also available in Halton Hills.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Georgetown Hospital Redevelopment*

The Georgetown Hospital is currently undergoing a major redevelopment project that will result in numerous enhancements and an expansion of the hospital facilities and services. The \$14.2 million redevelopment project will see the Emergency Room more than triple in size from 4,270 square feet to 14,000 square feet and a new Diagnostic Imaging department including a new CT scanner in the former ER space.

# Our Goals

- Reduce the number of citizens dependent on social services.
- Ensure residents are served by an integrated and comprehensive system of healthcare services through all stages of life.
- Improve quality of access to local social services (e.g. length of waiting time) and variety of services available.
- Make Halton Hills a destination of choice for general and specialist healthcare practitioners.
- Live healthy and active lifestyles.
- Increase availability of and access to specialized health services in Halton Hills.
- Increased co-ordination between health and social services.



The Georgetown Hospital is currently undergoing a major expansion to better serve the community.

# Poverty



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Poverty has a devastating impact on peoples' quality of life and compromises their ability to secure essential resources needed to survive, such as shelter and access to a nutritious diet. In many cases, poverty can be difficult to identify and document. In affluent areas with lower rates of poverty, such as Halton Hills, those that do face poverty can be even more marginalized and become forced to migrate to larger urban centres. In 2060, all Halton Hills residents will be able to meet their basic everyday needs.

## Where We Are Now

Residents in Halton Hills are generally well off, having a higher average income than the Ontario average. The median income in Halton Hills for those 15 years old and over was \$36,162 in 2005, compared to the median Ontario income of \$27,258 (Statistics Canada, 2006). Additionally, 5.1% of residents fell below the low income cutoff before tax in 2005 and the unemployment rate was 4.1% (Statistics Canada, 2006). There are a number of support programs that are currently available to low income residents, including well-run food programs, energy rebate programs, and others. Social assistance programs are in place such as Ontario Works, and childcare and dental care subsidies through Halton Region for those who need assistance.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Food Banks*

The Georgetown Bread Basket (GBB) and Acton Food Share are volunteer based organizations that help feed the hungry in Halton Hills. They work with churches, individuals, groups and food suppliers to collect food donations, process and store products at their facility, and distribute food to those in need. They help organize food drives and facilitate donations of food or funds to purchase fresh produce.

## Our Goals

- Ensure everyone, regardless of their socio-economic status, can enjoy convenient and affordable access to local, healthy, nutritious and culturally appropriate foods.
- Reduce poverty, homelessness and reliance on food banks.
- Increase public awareness of and advocacy for actions to eliminate poverty in our community (e.g. skills development, free childcare).
- Reduce the number of citizens living below the official definition of poverty.
- Provide no-cost opportunities and locations for socializing and recreation in all four seasons.
- Be aware of and responsive to the needs of the homeless.



Mayor Bonnette delivering donated food collected at the Earth Day Fair to the Georgetown Bread Basket.

# Comfort, Safety, and Inclusion



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Quality of life for many people is living in a community where they feel safe and comfortable. This includes a community that is welcoming and inclusive where all members of the community can live and be actively involved and contribute. In 2060, Halton Hills continues to retain its “small-town feel” and great sense of community. It will be a thriving and diverse community where diversity is celebrated, and everyone’s needs, regardless of religion, age, gender and cultural or ethnic background, are met.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills is a vibrant and increasingly diverse community, which is safe and welcoming. An adequate number of emergency service personnel make Halton Hills a safe place to live. Halton Regional Police Service provides community-based policing to Halton Hills, with a police division located in Georgetown (11 Division). Although crime in general has been decreasing, traffic-related incidents are reported to be increasing. In Halton Hills the total crime rate in 2011 was 2,777 per 100,000 people (Halton Hills Crime Statistics, 2009-2011), showing a steady decline over the last few years.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Communities On Phone Patrol*

Communities On Phone Patrol (COPP), a joint effort of the Halton Regional Police Service and the citizens of Halton Region, is a community based program to help control crime. Community volunteers act as the extra eyes and ears of community policing by patrolling assigned areas where there have been high incidences of crime and observing and reporting any suspicious and/or illegal activities.

## Our Goals

- Celebrate, promote, respect and accept the community's diversity, regardless of age, gender, cultural background and/or ability.
- Provide community services and facilities that recognize and meet the community's diverse needs, as well as overcome any barriers experienced by the community.
- Ensure all residents and visitors feel welcomed, safe, connected, respected and actively engaged in Halton Hills.
- Ensure Halton Hills is a fully accessible community.
- Provide no-cost or low-cost opportunities for social interaction.



Halton Hills offers a wide range of high quality community services and facilities to meet the community's needs, including recreation facilities, seniors' centres and activities for youth.

# Learning



## Our Hopes and Dreams

Education enables personal fulfillment as well as making a major contribution to the overall sustainability of a community. In 2060, Halton Hills will offer bountiful local learning opportunities that enable everyone to reach their desired full social, intellectual, economic, cultural and physical potential.

## Where We Are Now

Halton Hills is the home of a generally well educated population. In 2006, 51% of the population 15 years old and over had some form of post-secondary education, 30% had achieved high school or equivalent, and 19% had no certificate, diploma, or degree (Statistics Canada, 2006). Educational opportunities are available to Halton Hills residents of all ages. Adult education courses are available through the high schools and nearby colleges. The Halton Hills library system offers extensive and diverse learning activities. Local Seniors' Centres also offer a range of educational programs and local special interest groups offer informative and educational opportunities.

### **Sustainability in Action** *Active & Safe Routes to School*

Active & Safe Routes to School is a provincial movement dedicated to children's mobility, health, and wellbeing. The local school boards have been working with the Region, the Town, and other stakeholders to implement the Active and Safe Routes to School initiative as a way to encourage active transportation to schools, while reducing air pollution.

## Our Goals

- Increase awareness about the relevance and importance of sustainability to high quality community life through formal and informal community engagement channels.
- Expand learning opportunities around sustainability through the curriculum, school infrastructure, teaching and school operations.
- Develop the potential and passions of youth so that they can make meaningful contributions to the long-term success of Halton Hills.
- Develop Halton Hills into a centre for higher education and research, apprenticeship and training.
- Encourage life-long learning opportunities, including e-learning, that fulfill personal ambitions, support the environment and contribute to the growth of a viable and robust knowledge-based sector.
- Create awareness of the benefits of literacy in all aspects of community life.



As part of the Town's summer camps, youth learn about sustainability and the importance of energy conservation.

# A Commitment to Moving Forward

Imagine Halton Hills has captured the hopes and dreams of our community for our long-term future. This Strategy provides our community with solid guidance on the elements of our community that we value, what we want to improve upon and provides strategies on how we can collectively achieve our hopes and dreams. Our work does not stop here. Now that the Strategy has been completed, we will develop an implementation plan to ensure that we continue to move forward towards a more sustainable future. The implementation plan will outline specific steps and mechanisms for implementing Imagine Halton Hills.

As we transition our efforts from planning to implementation, there are three areas that we will be focusing on:

- Strengthening our Community Capacity;
- Measuring and Reporting on our Progress; and
- Engaging the Community.

# Strengthening Our Community Capacity

The development of this Strategy has been led by a Steering Committee, consisting of members from TSAC with the support of the Office of Sustainability at the Town of Halton Hills. As a truly community-led Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills will require many people to move it from a strategy to reality. It cannot be implemented by the Town or a single organization alone. To succeed, the Strategy must be implemented by our community as a whole.

There is tremendous strength in our community through community groups, businesses, institutions, municipal governments, branches of the federal or provincial government, and non-governmental organizations. Many of these groups and organizations are already doing

things right now that are contributing to making Halton Hills more sustainable. As the Strategy transitions to implementation, TSAC will continue to work with the Town of Halton Hills to develop an annual workplan that outlines how we can build on the strengths of our community to achieve sustainability actions.

At the Town of Halton Hills, Imagine Halton Hills will help set priorities and guide decision-making, as well as other Town plans, policies, studies, and other initiatives. Specifically, there are numerous significant initiatives, either in progress or planned, that will advance the Vision, Focus Areas, and Goals of Imagine Halton Hills and help “operationalize” it through more detailed policies.

## Implementing Sustainability *Town Initiatives Underway*

An example of initiatives underway and/or recently completed:

- Economic Development Strategy
- Community Branding Exercise
- Green Building Study
- Cultural Master Plan
- Mayor’s Community Energy Plan
- Corporate Sustainable Building Policy

# Measuring and Reporting

Measuring and reporting our progress will tell us how well we are doing on our journey towards community sustainability and demonstrate activities that contribute to the community’s Vision of a sustainable future.

## Sustainability Indicators

A set of “big picture” indicators will be used to monitor and track progress over time. The indicators will provide Halton Hills with a snapshot of progress spanning our multiple sustainability Pillars and Focus Areas. These “big picture” indicators will be supported by indicators and targets to measure the success of specific actions taken in each Focus Area. The indicators below have been selected based on best practices and suited to the needs of Halton Hills. They use readily available data sources and allow for the comparison over time of where our community stands with respect to progress towards sustainability.

The “big picture” indicators will be measured on a regular basis and reported in our Sustainability Report Cards. Indicators will be reviewed as part of the overall review of the Strategy and more may be added over time as more data becomes available.

Indicator	Measurement
Trails	Total kilometres of trails (km)
Library Participation	Library use
Cultural Activity Participation	Annual survey of the variety of participation in cultural activities and organizations
Recreational Program Participation	Total participant hours for recreation programs per 1,000 persons (# hours)
Open Space	Hectares of municipally owned open space (ha)
Community Facilities	Number of accessible facilities for use by many community groups (# facilities)
Heritage Protection	Number of designated heritage properties and districts (#)
Employment Participation Rate	Employment participation rate in all sectors for those 15 years and over (%)
Green and Clean-tech Business Opportunities	Number of jobs classified as being “green” in Halton Hills (# jobs)
Business Diversity	Number of business sectors accounting for 50% of all economic activity (#)
Family Income	Average Halton Hills’ family income (\$)
Agricultural Land	Number of hectares of land re designated from agricultural purposes to other uses (ha)
Annual Gross Farm Receipt	Total gross farm receipts (\$)
Tax Ratio	Ratio of residential to non residential property assessment
Live-Work Ratio	Percentage of people that work from home (%)
Commercial Space	Commercial floorspace per capita (square feet)
Employment Density	Employment density per hectare (# jobs/hectare)
Water Consumption	Average total daily flow of water per person (litres)
Tree Canopy Cover	Tree canopy cover as a percentage of Town area total coverage and urban area coverage (%)
Population Density	Number of people/km <sup>2</sup> in the urban areas and rural areas (# people/km <sup>2</sup> )
Green Building	Number of buildings certified by recognized green building programs, including construction meeting the Town’s Green Building Standard, LEED™, etc (# of buildings)
Renewable Energy	Number of renewable energy projects and total capacity of renewable energy output (kilowatts)
Transportation Modal Split	Percentage mode of transportation to work for total employed labour force 15 years and over with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address (%): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Car, truck, van, as driver</li> </ul>

Indicator	Measurement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Car, truck, van, as passenger</li> <li>○ Public transit</li> <li>○ Walked or bicycled</li> <li>○ All other modes</li> </ul>
<b>Household Spending on Shelter</b>	Number of households spending more than 30% of gross income on shelter per 1,000 households (# households)
<b>Low Income Percentage</b>	Number of households in the low income bracket before taxes per 1,000 households (# households)
<b>Dependency on Social Services</b>	Number of citizens dependent on social services per 1,000 residents (# citizens)
<b>Access to Senior Services</b>	Range of services available for Halton Hills seniors who require significant assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Average monthly hours of home care available (hours)</li> <li>○ Number of affordable assisted living options with 24/7 in house care available (#)</li> <li>○ Percentage of Halton Hills seniors needing long term care beds who are able to remain in Halton Hills (%)</li> </ul>

## Sustainability Report Card

As we implement our Strategy, we will monitor and report on progress on a regular basis through the use of a Sustainability Report Card. The Sustainability Report Card will provide a community update on sustainability, including advancement of actions and activities that support our Vision, Focus Areas, and Goals, and the actions of community partners. The Sustainability Report Card will also report on the indicator framework.

## Review of Imagine Halton Hills

Our values and hopes and dreams presented in this Strategy are representative of Halton Hills as of 2013. Our Strategy needs to be flexible in order to adapt to our community as it changes. Accordingly, Imagine Halton Hills should be refreshed on a regular basis. The Strategy will be reviewed every four years, at the end of the first year of each new municipal Council term. The purpose of this review will be to engage our Town Council and our community in sustainability, and to review or revise our Strategy according to newly identified priorities, successes achieved, and any unforeseen challenges or opportunities.

# Engaging the Community

An ongoing conversation about sustainability in our community is important. Outreach and communications (including social media) will be ongoing through implementation. We will continue to raise awareness of sustainability, encourage personal actions, continue development of community partnerships, and celebrate progress of partners and individual projects that move us closer towards sustainability.

An event, similar to the Sustainability Forum, will be hosted every two years to communicate and celebrate the success of Imagine Halton Hills and assist in identifying the new priorities for action. The event will also provide an opportunity to learn about community partner experiences and successes and encourage others to become involved.



Artistic representation of the sustainability discussion captured at the Community Sustainability Forum 2012.

# Getting Involved

Every single person and organization in Halton Hills has a role to play in our community's future. There are numerous opportunities to stay involved and participate.

For more information on becoming a community partner, please contact:

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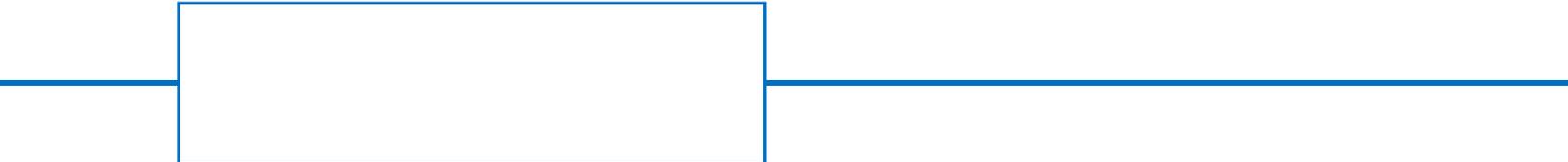
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## Accessibility

A general term used to describe the degree of ease that something (e.g., device, service, and environment) can be used and enjoyed by persons with a disability. The term implies conscious planning, design and/or effort to ensure it is barrier-free to persons with a disability and, by extension, highly usable and practical for the general population as well.

## Active Transportation

Any form of human-powered transportation such as: walking, jogging, running, cycling, in-line skating, skateboarding, snowshoeing, and skiing.

## Affordable Housing

Defined by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation as housing that does not necessitate a household spending more than 30% of gross income on shelter costs.

## Aggregates

Aggregates are a granular material used in construction. Aggregates are produced from natural sources extracted from quarries and gravel pits and in some countries from sea-dredged materials (marine aggregates).

## Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Source: Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy, 2011).

## Brownfield

Undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. Brownfields are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

## Climate Change

Changes in global climate patterns (such as temperature, precipitation, or wind) that last for extended periods of time as a result of either natural processes or human influences.

In some cases 'climate change' has been used synonymously with the term 'global warming'.

## Community Economic Development

Community Economic Development (CED) is action taken locally by a community to provide economic opportunities and improve social conditions in a sustainable way. CED initiatives often aim to improve the lot of those who are disadvantaged. CED is a community-centred process that blends social and economic development to foster the economic, social, ecological and cultural wellbeing of communities.

## Community Engagement

How stakeholders and the public in communities are engaged in determining their needs and/or ways of addressing these. Engagement goes beyond simple consultation and feedback, and involves people working collaboratively, through inspired action and learning, to create and realize bold visions for their common future.

## Complete Community

Complete communities meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, a full range of housing, and community infrastructure including affordable housing, schools, recreation and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also a component of a complete community.

## Culture

A community's values and aspirations, traditions and shared memories, the ways they develop, receive and transmit these, and the ways of life these processes produce. Cultures are maintained through communities. Artistic expression and creativity are ways that cultural identities are developed.

## Cultural Heritage

The legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Cultural heritage includes tangible culture (such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art and artifacts), intangible culture (such as folklore, traditions, language and knowledge), and natural heritage (including culturally-significant landscapes and biodiversity).

## Ecosystem

The system of interactions between living organisms and their environment.

## Feed-In-Tariff

An economic policy created to promote active investment in and production of renewable energy sources. Feed-in tariffs typically make use of long-term agreements and pricing tied to costs of production for renewable energy producers. By offering long-term contracts and guaranteed pricing, producers are sheltered from some of the inherent risks in renewable energy production, thus allowing for more diversity in energy technologies.

## Goal

Statement of general direction leading towards a desired end state or vision.

## Green Economy

An economic system that results in improved human wellbeing and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive.

## Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

Greenhouse gases include naturally occurring gases as well as new emissions created by industrial and individual activities. Naturally occurring GHG include water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone. Others result exclusively from human industrial processes. Human activities also add significantly to the level of naturally occurring greenhouse gas emissions:

- *Carbon dioxide* is released into the atmosphere by the burning of solid waste, wood and wood products, and fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal).
- *Nitrous oxide* emissions occur during various agricultural and industrial processes, and when solid waste or fossil fuels are burned.
- *Methane* is emitted when organic waste decomposes, whether in landfills or in connection with livestock farming. Methane emissions also occur during the production and transport of fossil fuels.

## Halton Region

The Regional Municipality of Halton is an upper tier municipality. The Town of Halton Hills is one of four local municipalities (Halton Hills, Milton, Oakville, and Burlington) that make up Halton Region. The Region is responsible for regional services, such as water and wastewater, and waste management, as well as providing regional planning direction.

## Indicator

A component of the community, such as a flow, an action, an activity or built space, that is measured over time and can help show changes in a specific condition. Indicators provide a measurement tool to gauge performance and can be used to educate and affect change.

## Integrated

In this context, “integrated” refers to the practice of bringing diverse, normally separate, concerns and planning processes together (e.g., transportation, land use, environment, housing, waste, water, energy, community health, recreation, culture, municipal finance, and others). Although community planning is, in principle, supposed to link these planning processes, in practice, this is not often done - the “silo” approach is the de facto practice. A Sustainability Strategy aims to establish a framework through which these various planning efforts can be dovetailed and integrated and therefore involves a multi-disciplinary approach that brings together a wide range of expertise. Moreover, a Sustainability Strategy recognizes that the municipality does not have sole control over urban processes and attempts to integrate other actors (such as industry, non-government organizations, other levels of government) into the planning process.

## Knowledge-Based Economy

An expression that describes trends in advanced economies towards greater dependence on knowledge, information and high skill levels, and the increasing need for ready access to all of these by the business and public sectors.

## Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™)

The LEED Green Building Rating System™ encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria. LEED™ is a third-party certification program and an internationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. It promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: (1) sustainable site development, (2) water efficiency, (3) energy efficiency, (4) materials selection, and (5) indoor environmental quality.

## Live-Work

Property which combines residential living space with commercial or manufacturing space; or working in the same community you live in.

## Municipal Cultural Plan

A process for utilizing a community's cultural assets to support economic development and to integrate culture into local planning and decision-making processes.

## Natural Heritage

Natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from an aesthetic or scientific point of view. Geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation. Natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

## Natural Resources

A material source of wealth, such as timber, fresh water, or a mineral deposit, that occurs in a natural state and has economic value.

## Policy

Principles or rules used by organizations, governments and/or businesses to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes.

## Renewable Energy

Natural resources that provide energy such as sunlight, wind, tides and geothermal heat, which are naturally replenished.

## Resilient

The capability to anticipate risk, limits impact, and bounce back rapidly through survival, adaptability, evolution, and growth in the face of turbulent change.

## Stakeholder

An individual or group potentially affected by the activities of an organization/government body.

## Stormwater

The discharge of water by runoff from land and impervious areas, such as paved streets, parking lots and buildings, during rainfall and snow events.

## Stormwater Management

Stormwater management is anything associated with the planning, maintenance, and regulation of facilities which collect, store, or convey stormwater.

## Tourism

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure.

## Tax Base

The assessed value of a set of assets, investments or income streams that is subject to taxation, or the assessed value of a single asset that is subject to taxation. Anything that can be taxed has a tax base.

## Urban Growth Boundary

An urban growth boundary is a line drawn between urban and rural lands defining the limits to which the urban area will grow.

## Vision

A shared description or desired direction for the future.

## Waste Diversion Rate

The percentage of total waste that a jurisdiction diverts from disposal at landfills and transformation facilities through reduction, reuse, recycling programs and composting programs.

# SUSTAINABILITY

