



BY-LAW NO. 2011-0101

A By-law to adopt Amendment No. 14 to the Official Plan of the Town of Halton Hills – Policies Related to School Sites

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Halton Hills, is empowered to enact this By-law by virtue of the provisions of the Planning Act, 1990, R.S.O., c.P. 13, as amended;

AND WHEREAS the Regional Municipality of Halton, as the approval authority, has exempted this Official Plan Amendment from their approval;

AND WHEREAS on November 28, 2011, Council for the Town of Halton Hills approved Report No. PDS-2011-0089, dated November 14, 2011, in which certain recommendations were made relating to the School Site Land Use Planning Study;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. That Amendment No. 14 to the Official Plan of the Town of Halton Hills, being the attached text is hereby adopted;
2. That the Town Clerk is hereby authorized to circulate the Official Plan Amendment as provided for by the Planning Act regarding the appeal process.

BY-LAW read and passed by the Council for the Town of Halton Hills this 12th day of December, 2011.

MAYOR – Rick Bonnette

TOWN CLERK – Suzanne Jones

**AMENDMENT NO. 14
TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN
FOR THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS**

**Town of Halton Hills
School Site Policies**

AMENDMENT NO. 14

TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

PART A – THE PREAMBLE does not constitute part of the Amendment.

PART B – THE AMENDMENT, consisting of the following text, constitutes Amendment No. 14 to the Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills.

PART C – THE APPENDICES - does not constitute part of the Amendment, but is included for information purposes only.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN
OF THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

The attached text constitutes Amendment No. 14 to the Official Plan of the Town of Halton Hills, which was adopted by the Council of the Town of Halton Hills by By-law 2011-0101 in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act, 1990, R.S.O., c.P. 13, as amended;

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS



MAYOR – R. Bonnette



CLERK – S. Jones

Part A – The Preamble

1. Purpose of the Amendment

The value of schools in the Town of Halton Hills extends beyond the primary role of providing education to children. Schools often provide indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, open space, and meeting places for communities. And very often, schools are considered focal points of a community and are situated geographically in the centre of a neighbourhood, providing an accessible location for students and providing open space and park amenities in a central location for residents. In addition, a small, local school can provide programs and services that specifically respond to the needs of the local community.

Community hubs are typically established in public buildings, often schools, where there is the co-location of services and facilities to provide local access for communities. Hubs can operate outside of typical school hours (evenings & weekends) and provide a wide range of services and facilities including: education, meeting places, health services, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, drop-in centres for parents or youth, social services, etc. Very often, schools are the only buildings available that are centrally located and have the building space (or land for building expansion) to provide these hubs.

The purpose of this Amendment is to implement the recommendations resulting from the Town of Halton Hills School Site Land Use Planning Study by including new policies in the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan which reinforce the value of schools in a neighbourhood and the desire by Council that school sites be preserved for their intended educational purposes in consideration of their importance as community hubs and neighbourhood gathering places.

2. Location

This amendment applies to all school properties within the entirety of the Town of Halton Hills.

3. Basis of the Amendment

Over the past few years there have been a number of emerging issues with respect to existing and proposed schools sites in the Town, including:

- issues pertaining to schools and the provision of capital funding by the Ministry of Education, the potential closure of existing schools in mature neighbourhoods, and the trends to larger schools in greenfield areas;
- the role of schools and surplus school sites in a community context including the relationship of these sites to parkland and other community facilities in meeting recreational and other community and human service needs; and,
- the potential for surplus school sites to be utilized for residential purposes, which could assist in fulfilling the Province's intensification objectives as set out in Places to Grow.

In consideration of the above, in February 2009, Council passed a resolution to:

- Initiate a study to review the current role of publicly funded school sites in the community; and,
- Determine whether the land use designations and zones in the Town's existing Official Plan and Zoning By-laws are appropriate for school sites.

Through the School Site Land Use Planning Study, five options were considered which proposed a variety of land use designations and regulatory alternatives for elementary school sites. The distinguishing factor among the options was the range of uses permitted on an elementary school site within the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law. At the conclusion of the study, it was recommended that the current approach in

the Official Plan and Zoning By-law with respect to the elementary school sites continues to be appropriate. The current approach requires a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) for new low density residential uses and both an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) and ZBA for medium or high density residential development on an elementary school property. This approach clearly indicates a preference towards low density residential, should the property not be required for an elementary school or other institutional purpose.

A number of policies are already included in the Town's Official Plan related the important role that school sites play in neighbourhoods; the relationship between elementary schools and neighbourhood parks to provide complementary facilities; encouraging the location of community/recreational centres in a campus setting; and directing the Town to ensure that the school boards are an integral part of the planning process in order that the provision of schools keeps pace with projected population demand.

To enhance the existing policy framework, the study recommended that additional policies be included in the Official Plan which:

- Reinforce the importance of elementary school properties as community hubs and neighbourhood gathering places.
- Encourage the retention of schools in existing neighbourhoods in consideration of the role they play as a focus for community activity and neighbourhood interaction.
- Require that once a school site has been identified in a newly developing area, a sign be placed on the property advising residents that a school is planned for the site but that the need for the site and timing of construction is at the sole discretion of the school board.
- Prioritize consideration of alternative uses of elementary and secondary school sites, with other public institutional uses and parks and open spaces as the first priority, private institutional uses as the second priority, and commercial and residential uses subject to applicable Official Plan criteria as the third priority.

Part B – The Amendment

All of this part of the document entitled PART B – THE AMENDMENT, consisting of the following text, constitutes Amendment No. 14 to the Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills.

Details of the Amendment

The Official Plan of the Town of Halton Hills is hereby amended as follows:

1. That Section A1 The Community Vision is hereby amended by adding the following at the end of the fourth paragraph “This includes ensuring that schools and other similar community facilities are planned for in all new neighbourhoods and retained where possible in existing neighbourhoods in recognition of the role they play as a focus of community activity and neighbourhood interaction.”
2. That Section A2.3.2h) Urban Character – Strategic Objectives is hereby amended by adding in the words “public schools,” after the words “community facilities”.
3. That Section A2.8.2 Infrastructure – Strategic Objectives is hereby amended by adding a new strategic objective g) as follows:

“g) To ensure that public school facilities and other community infrastructure are provided in both older and newer neighbourhoods and that these facilities are available for all current and future residents of the Town.”
4. That Section D1.1 Living Areas – Objectives is amended by adding a new sub-section as follows, and re-numbering the subsequent sub-sections:

“f) ensure that all residential areas are served by schools, parks and other facilities which are intended to function as community hubs and neighbourhood gathering places;”
5. That Section D2.5.6.3 Major Institutional Area – Permitted Uses is hereby amended by adding the following at the end of this section: “Residential uses such as retirement residences, long term care facilities and other complementary accommodation may also be permitted, but only in conjunction with a major institutional use.”
6. That Section F3 Design for New Communities is hereby amended by adding a new sub-section as follows, and re-numbering the subsequent sub-sections:

“g) School sites shall be centrally located to be integrated with parkland in a manner that supports their development as community hubs and/or neighbourhood gathering places which are the site of a full range of uses. The number and location of school sites shall be very carefully chosen and take into account the location of existing schools and programs;”
7. That Section F6.1 Transportation – Objectives is hereby amended by adding a new sub-section as follows, and re-numbering the subsequent sub-sections:

“f) encourage the location of school sites on roads that can accommodate cycling, walking and all forms of motor vehicle traffic including school buses;”
8. That Section F6.2 Pedestrian and Cycling Routes and Facilities is hereby amended by adding a new sub-section as follows, and re-numbering the subsequent sub-sections:

“c) require the integration of cycling and walking routes with the location of school sites in existing and new neighbourhoods;”

9. That Section F7.2.8 General Policies Applying to all Public Parkland – Use of Monies Received Through the Cash-in-Lieu Process is hereby amended by deleting sub-section c) and replacing it with the following:

“c) acquisition of lands that are declared surplus by a Board of Education or other public agencies;”

10. That Section F8 Community Facilities and Services is hereby amended by adding a new Section F8.1.1 as follows:

“F8.1.1 Elementary and Secondary School Sites

In the interest of preserving elementary and secondary school sites for their intended educational purposes and due to their importance as community hubs and/or neighbourhood gathering places, the Town of Halton Hills encourages the retention of all such schools that existed on the date this Plan was approved. In addition, where a school site has been identified and reserved in a newly developing area, the Town encourages the school boards to implement their request initially to reserve the site when the planning for the area was undertaken. Once such a school site has been identified, the Town will require that a sign be placed on the property advising residents that a school is planned for the site and that the timing and need for the site is at the absolute discretion of the school board involved.

Where all or part of a site which has been identified for an elementary or secondary school is not required, or where an existing school is proposed to be closed, alternative uses shall be permitted in order of priority as follows:

1. Other public institutional uses, parks or other open space uses that would continue to fulfill the role of the site as a focus of community activity and neighbourhood interaction particularly in areas where there is a parkland deficiency;
2. Private institutional uses such as places of worship, private educational facilities, day nurseries, and long term care facilities and retirement homes in accordance with Sections D1.3.1.8.1 and D1.3.1.9 as appropriate; and,
3. Low Density Residential uses in accordance with the policies of Section D1.3.1 of this Plan and/or commercial uses, but only if commercial uses on the site would be permitted in accordance with Section D2.5.5 of this Plan.

In order to implement the Town's objectives in this regard, communication between the School Boards and the Town is required and the Town will work cooperatively with the School Boards on finding solutions regarding the long term use of existing and planned school sites.”

PART C
THE APPENDICES

School Site Land Use Planning Study - Reports to Council

Report	Title
PDS-2009-0033	School Site Land Use Planning Study - Terms of Reference
PDS-2010-0049	School Sites Land Use Planning Study – Background, Issues and Options Paper
PDS-2011-0065	School Site Land Use Planning Study – Preliminary Land Use Option and Draft Official Plan Amendment
PDS-2011-0089	School Site Land Use Planning Study Recommendation Report

School Site Land Use Planning Study - Supporting Documents

Title	Date
Background, Issues and Options Paper	May 2010
Final Recommendations School Site Study - Memorandum	August 2011
Draft Official Plan Amendment	September 2011