

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Community Affairs Committee

REPORT FROM: Tara Buonpensiero, Senior Planner - Policy

DATE: August 31, 2017

REPORT NO.: PLS-2017-0010

RE: Rural Policy and Zoning Review – Discussion Paper and Consultation Strategy

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PLS-2017-0010, dated August 31, 2017, with respect to the Rural Policy and Zoning Review-Discussion Paper and Consultation Strategy, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be authorized to implement the consultation strategy as outlined herein, including directly mailing approximately 2,200 property owners in the study area;

AND FURTHER THAT Council endorses the Discussion Paper prepared by Meridian Planning, dated March 2017 in principle, and authorizes the use of the study as the basis for developing draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments.

BACKGROUND:

In February 2016, Council approved the Terms of Reference for the Rural Policy and Zoning Review. The Terms of Reference included a 3 phase work program for completion of the Rural Policy and Zoning Review as shown on Figure 1.

Figure 1: Rural Review Work Program



A Council Workshop was held on the Rural Policy and Zoning Review on March 20, 2017. At the workshop, Nick McDonald of Meridian Planning provided a presentation on the findings of the Discussion Paper. There was also a discussion at the Workshop on the benefits of holding a public engagement session upon completion of the Discussion Paper versus waiting and having a public engagement session when the draft Official Plan and Zoning Amendments are prepared.

Following input received from the Council Workshop, the purpose of this report is to:

- Summarize the findings of the Discussion Paper and seek authorization to use the study as the basis for developing draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments in the next phase of the process
- To recommend a detailed consultation strategy including the proposed letter and newsletter to be sent to property owners in the study area.

COMMENTS:

Discussion Paper

A summary of the Rural Policy and Zoning Review Discussion Paper is provided in this report and a copy is available for viewing in the Council Lounge as well as on the Town's website.

The Discussion Paper is divided into 5 Sections as follows:

Section 1 – Introduction

Section 1 outlines the scope of the review, the purpose of the discussion paper as well as provides an overview of the Provincial, Regional and Local policies to be considered as part of the Rural Review.

A summary of the policy framework has not been summarized in this Report but is available for review in Section 1.3 and 1.4 of the Discussion Paper. Also included in this section is a summary of possible implications of changes to Provincial Plans that were in the midst of being updated through the Coordinated Provincial Plan Review. Since the Discussion Paper was prepared, the final Provincial Plans have been released (The Greenbelt Plan, The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and The Niagara Escarpment Plan) and implications from these documents will be addressed in the draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments.

Section 2 – Linkages

Section 2 of the Discussion Paper demonstrates the difference in structure implemented by the Region through their recent Official Plan Amendment (ROPA 38) as compared to the current structure of the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan.

Table 1 summarizes the difference in structure between ROPA 38 and the Town’s Official Plan.

As illustrated on Table 1, the Region of Halton’s Official Plan includes three main policy areas that the Town must implement in our Official Plan and Zoning By-law as follows:

- The Natural Heritage System
- The Agricultural Policy Framework
- Mineral Aggregate Resources

Table 1: Comparison of the Structure in the Regional Official Plan and the Town Official Plan.

Category	Regional Official Plan Structure	Town Official Plan Structure
Environmental	<u>Natural Heritage System</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Natural Heritage System (includes Escarpment Natural Area and Escarpment Protection Area) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Key Features</i> • <i>Enhancement Areas, Buffers and Linkages</i> • Greenbelt Natural Heritage System 	<u>Environment and Open Space</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenlands System • Greenlands A • Greenlands B • Greenlands within Urban Areas • Greenlands within Urban Areas to 2031 • Escarpment Natural Area • Greenbelt Greenlands • Escarpment Protection Area • Escarpment Rural Area
Agriculture	<u>Agricultural System</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prime Agricultural Area</i> • <i>Prime Agricultural Area inside NHS</i> • <i>Enhancement Areas, Buffers and Linkages (outside of Key Features)</i> • Agricultural Area outside of Prime Agricultural Area <p><i>The ROP has established separate designations for Hamlet and Rural Cluster areas that are not included in the Agricultural System designation.</i></p>	<u>Agricultural/Rural Area</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Area • Protected Countryside Area • Country Residential Area • Major Institutional Area • Hamlet Area • Rural Cluster Area • Mineral Resource Extraction Area
Mineral Aggregate	<u>Mineral Resource Extraction Area</u>	<i>*Included in the Town’s Agricultural/Rural Area</i>

It is important to note that the Town's Official Plan already includes comprehensive policies for each of the areas identified above, however in some instances the Regional Official Plan has adopted a different structure, and therefore some changes will be required to the Town's Official Plan structure to conform with ROPA 38.

Also of importance is that Official Plan Amendment No. 10 was recently approved by the Region of Halton and contained a number of modifications to the Environment and Open Space policies in the Urban Areas pending more comprehensive Amendments arising from the recommendations of this Study. Official Plan Amendment No. 10 has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board and is not yet in force and effect. This matter will be the subject to an upcoming report to Council.

Section 3.0 Implementing ROPA 38 Regional Natural Heritage System

The Region has implemented a Natural Heritage System through ROPA 38 that is made up of two parts as follows:

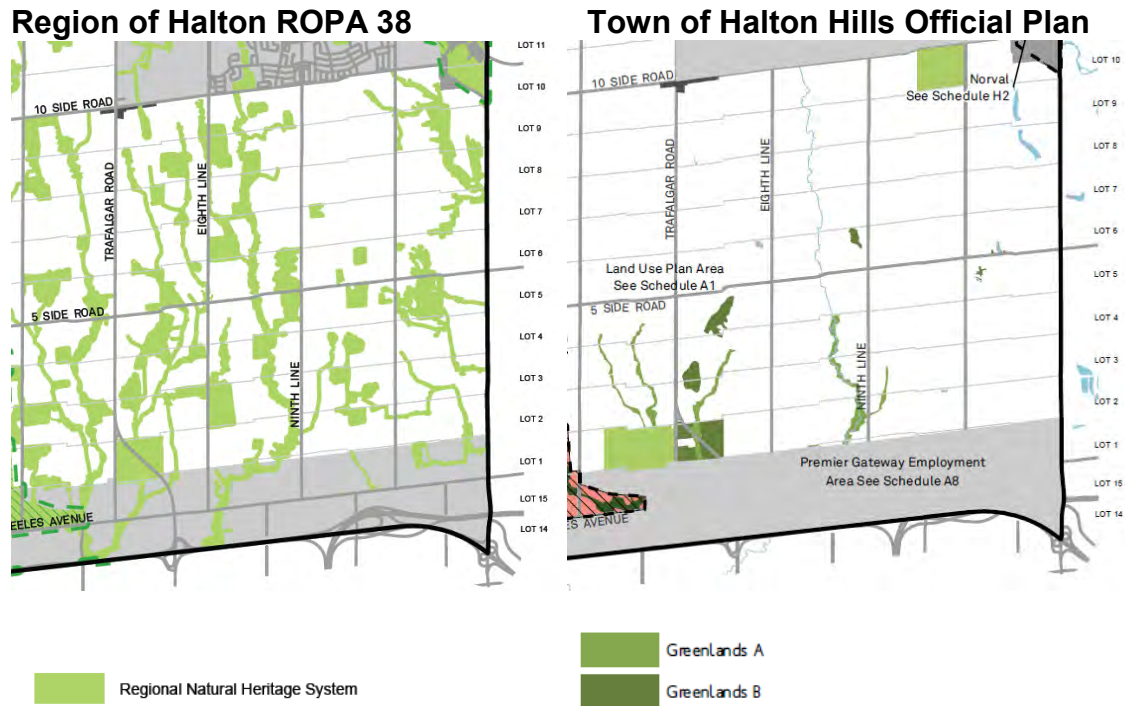
1. The Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS) which applies to areas within the Niagara Escarpment and the Town's white belt area (below the Niagara Escarpment and not within the Provincial Greenbelt).
2. The Greenbelt Natural Heritage System which applies within the Provincial Greenbelt Area.

The Regional Natural Heritage System

Through ROPA 38, the land area designated Regional Natural Heritage System has been significantly expanded. This will have a direct impact on properties in the Town of Halton Hills. Currently in the Town's Official Plan, there are 119 ha of land designated either Greenlands A or B within the rural area, however in ROPA 38 there is 1,447 ha of land designated Regional Natural Heritage System.

Although a large proportion of the new Regional Natural Heritage System lands are within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, Figure 1 shows the rural properties in the Town that were not previously affected by environmental policies or zoning regulations, that will now be affected to varying degrees depending on their particular situation. On the left side of Figure 1, the map depicts the Regional Natural Heritage System from ROPA 38 and the right side, Greenlands 1 and 2 are shown as currently included in the Town's Official Plan.

Figure 1: Comparison of ROPA 38 Regional Natural Heritage System to Current Town Official Plan Greenlands A and B



The Regional Natural Heritage System is further categorized in the Regional Official Plan as within Key Features and outside of Key Features (also described as enhancement areas, linkages and buffers).

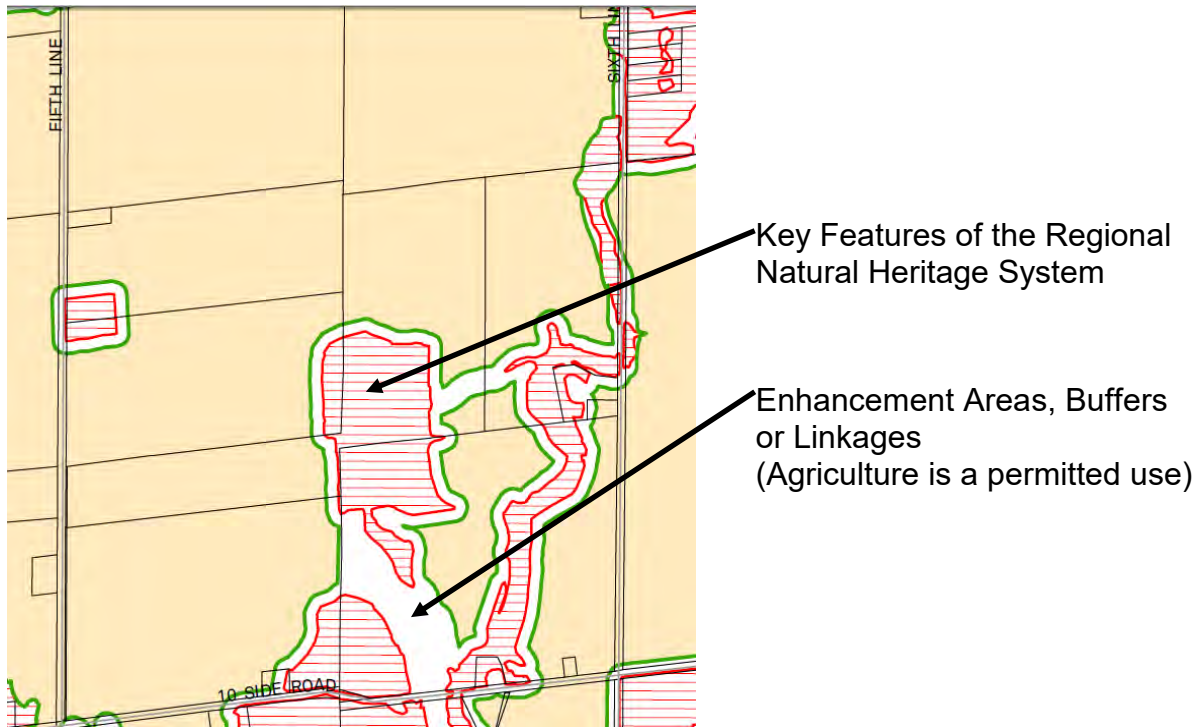
Key Features include areas of fish habitat, wetlands, significant woodlands, valleylands and wildlife habitat as well as significant habitat of endangered and threatened species. Development within Key Features is generally not permitted in the Regional Official Plan and the Plan also requires that an Environmental Impact Assessment be undertaken prior to development in close proximity to Key Features.

Areas outside of Key Features are classified as enhancement areas, linkages and buffers. The Regional Official Plan recognizes agriculture as a permitted use where Key Features are not identified.

The Town of Halton Hills Official Plan and Zoning By-law will need to include new mapping and policies to implement ROPA 38 related to the Regional Natural Heritage System.

Figure 2 shows an example of the Regional Natural Heritage System (outlined in green) and the Key Features within the Natural Heritage System in red hatching. The areas that are within the Regional Natural Heritage System but not within a Key Feature are enhancement areas, linkages or buffers.

Figure 2: Example of Key Features and Enhancement Areas, Buffers and Linkages



The Greenbelt Natural Heritage System

The Town implemented the Greenbelt Plan through the Town’s 2008 Official Plan Review and 2010 Comprehensive Zoning By-law update and therefore minimal changes are expected to mapping, policies or zoning in the Greenbelt Area to implement the approved Regional Official Plan.

Section 4.0 Implementing ROPA 38 Agricultural Policy Framework

There are two agricultural designations in the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan that are being reviewed as part of the Rural Policy and Zoning Review, which are:

1. The Agricultural Area designation – applies in the rural area of the Town of Halton Hills (outside of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area and the Provincial Greenbelt Plan Area)
2. The Protected Countryside Area designation – applies within the Greenbelt Plan Area

The Regional Official Plan establishes an Agricultural System made up of:

1. The Agricultural Area, which is divided into Prime Agricultural Area and Outside of the Prime Agricultural Area – applies in the Greenbelt Plan Area, Niagara Escarpment Plan Area and rural area of the Town of Halton Hills.

2. Parts of the Natural Heritage System that are generally outside of Key Features – applies in the rural area of the Town of Halton Hills shown on Figure 2 as enhancement areas, buffers and linkages.

The Regional Official Plan requires that the local municipality designate Prime Agricultural Areas and include supporting policies in their Official Plan. Previously the Town's Official Plan described lands that were Prime Agricultural Lands through text, but did not identify them on a land use schedule.

Subsequent to the Sustainable Halton planning exercise, the Province released the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement which expanded and clarified permitted uses in agricultural areas including permitting on-farm diversified uses.

The main changes that are required to the Town's Official Plan are to identify and map all of the lands included in the Regional Plan as Prime Agricultural Area including lands within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area and lands within the Greenbelt Plan Area. The Town will also need to review permitted uses in the Agricultural Area to conform to the Regional Official Plan as well as permit any additional uses in the Agricultural Area as provided for in the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement.

Section 5.0 Implementing ROPA 38 Aggregate Policy Framework

Currently the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan includes a Mineral Resource Extraction Area designation that applies to all extraction operations that are licensed in accordance with the Aggregate Resources Act. Appendix 2 to the Town's Official Plan identifies the licensed mineral aggregate resource operations in the Town as well as the high potential mineral aggregate resource areas.

The Regional Official Plan also designates licensed extraction operations as Mineral Resource Extraction Areas.

Revisions to the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement have been introduced which require that deposits of mineral aggregate resources shall be identified. As a result, the only change recommended to the Town's Official Plan related to Mineral Aggregate Resources is that the High Potential Mineral Aggregate Resources be identified on an operative Schedule to the Official Plan instead of as an Appendix for informational purposes, which is currently the case.

Proposed Consultation Strategy

As mentioned previously in this report, a Council Workshop was held on the Rural Policy and Zoning Review on March 20, 2017. As part of the Workshop, Council directed that staff mail all property owners in the study area to notify them of the commencement and purpose of this study and suggested that information to residents be provided in the form of a newsletter and also that an online mapping tool be developed to help residents determine if they may be affected by the study.

Since the workshop, staff have considered comments provided by members of Council on public engagement and are proposing the following comprehensive consultation strategy.

Public consultation on the Rural Policy and Zoning Review is proposed to be undertaken as follows:

1. Notice to be direct mailed to all property owners within the study area (approximately 2,200) to introduce the study. (Draft letter attached as Schedule A to this Report)
2. Preparation of Project Newsletter #2 which includes the following headlines:
 - What is the Study About?
 - Map of the Study Area
 - Who is affected by the Study?
 - What should you do?
 - Frequently asked questions
 - Have your say!
 - Where do I get more information?

The Newsletter would be mailed out with the notice to all property owners in the study area, as well as sent out electronically to people on the email notification list and posted on the Project Website. (Draft Newsletter attached to this Report as Schedule B)

3. An updated project website which will elaborate on the Newsletter and include the following:
 - Updated information on the study
 - Frequently asked questions (attached to this Report as Schedule C)
 - Information on how the study could potentially affect rural residents
 - Encourage residents to visit Let's Talk Halton Hills where residents can learn more about the study, ask staff questions in an interactive table and provide their input on a few survey questions. The results of the survey questions will help staff and the consultant team develop draft policies and zoning (the survey questions are attached to this Report as Schedule D)
 - An interactive map allowing people to input their address to determine if they may be affected by the study.
 - Who to contact for more detailed information

Messaging in the consultation documents reflects the Town's limitations when undertaking the Rural Review. The documents indicate what the Town is required to do as a result of Regional policies currently in place and focuses on obtaining public input on where options are available to the Town to implement Regional policies.

In order to manage the potential for a significant number of telephone calls to the Town as a result of directly mailing all property owners in the study area, a separate

telephone extension has been set up for this project that rings to multiple town staff simultaneously. This will result in more of these calls being answered by staff and less instances of property owners calling and getting voice mail.

It is the opinion of Town staff and the project consultant team that the proposed consultation strategy provides all property owners in the study area with the information necessary to determine if they will be affected by the study, to participate in the process early as well as join the e-mail notification list to continue to be notified as the study progresses.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Strategic Plan sets out a broad vision for the community contained in the eight strategic directions. This report relates to the following Strategic Directions and corresponding objectives:

B Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Environment

B.3 To preserve, protect, enhance, and where possible, restore, a Natural Heritage System of significant natural heritage features and areas, and their related ecological functions.

E. Preserve, Protect and Enhance our Countryside

E.1 To protect and enhance the Niagara Escarpment and the Protected Countryside (i.e. the Greenbelt) as unique and important features in the Town.

F. Protect and Enhance Our Agriculture

F.1 To support and promote the agricultural industry as an integral part of the Town economy.

F.2 To support and promote agricultural land uses and other compatible rural business activities.

I. Provide Responsive, Effective Municipal Government

I.4 To encourage and support community participation in municipal decision-making.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost of printing letters, newsletters and postage will be paid for from the existing capital account for this study.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

Following adoption of the recommendations of this report, staff will initiate the consultation strategy outlined herein which will notify property owners within the study area about the purpose of the review, advise where to find more information and how to participate.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Discussion Paper which will form the basis for preparation of draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments as well as present a proposed consultation strategy.

Should Council direct staff to proceed in accordance with the recommendations of this report, the final Recommendation Report will address the relationship between the proposed Amendments and any sustainability implications.

CONSULTATION:

A Technical Advisory Committee and Liaison Committee have been established for this project. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee include:

- Manager of Planning Policy, Town of Halton Hills;
- Senior Planner-Policy, Town of Halton Hills;
- A representative from Halton Region – Legislative and Planning Services;
- A representative from Town’s Development Review section (as required)
- A representative from the Town’s Zoning section (as required)
- The Town’s Planning Technician (as required)
- A representative from each of the area Conservation Authorities (to attend meetings as required) as follows:
 - Grand River
 - Credit Valley
 - Conservation Halton

Members of the Project Liaison Committee include:

- the Mayor;
- a Regional Ward Councillor and a Local Ward Councillor;
- staff from the Town and the Region;
- an agricultural representative (i.e. Halton Federation of Agriculture);
- an aggregate representative; and,
- two members of the public that own land in the study area.

The draft Background Paper was presented to both committees in January 2017 and comments were incorporated into the document.

One of the roles of the Project Liaison Committee is to provide input into public consultation. At the January 2017 meeting, there was a discussion on public consultation and the committee recommended that notification of this study should be provided to all property owners and that any communication should clearly outline the potential implications of the study. These recommendations have been considered in the proposed consultation strategy outlined in this report.

CONCLUSION:

Further to the Council Workshop that was held on the Rural Policy and Zoning Review on March 20, 2017, the purpose of this report is to:

- Summarize the findings of the Discussion Paper and seek authorization to use the Discussion Paper as the basis for developing draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments in the next phase of the process
- To recommend a detailed consultation strategy including the proposed letter and newsletter to be sent to property owners in the study area

Upon approval of the recommendations of this report, staff will proceed with the consultation strategy as outlined herein and will also commence Phase Two of the planning process which includes drafting the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to be presented to the public at an open house in the fall of 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Buonpensiero, MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner – Policy

Reviewed and Approved by,

Steve Burke, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Planning Policy

John Linhardt, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning and
Sustainability

Brent Marshall
Chief Administrative Officer



NOTICE OF STUDY COMMENCEMENT

September XX, 2017

Dear Halton Hills Property Owner:

Re: Town of Halton Hills Rural Policy and Zoning Review
File: D08 RU

The Town of Halton Hills has initiated a review of its Official Plan and Zoning By-law to determine what changes are required to implement the new Region of Halton Official Plan policies on agriculture, natural heritage and mineral aggregate resources.

The Town is required by law to update our Official Plan and Zoning to conform to the Regional Official Plan.

You are being sent this letter because you own property in the study area. More specifically, if you are planning on making changes to your property (building an addition, a deck, planning on putting in a pool, building a new agricultural building etc.) this study may affect your future plans.

More information on the study is available in the enclosed newsletter, as well as on the project website <http://www.haltonhills.ca/ruralreview/index.php> which includes Frequently Asked Questions, mapping to help identify if your property may be affected, and an online survey available on the Town's new engagement platform 'Let's Talk Halton Hills'. Visit <http://www.letstalkhaltonhills.ca/> to register and share your voice.

All property owners in the affected area are being mailed this notice of study commencement; however future correspondence on the study will be done through email. Please join the email list on the project website to be notified of upcoming meetings and new information. If you require future notices to be sent by mail, please call Christine Maiorano at 905-873-2601 ext. 2377.

Please review the attached newsletter and information on the Town's website. If you have further questions please call - 905-873-2601 ext. 3605 and Town staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Tara Buonpensiero
Senior Planner – Policy
tarab@haltonhills.ca

encl. Fall 2017 Newsletter



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Question #1: What is the Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS)? The RNHS applies to lands that are site of wetlands, flooded areas, watercourses and other environmental features. Other lands that are intended over time to link these features together and enhance the system are also included. For this reason, some lands without any environmental features including currently cultivated fields may be included in the RNHS. Lands that are within floodplains and also within the Escarpment Protection Area and Escarpment Natural Area designations in the Niagara Escarpment Plan are also included.

Question #2: How do I know if the RNHS mapping affects my property? Mapping showing the extent of the RNHS is available on the Town's website and can also be viewed at the Town's Municipal offices. If you need assistance with the mapping, please call a staff member at 905-873-2601 ext. 3605.

Question #3: What are the implications of being within the RNHS? The policies of the Regional Official Plan restrict the types of development that can occur within the RNHS and in some cases, within a certain distance of the boundary of the RNHS, depending on the type of development proposed. In some cases, the new policies require that an Environmental Impact Assessment be prepared to determine whether the proposed development can proceed.

Question #4: What is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)? An EIA is a study completed by a qualified professional that identifies the key environmental features that may be affected by proposed development, confirms the location and boundaries of the feature and then assesses the impacts of the proposed development on that feature.

Question #5: Can the Town modify the RNHS mapping prepared by the Region? The Regional Official Plan requires that the Town implement the RNHS mapping as is. However, the Regional Official Plan does permit refinements to the mapping if an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is completed and/or the Region is provided with evidence that the RNHS mapping is inaccurate.

More FAQs are available on the Project Website

HAVE YOUR SAY!

PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ON OUR WEBSITE

The new Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS) mapping and policy framework prepared by the Region of Halton will affect a number of properties in the Town's rural area. Property owners are encouraged to review the FAQ's, mapping and background information available on the Town's website to see how it may affect them. Once this information has been reviewed, it would be appreciated if you could visit the project website and provide feedback to the questions below:

1. The Regional Official Plan requires that lands included in the RNHS designation as mapped in the Regional Official Plan be applied to the same lands in the Town. Do you have questions, or concerns with respect to the accuracy of the RNHS mapping on your property? If so contact Town staff at 905-873-2601 ext. 3605.
2. Given that the RNHS will have an impact on certain forms of development in the rural area, and the possibility exists for the Town to consider exempting certain forms of minor development from requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (see Question #4 above), what types of development should be considered for exemption? Examples in this regard include the expansion of existing buildings, the development of small accessory buildings etc.
3. The Regional Official Plan states that an EIA may be required when new buildings (agricultural and non-agricultural) are proposed in certain circumstances. To trigger preparation of an EIA, the Town has a few tools available, including requiring that a site plan agreement be entered into, applying for a minor variance and/or applying to lift a holding provision that permits existing uses only on the property. Which tool do you think is most appropriate and why? Information on each of these tools is available on the Frequently Asked Questions on the project website.

Question #5: Can the Town modify the RNHS mapping prepared by the Region? The Regional Official Plan requires that the Town implement the RNHS mapping as is. However, the Regional Official Plan does permit refinements to the mapping if an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is completed and/or the Region is provided with evidence that the RNHS mapping is inaccurate.

Question #6: Can the Town exempt certain types of development from requiring an EIA? A component of the study being completed by the Town is to look into this issue in more detail, in consultation with the Region who (ultimately) would have to support any exemptions. It may be possible for the Town to exempt certain types of development from requiring an EIA, such as the construction of accessory buildings, decks, swimming pools and building additions. There may be other circumstances where an EIA could be waived as well. If the mapping affects your property, it is important that we hear what types of developments you think should be exempted. Please participate in the survey [here](#).

Question #7: What impact will the RNHS mapping have on agriculture? All existing agricultural uses are permitted to continue. However, new agricultural buildings that are proposed within the RNHS or within 120 metres of the RNHS may require an EIA, depending on the size of the building, the nature of the key feature within the RNHS and its location in relation to the edge of the RNHS.

Question #8: How does the RNHS mapping affect development on vacant parcels of land? New development on vacant parcels of land may be affected by the RNHS, depending on where new buildings are proposed in relation to the RNHS, the size of the property and the nature of the key feature that exists on or near the property. The owners of vacant lots are encouraged to review the mapping in detail to see how the mapping may affect their future plans.

Question #9: How does the new RNHS affect properties that are already the site of an existing house? The house and all legally constructed accessory buildings would be recognized as existing uses. However, the expansion of the house or any accessory buildings, or the construction of new accessory buildings and structures may be impacted by the new RNHS depending on what is proposed, its location in relation to the boundary of the RNHS and the nature of the key feature in the RNHS that is on or near the property.

Question #10: What are the impacts of the RNHS if my property is subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan? In cases such as these, the Niagara Escarpment Commission is the approval authority and is responsible for issuing development permits for development and site alteration. When considering development permit applications, the Niagara Escarpment Commission will take into account the RNHS policies established in the Region of Halton Official Plan.

Question #11: If an EIA is required for new development on my property, what options will the Town consider in terms of the process to be followed? In order to trigger the required EIA, the Planning Act process must be used to establish the trigger. The process may involve the lifting of a holding provision (refer to Q12), the entering into of a Site Plan Agreement (refer to Q13) or the approval of a minor variance (refer to Q14), but only if the EIA is accepted. Further details on the types of processes being considered by the Town are found within the discussion paper on the Town's website.

Question #12 What is a holding provision? A holding provision is placed on properties in the Town's Zoning By-law and signifies that there is a condition that is required to be fulfilled before certain things can happen on a site. For example, the Town could place a holding provision on properties to determine if an EIA is required prior to building an addition or a new agricultural building. If it is determined that an EIA is required, the holding provision would be removed upon the successful completion of the EIA allowing the property owner to proceed with their plans.

In order to have a holding provision lifted, staff must prepare a report for Council recommending the hold be lifted.

Question #13: What is a site plan? A site plan is a drawing, or set of drawings that illustrate where things are on a property such as the location of buildings, driveways, parking areas, pedestrian sidewalks, landscaping, fences, etc. To determine if a site plan is required, a building permit must be submitted and then through the site plan process, it would be determined if an EIA would be required.

Question #14 What is a minor variance? A minor variance is an application that is submitted to request that a proposed development be permitted to vary slightly from the requirements outlined in the zoning by-law. In this instance, any development within a certain distance of a key environmental feature would require a minor variance, which would trigger the requirement for preparation of an EIA. A minor variance is considered by the Committee of Adjustment, which is a committee of Council. The Committee of Adjustment meets once a month.



Town of Halton Hills



Rural Policy and Zoning Review SURVEY QUESTIONS

DRAFT

The new Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS) mapping and policy framework prepared by the Region of Halton will affect a number of properties in the Town's rural area. Property owners are encouraged to review the FAQ's, mapping and background information available on the Town's website to see how it may affect them. Once this information has been reviewed, it would be appreciated if you could complete the questions below at the following link:

<http://www.letstalkhaltonhills.ca/>

1. The Regional Official Plan requires that lands included in the RNHS designation as mapped in the Regional Official Plan be applied to the same lands in the Town. Do you have questions, or concerns with respect to the accuracy of the RNHS mapping on your property? If so please contact Town staff at 905-873-2601 ext. 3605.
2. Given that the RNHS will have an impact on certain forms of development in the rural area, and the possibility exists for the Town to consider exempting certain forms of minor development from requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (see Question #4 of the Frequently Asked Questions), what types of development should be considered for exemption? Examples in this regard include the expansion of existing buildings, the development of small accessory buildings etc.
3. The Regional Official Plan states that an EIA may be required when new buildings (agricultural and non-agricultural) are proposed in certain circumstances. To trigger preparation of an EIA, the Town has a few tools available, including requiring that a site plan agreement be entered into, applying for a minor variance and/or applying to lift a holding provision that permits existing uses only on the property. Which tool do you think is most appropriate and why? Information on each of these tools is available on the Frequently Asked Questions on the project website.