



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor R. Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Steve Burke, Senior Planner - Policy

DATE: June 12, 2007

REPORT NO.: PD-2007-0045

RE: Intensification Opportunities Study
File No.: D08/IN Intensification Study - 2007

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2007-0045 dated June 12, 2007, with respect to Terms of Reference for the completion of an Intensification Opportunities Study, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve the Terms of Reference (attached as Schedule One to this report) for the completion of an Intensification Opportunities Study and direct staff to undertake the Study in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Region of Halton for information.

BACKGROUND:

Places to Grow: Better Choices, Brighter Future – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, approved under the *Places to Grow Act*, took effect on June 16, 2006. The Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Growth Plan contains policies that direct a significant portion of new growth to previously developed areas through intensification. All municipal official plans must be brought into conformity with the GGH Growth Plan by June 16, 2009.

One of the integral policies of the GGH Growth Plan is that by the year 2015 and every year thereafter, a minimum of **40 percent** of all residential development within each upper-tier municipality (e.g. Region of Halton) must be within the Built-up Area. The Built-up Area is defined as the limits of the developed urban area as of the effective date of the GGH Growth Plan (i.e. June 16, 2006). As noted in PD-2007-0015, Halton Hills staff is providing input to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (MPIR) as

they develop the Built Boundary delineating the Built-up Area. The Built Boundary is expected to be finalized by MPIR in the next few months.

In order to implement this intensification target, *Places to Grow* requires all Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities to develop an **intensification strategy** and implement the strategy through amendments to their official plans. The Region of Halton, with the participation of the local municipalities, is addressing this requirement through Sustainable Halton.

COMMENTS:

The Halton Hills Official Plan

The Halton Hills Official Plan (2006) already provides a solid policy foundation with which to guide residential intensification and mixed-use development in the Town, based upon the Regional Official Plan and the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement. The Halton Hills Official Plan program involved the preparation of discussion papers on growth management and housing, which addressed the provincial Smart Growth initiative that was a precursor to *Places to Grow*, and guided development of the Official Plan (2006). The Official Plan (2006) contains land use designations and policies that address intensification, and includes policies directing that further planning be undertaken in the case of the GO Station Study Area and South Acton Special Study Area.

Sustainable Halton

However, the Official Plan (2006) does not formally address the policy framework contained in *Places to Grow*, due to the timing of the approval of the Growth Plan relative to approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment 25. Section G2.3 of the Official Plan (2006) does address conformity with *Places to Grow*, including the examination of opportunities for intensification. The Intensification Opportunities Study will review the Official Plan policies and land use designations in terms any refinements necessary to achieve conformity to the intensification policy directions of *Places to Grow*.

Basis for the Study

The Intensification Opportunities Study is an important component of a Halton Hills strategy for growth management linked to the Region-wide Sustainable Halton Plan, which in turn is a response to *Places to Grow*, the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Growth Plan.

Staffing Resources and Study Timing

This Study will be completed in-house by Planning Policy staff. The Study will also be closely coordinated with the concurrent GO Station Study (see Report PD-2007-0046 on this Council Agenda). It is anticipated that the Study will take one year to complete, excluding the final phase involving formal input to Sustainable Halton.

Requirements and Project Scope

The purpose of the Intensification Opportunities Study is to critically assess the capability of the Town to address the intensification policies contained in *Places to Grow*. This would include evaluating the role Halton Hills should play in achieving the Halton Region-wide 40 percent intensification target contained in the GGH Growth Plan.

In particular, the Study will identify **intensification areas**, in keeping with the policy direction of *Places to Grow*, where residential and mixed use development should be directed within the established urban areas of Georgetown and Acton. In addition, the Study will update the current **inventory** of individual intensification sites in Halton Hills, including a re-assessment of the intensification potential of those sites.

Although the *built boundary* has not yet been finalized by Public Infrastructure Renewal, it is expected that the *built-up area* will generally correspond with the established urban areas of Georgetown and Acton, and will not include the established areas of the Hamlets of Glen Williams, Norval and Stewarttown. The objective is to provide for development opportunities and increase population and population-related employment, while ensuring that the character and stability of established residential neighbourhoods and commercial areas is maintained and enhanced.

The Study will contribute to the development of a policy framework (i.e. intensification strategy) that will form a component of a growth management strategy for Halton Hills, which provides input to the Sustainable Halton Plan process. Subsequently, the Sustainable Halton process will result in updated Official Plans for the Region of Halton and Town of Halton Hills. An outline of the process is contained in Schedule Two of the attached draft Terms of Reference.

Specifically, the Study will:

1. Identify intensification areas as the focus for intensification efforts, as well as areas where intensification should not be directed.
2. Update the inventory originally prepared for the 1999 Housing Intensification Opportunities Study and updated through the 2002 Municipal Housing Statement Update and ROPA 25 Ontario Municipal Board hearing preparations.
3. Conduct a planning policy review.
4. Identify successful Halton Hills examples of intensification.
5. Prepare a Halton Hills Intensification Strategy, which will subsequently be implemented through Sustainable Halton, as appropriate, and through a specific or overall amendment to the Halton Hills Official Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The subject of this report is consistent with the Strategic Actions to: monitor and report on the implications of *Places to Grow*, the Provincial Growth Plan; and, participate in the integrated Halton approach to growth management including the development of a Halton Intensification Strategy, under the Strategic Priority of Managing Growth.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with this report as the Study will be completed in-house by staff of the Policy and Information Services Division of the Planning and Development Services Department.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

If approved, the Terms of Reference for the Intensification Opportunities Study call for the formation of a Steering Committee, including community stakeholders, as well as a public open house to obtain public input on the Study recommendations.

CONSULTATION:

The Region of Halton is aware of the intentions of Halton Hills to initiate an Intensification Opportunities Study, as part of a Halton Hills growth management strategy, and as input to Sustainable Halton, through discussion of the Halton Area Planning Partnership. Regional staff has been informed that this report was proceeding to Council.

CONCLUSION:

The preparation of an Intensification Opportunities Study is a requirement of the GGH Growth Plan, and is an important component of a Halton Hills strategy for growth management linked to the Region-wide Sustainable Halton Plan. It is recommended that Council approve the Terms of Reference (attached as Schedule One to this report) for the completion of an Intensification Opportunities Study and direct staff to undertake the Study in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Burke, MA (Pl.), MCIP, RPP
Senior Planner - Policy

Bruce MacLean, BA, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning and Development

Dennis Y. Perlin
Chief Administrative Officer

HALTON HILLS
INTENSIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES STUDY

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Municipal Situation/Overview

Council of the Town of Halton Hills adopted a new Official Plan in September 2006. This new Official Plan was the result of an Official Plan program involving a Municipal Housing Statement Update, and a series of discussion papers. The Municipal Housing Statement Update included an inventory of residential intensification opportunities throughout the municipality.

The Official Plan (2006) implemented Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 25, based upon a 2021 planning horizon, population and employment of 70,000 and 29,400 respectively, and no change to the boundaries of the Georgetown and Acton Urban Areas. The Official Plan (2006) was prepared to achieve conformity with the new Regional Official Plan (ROPA 25) and the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement. The Region of Halton has not yet approved the new Halton Hills Official Plan.

The Regional Official Plan and Halton Hills Official Plan must still be brought into conformity to *Places to Grow*, the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan, which came into effect in June 2006. In order to address conformity to *Places to Grow* and address the many issues related to future growth, the Region of Halton is in the midst of the Sustainable Halton Plan process.

Places to Grow is based upon a 2031 planning horizon and requires the Region of Halton to accommodate 36,000 more people and 32,000 more jobs by the year 2021 than in the current Regional Official Plan, and an additional 120,000 people and 50,000 jobs between 2021 and 2031.¹ *Places to Grow* also requires that, by the year 2015, 40 percent of annual residential development must occur through intensification within the urban areas existing in June 2006. In order to implement this intensification target, *Places to Grow* requires all Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities to develop an intensification strategy and implement the strategy through amendments to their official plans. The Region of Halton, with the participation of the local municipalities, is addressing this requirement through Sustainable Halton.

Basis for Study

The Intensification Opportunities Study is an important component of a Halton Hills strategy for growth management linked to the Region-wide Sustainable Halton Plan, which in turn is a response to *Places to Grow*, the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Growth Plan.

Staffing Resources

This Study will be completed in-house by Planning Policy staff. The Senior-Planner Policy will coordinate the Study with the concurrent GO Station Study.

Requirements and Project Scope

The purpose of the Intensification Opportunities Study is to critically assess the capability of the Town to address the intensification policies contained in *Places to*

¹ The forecasted population increases are based on Census population, rather than Total population as in the Growth Plan, which factors in a 4 percent Census undercount.

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Grow. This would include evaluating the role Halton Hills should play in achieving the Halton Region-wide 40 percent intensification target contained in the GGH Growth Plan.

In particular, the Study will identify **intensification areas**, in keeping with the policy direction of *Places to Grow*, where residential and mixed use development should be directed within the established urban areas of Georgetown and Acton. In addition, the Study will update the current **inventory** of individual intensification sites in Halton Hills, including a re-assessment of the intensification potential of those sites.

Although the *built boundary* has not yet been finalized by Public Infrastructure Renewal, it is expected that the *built-up area* will generally correspond with the established urban areas of Georgetown and Acton, and will not include the established areas of the Hamlets of Glen Williams, Norval and Stewarttown. The objective is to provide for development opportunities and increase population and population-related employment, while ensuring that the character and stability of established residential neighbourhoods and commercial areas is maintained and enhanced.

The Study will contribute to the development of a policy framework (i.e. intensification strategy) that will form a component of a growth management strategy for Halton Hills, which provides input to the Sustainable Halton Plan process. Subsequently, the Sustainable Halton process will result in updated Official Plans for the Region of Halton and Town of Halton Hills (see Schedule Two). It is anticipated that the first 3 phases of the Study will take one year to complete. No time frame has been established for Phase 4 as it is dependent on Sustainable Halton.

Specifically, the Study will:

1. Identify **intensification areas** as the focus for intensification efforts, as well as areas where intensification should not be directed.
2. Update the inventory originally prepared for the 1999 Housing Intensification Opportunities Study and updated through the 2002 Municipal Housing Statement Update and ROPA 25 Ontario Municipal Board hearing preparations.
3. Conduct a planning policy review.
4. Identify successful Halton Hills examples of intensification
5. Prepare a Halton Hills Intensification Strategy, which will subsequently be implemented through Sustainable Halton, as appropriate, and through a specific amendment or overall amendment to the Halton Hills Official Plan.

The main tasks of the Study include the following;

- Review of the current Provincial (in particular *Places to Grow*) and Regional planning context, and application of this policy framework to Halton Hills;

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Provide examples of successful intensification projects in the Town that may serve as a model for future efforts;
- Identification of an appropriate number and variety of *intensification areas* as the focus for intensification efforts, based upon the policy framework of the Official Plan (2006) and *Places to Grow*;
- Update of the inventory of intensification sites in the Town, and identification of new intensification sites, as appropriate;
- Assessment of the physical potential of individual sites and areas to accommodate intensification (e.g. site configuration, existing uses);
- Assessment of the adequacy of physical and *community infrastructure* for an individual site or area (e.g. road network, water/wastewater, stormwater management, parks, schools, community centres, etc.)
- Assessment of the market potential (i.e. housing demand/demographics) to accommodate intensification, and/or the barriers to intensification, for various forms of intensification in Halton Hills;
- Identification of the appropriate scale and type of development in intensification areas (i.e. built form, density, uses).
- Provision of opportunities for public input to the process; and,
- Development of an Intensification Strategy as input to the Sustainable Halton Plan process, and as the basis for amendments to the Halton Hills Official Plan.

Study Program

Phase 1 – Policy Analysis and Inventory Update (4 months)

This study phase involves the preparation of a Background Intensification Study Report consisting of four primary tasks, and concluding with presentation to a Steering Committee (comprised of Town staff, Regional staff, Councillors, advisory committee and community stakeholder groups):

- 1) Planning Policy Review
- 2) Update of Intensification Sites Inventory and mapping
- 3) Identification of Intensification Areas
- 4) Identification and Analysis of Successful Examples of Intensification

These tasks are described in greater detail below.

Deliverables:

- Background Intensification Study Report
- Intensification Inventory numbers provided as input to Sustainable Halton Intensification Study
- Presentation to Steering Committee

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Planning Policy Review

The Halton Hills Official Plan (2006) already provides a solid policy foundation with which to guide residential intensification and mixed-use development in the Town, based upon the Regional Official Plan and the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement. The Halton Hills Official Plan program involved the preparation of discussion papers on growth management and housing, which addressed the provincial Smart Growth initiative that was a precursor to *Places to Grow*. The Official Plan (2006) contains land use designations and policies that address intensification, and includes policies directing that further planning be undertaken in the case of the GO Station Study Area and South Acton Special Study Area.

However, the Official Plan (2006) does not formally address the policy framework contained in *Places to Grow*, due to the timing of the approval of the Growth Plan relative to approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment 25. Section G2.3 of the Official Plan (2006) does address conformity with *Places to Grow*, including the examination of opportunities for intensification. The Study will review the Official Plan policies and land use designations in terms any refinements necessary to achieve conformity to the intensification policy directions of *Places to Grow*.

Identification of Intensification Areas

While requiring that municipalities generally encourage *intensification* throughout the *built-up area*, *Places to Grow* also requires that all municipalities identify **intensification areas** to support achievement of the intensification target contained in the Plan. Intensification areas are defined by the Plan as:

Lands identified by municipalities or the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal within a *settlement area* that are to be the focus for accommodating *intensification*. Intensification areas include *urban growth centres*, *intensification corridors*, *major transit station areas*, and other major opportunities that may include infill, *redevelopment*, *brownfield sites*, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings and *greyfields*.²

A hierarchy of intensification areas specified in *Places to Grow* and the Regional Official Plan is provided in Table One. This should be understood as a nested hierarchy as some sites or areas may meet the definition of more than one of these intensification areas.

The Growth Plan has already identified 25 Urban Growth Centres. There are no Urban Growth Centres located in the Town of Halton Hills.

As noted on Table One, the Official Plan (2006) has already identified and designated areas for intensification and mixed-use development. In particular, portions of the Guelph Street Corridor in Georgetown have been placed in a Community Node designation. Other areas such as the GO Station Study Area and the South Acton Special Study Area are the subject of specific policies in the Official Plan (2006) to guide comprehensive planning, including the evaluation of intensification potential.

² See Schedule One for complete definitions of the *italicized* terms from *Places to Grow*.

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

The GO Station Study Area generally meets the definition of a *major transit station area* in the GGH Growth Plan. The Official Plan (2006) requires the completion of a detailed planning study that would be implemented through a Secondary Plan for the area. To the extent possible, the Intensification Opportunities Study and GO Station Study will be coordinated, in order that the latter study can provide relevant information to the former study.

Table One: Intensification Hierarchy

Growth Plan Designation	Regional Plan Designation	New Halton Hills Official Plan Designation
Urban Growth Centre	Primary Node	N/A
N/A	Secondary Node ³	Community Node
Intensification Corridors	Mixed Use Corridors ⁴	Community Node
Major Transit Station Areas	N/A	Georgetown GO Station Study Area
N/A	N/A	Downtown Areas; Secondary Node
Brownfields	N/A	South Acton Special Study Area
Redevelopment Sites	N/A	Various
Greyfields	N/A	Various
Vacant/Infill Sites	N/A	Various
Secondary Suites/ Accessory Apartments	N/A	Low Density Residential ⁵ Areas

An objective of the Intensification Opportunities Study will be to identify an appropriate number and variety of intensification areas, as generally outlined in Table One, consistent with the policy direction of *Places to Grow*, as well as assess the overall intensification potential of these areas. The Study will also identify those areas that may contain suitable intensification sites, but that are not an appropriate area in which to focus intensification efforts.

³ Designated in Local Official Plans.

⁴ Designated in Local Official Plans.

⁵ Subject to Official Plan criteria and Zoning By-law regulations.

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Housing Intensification Inventory Update

The 1999 Housing Intensification Opportunities Study developed an inventory of properties with intensification potential, based upon work that formed part of the 1993 Urban Areas Study. The 2002 Municipal Housing Statement Update re-assessed and updated the 1999 Study. Those numbers were updated as part of the preparations for an OMB hearing on ROPA 25. A principal task of this Study will be to update the current inventory and re-assess the intensification potential of the individual intensification sites. This assessment will involve an evaluation of the physical capability of the sites to accommodate intensification, as well as an evaluation of the market potential for various forms of intensification in Halton Hills.

Identification and Analysis of Successful Examples of Intensification

The Study will also review the history of intensification within the Town of Halton Hills, in order to identify successful intensification examples. These examples will be critically analyzed to determine if they serve as suitable models of the type, scale, location, level of *community infrastructure*, etc. of intensification that can inform future intensification efforts in Halton Hills.

Phase 2 – Final Intensification Study Report & Draft Intensification Strategy

(4 months)

This study phase involves the finalization of the Intensification Opportunities Study report based on input from public agencies, the preparation of a Draft Halton Hills Intensification Strategy, including any recommended changes to the Official Plan (2006) to facilitate implementation of the Intensification Strategy, and concludes with public consultation.

Deliverables:

- Final Intensification Opportunities Study Update (inventory and mapping)
- Draft Halton Hills Intensification Strategy
- Presentation to Steering Committee
- Public Open House

Phase 3 – Final Intensification Strategy

(4 months)

This study phase involves the finalization of the Intensification Strategy, based on public input, presentation to the Steering Committee and a Public Open House, followed by preparation of a staff report and a presentation to Council summarizing the conclusions and recommendations of the Strategy for the consideration of Council.

Deliverables:

- Final Intensification Strategy
- Presentation to Steering Committee
- Public Open House
- Staff Report and Council Presentation

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Phase 4 – Input to Sustainable Halton Intensification Strategy

This study phase involves providing formal input to Regional staff and consultants in order to integrate the Halton Hills Intensification Strategy with the overall Sustainable Halton Intensification Strategy. The Study will be coordinated to the extent possible with the Sustainable Halton Plan process. The integration of the Town and Regional strategies will result in amendments to the Local and Regional Official Plans, which will form part of comprehensive five-year review amendments to those documents.

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Schedule One: Growth Plan Terminology

<p>Brownfield Sites: Undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant (PPS, 2005).</p>
<p>Built-Up Areas: All land within the <i>built boundary</i>.</p>
<p>Built Boundary: The limits of the developed urban area as defined by the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal in accordance with Policy 2.2.3.5.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> MPIR has developed a technical methodology for delineating the <i>built boundary</i> based on the principle that development should have been constructed on or before the effective date of the Growth Plan – June 16, 2006.</p>
<p>Community Infrastructure: Community infrastructure refers to lands, buildings, and structures that support the quality of life for people and communities by providing public services for health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, security and safety, and <i>affordable</i> housing.</p>
<p>Complete Communities: Complete communities meet a person'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 <i>community infrastructure</i> including <i>affordable</i> housing, schools, recreation and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also provided.</p>
<p>Greyfields: Previously developed properties that are not contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.</p>
<p>Higher Order Transit: Transit that generally operates in its own <u>dedicated right-of-way</u>, outside of mixed traffic, and therefore can achieve a <u>frequency of service</u> greater than mixed-traffic transit. Higher order transit can include heavy rail (such as subways), light rail (such as streetcars), and buses in dedicated rights-of-way.</p>
<p>Intensification: The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) redevelopment, including the reuse of <i>brownfield</i> sites;b) the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;c) infill development; ord) the expansion or conversion of existing buildings (PPS, 2005).
<p>Intensification Areas: Lands identified by municipalities or the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal within a <i>settlement area</i> that are to be the focus for accommodating <i>intensification</i>. Intensification areas include <i>urban growth centres</i>, <i>intensification corridors</i>, <i>major transit station areas</i>, and other major opportunities that may include infill, <i>redevelopment</i>, <i>brownfield sites</i>, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings and <i>greyfields</i>.</p>
<p>Intensification Corridors: <i>Intensification areas</i> along major roads, arterials or <i>higher order transit</i> corridors within the built boundary that have the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed-use development consistent with planned transit service levels.</p>

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Major Transit Station Area: The area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit* station within a *settlement area*, or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. Station areas generally are defined as the area within an appropriate 500m radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

Settlement Areas: Urban areas and rural settlement areas within municipalities (such as cities, towns, village and hamlets) where: a) development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and b) lands have been designated in an official plan for development over the long term planning horizon provided for in the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005.

Halton Hills Intensification Opportunities Study
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Schedule Two: Intensification Opportunities Study Process Flow Diagram

