



Corporate Report

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CD.11 HAL
(Halton Hills)

DATE: July 12, 2005

TO: Chair and Members of Planning and Development Committee
Meeting Date: August 2, 2005

FROM: Edward R. Sajecki,
Commissioner of Planning and Building

SUBJECT: **Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan (May 2005)**

RECOMMENDATION: That a copy of the report titled "Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan (May 2005)" dated July 12, 2005 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building be forwarded by the City Clerk to the Town of Halton Hills.

BACKGROUND: This report is part of the ongoing program to update City Council on significant planning initiatives in adjacent municipalities.

On March 21, 2005 the Town of Halton Hills Council considered a staff report regarding submissions received on the Official Plan Program and, among other matters, authorized revisions to the Draft Official Plan for the purposes of proceeding to a public meeting.

On June 28, 2005 Town of Halton Hills Council held the statutory public meeting to consider a revised Draft Official Plan, dated May 2005. The Draft Official Plan (May, 2005) was revised in response to submissions received, and to integrate the Greenbelt Plan and the new Provincial Policy Statement.

This matter was last considered by City of Mississauga Council on July 7, 2004, when it considered the attached (Appendix 1) report titled "Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan Review" and adopted the following:

"That the report titled "Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan Review" dated June 8, 2004 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building be received for information".

PRESENT STATUS:

On June 28, 2005 the Town of Halton Hills Council held the statutory public meeting to consider a revised Draft Official Plan (May 2005).

COMMENTS:

1. Draft Official Plan Overview

The Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan, (May 2005) revises the April 2004 version in response to comments received and to implement the Greenbelt Plan and the new Provincial Policy Statement.

It establishes a vision for the future land use structure of the Town (Appendix 2), and is intended to manage change until the year 2021 by:

- providing the basis for managed growth and a population target of 70,000 residents and employment target of 29,400 jobs in 2021;
- recognizing the need for enhanced community services and infrastructure;
- establishing an 'Environment-First' philosophy that protects natural areas and ensures environmental impacts are considered in all land use and public works decisions;
- protecting the character, role and function of agricultural and rural areas;
- encouraging economic development in the 401/407 Employment Corridor and in key areas in Georgetown and Acton;

- strengthening policies regarding a mix and range of housing and heritage conservation; and
- outlining a vision for expanded Acton and Georgetown Downtowns.

The Draft Official Plan (May, 2005) is generally the same as the April 2004 Draft Plan previously considered by Mississauga City Council with respect to:

- a structure consisting of three (3) urban areas and a large rural landscape comprised of farmlands, natural heritage areas and a number of rural settlement areas of varying size;
- a 2021 planning horizon with a population of approximately 70,000 residents and 29, 400 jobs;
- no change in urban boundaries such that most new growth is directed to urban areas; and
- the development of a new Highway 401-407 Employment Area, located on the north side of Highway 401, between Winston Churchill Boulevard and James Snow Parkway for a range of prestige industrial, office, retail commercial and institutional uses on full municipal services.

The main difference between the two draft plans is that a large portion of Halton Hills is identified in the Draft Official Plan (May, 2005) as “Greenbelt Plan Area”, consisting of “Protected Countryside” and “Niagara Escarpment Plan Area” in accordance with the Greenbelt Plan. In the April, 2004 Draft Official Plan, these lands were designated for a variety of rural uses, residential, greenlands, and mineral resource extraction.

2. Impacts on Mississauga

The retention of the Town of Halton Hills urban boundary and the continuation of a 2021 planning horizon for the Official Plan Review results in no significant impacts on Mississauga. The only lands adjacent to Mississauga (on the north side of Highway 401, west of Winston Churchill Boulevard) are designated “Prestige Industrial”, which is consistent with the “Business Employment”

designation of lands on the south side of Highway 401 in Mississauga Plan.

Transportation and Works Department commented that the North-South Transportation Corridor Study Area, identified in relation to development in North West Brampton, has not been identified in the Draft Official Plan (May 2005).

The Minister of Transportation has advised the Town of Halton Hills that the Ministry proposes to initiate an Area Transportation Study to examine potential transportation improvements in an area from Highway 400 westerly to the Niagara Escarpment, south of the Oak Ridges Moraine. A major component of this study will examine the proposed Brampton North-South Transportation Corridor and potential linkages to the GTA-West Transportation Corridor.

In view of the above, Transportation and Works Department staff have previously requested the Ministry of Transportation to be invited to participate on the Technical Advisory Committee for this study.

CONCLUSION:

The Draft Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills (May, 2005) has been revised to be consistent with the Greenbelt Plan and the new Provincial Policy Statement. The City of Mississauga has no comment on the Draft Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills (May 2005).

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix 1 - "Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan Review" dated June 8, 2004 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building.

Appendix 2 - “Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan (May 2005) – Public Meeting Report” dated June 17, 2005 from the Town of Halton Hills Manager of Planning Policy.

Original Signed By:

Edward R. Sajecki
Commissioner of Planning and Building

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CD.11.HAL
(Halton Hills)

DATE: June 8, 2004

TO: Chairman and Members of the Planning and Development Committee

FROM: Edward R. Sajecki, Commissioner of Planning and Building

SUBJECT: **Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan Review**
MEETING DATE: June 28, 2004

ORIGIN: Planning and Building Department

COMMENTS: This report is part of the ongoing program to update City Council on significant planning initiatives in adjacent municipalities.

On April 8, 2004 The Town of Halton Hills Council passed the following:

THAT Report No. PD-2004-0017 dated April 8, 2004, regarding the Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan dated April 2004 be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorize the release of the Draft Halton Hills Official Plan dated April 2004 for formal public and agency comments;

AND FURTHER THAT the public consultation program identified in this report be approved;

AND FURTHER THAT the draft Halton Hills Official Plan dated April 2004 be posted on the Town's website;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of Report No. PD-2004-0017 be forwarded to the Region of Halton, and members of the public and agencies requesting notification on the Town's Official Plan Review.

Review Process

The draft Official Plan is the result of a series of studies, discussion papers, several meetings with the Official Plan Steering and Technical Committees, workshops and open houses that have taken place since 2001.

The Town of Halton Hills (see Exhibit 1) will be holding three public open houses prior to the end of June on the draft document and request that all comments be received by July 30, 2004. This will allow staff to make the appropriate changes in time to hold the statutory public meeting in October, 2004.

Draft Official Plan

The Town of Halton Hills is made up of three (3) urban areas and a large rural landscape comprised of farmlands, natural heritage areas and a number of rural settlement areas of varying size. *The Official Plan directs the majority of new residential and employment growth to the urban areas, where lands are available for development on full municipal services.*

The Official Plan ensures that Halton Hills is consistent with the *Best Planning Estimates* prepared by Halton Region, indicating enough urban land to 2021 to accommodate expected employment and residential growth.

These Best Planning Estimates indicate that the Town of Halton Hills will have a population of 70,000 people in 2021, which is an increase of approximately 20,000 from 2001. In addition to residential growth, employment growth is also expected, with the number of jobs in the Town expected to increase to 29,410 in 2021.

The Official Plan encourages the development of a new 401-407 Employment Corridor for a range of industrial, office, commercial and institutional uses on full municipal services. The corridor is defined by the three main tributaries of the Sixteen Mile Creek watershed system.

Halton Hills has projected future housing requirements between 7,500 and 7,900 new units between 2001 and 2021, based on a housing mix of 65-70% low density (single and semi-detached), 15-20% medium density (row housing) and 15-20% high density (apartments). These projections are based on the assumption that all potential infill housing will be realized, there is adequate servicing and household factor size will remain relatively the same.

Impacts on Mississauga

The Town of Halton Hills urban boundary being fixed and the continuation of a 2021 planning horizon for the Official Plan Review results in no significant impacts on Mississauga. Halton Region has determined that it has adequate supply of land for residential and employment uses until 2021.

CONCLUSION:

The Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan was released to facilitate public input into the new Official Plan. As the Review moves forward, staff will monitor the proposed policies and report to City Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report titled "Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan Review" dated June 8, 2004 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building be received for information.

Original Signed By: _____

Edward R. Sajecki

Commissioner of Planning and Building



MISSISSAUGA
Planning and Building



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DRAWN BY:

W. FINLAY

EXHIBIT 1



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor R. Bonnette & Members of Council

REPORT FROM: John Linhardt, Manager of Planning Policy

DATE: June 17, 2005

REPORT NO.: PD-2005-0045

RE: Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan (May 2005) – Public Meeting Report

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PD-2005-0045 dated June 17, 2005 regarding the Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan dated May 2005 be received;

AND FURTHER THAT all agency and public comments be referred to staff for a further report to be considered by Council during September 2005 regarding the final disposition of the Official Plan;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of Report No. PD-2005-0045 be forwarded to the Region of Halton, and members of the public and agencies requesting notification on the Town's Official Plan review.

BACKGROUND:

Context

Through report PD-2004-0017, staff summarized the process followed up to that time in preparing a new Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills Planning Area. This included the holding of Workshops, meetings with the Official Plan Steering and Technical Committees, the preparation of studies and discussion papers and consideration of various staff reports by Council. On April 17, 2004, with the approval of PD-2004-0017, Council authorized the release of the Draft Official Plan (April 2004) for formal public and agency comments. Notice was given in

the local newspapers as well as to individuals on the Official Plan Program mailing list. Notice was also given to the public agencies, Heritage Halton Hills, TEAC, the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Acton and Georgetown Business Improvement Areas with a request for comments by July 30, 2004. In addition to the foregoing, the following three publications were prepared:

- **Official Plan Newsletter #3**

This colour brochure was the third in a series of newsletters informing residents of the progress on the Official Plan Program. The newsletter outlined the contents of the Draft Official Plan and encouraged participation in the Official Plan Open Houses. It was made available at the Civic Centre, both branches of the Halton Hills Public Library and on the Town website.

- **Official Plan Information Bulletin**

This publication, which was an adaptation of the newsletter, was inserted into all tax bills sent out in June 2004. This was the most cost-effective way to provide information on the Official Plan Program to the most residents and businesses in the Town.

- **A New Official Plan for the Town of Halton Hills**

This 12-page booklet was designed as a handout for the Open Houses. It provided the highlights of the Draft New Official Plan under a number of different topic areas.

Public Consultation

As part of the public consultation program, staff in conjunction with Meridian Planning Consultants, conducted three Public Open Houses in the late spring of 2004 at the Acton Arena & Community Centre, St. Stephen's Church and the Halton Hills Civic Centre. In addition to the foregoing, staff received 36 written submissions on the Draft Official Plan during 2004.

Submissions Matrix

The aforementioned submissions were incorporated verbatim along with a staff response/recommendation into a document entitled Submissions Matrix dated February 2005 save and except for the Region's letter dated July 31, 2004. The Region's submission was addressed in the PD-2005-0011 dated February 23, 2005 because of its format and in consideration of the Region's role as the approval authority for the new Official Plan.

On March 21, 2005, following a staff presentation on the status of the Draft Official Plan dated April 2004, Council considered and endorsed Report No. 2005-0011 dated February 23, 2005 regarding the Official Plan Program Submissions Matrix. Among other matters, the report:

- a) summarized key policy issues emanating from agency and public comments received from the circulation of the Draft Official Plan; and,
- b) sought Council's authorization to revise the Draft Official Plan in accordance with the Submissions Matrix along with other minor housekeeping amendments identified by staff for purposes of proceeding to a statutory public meeting in accordance with Section 17 (15) of the *Planning Act*.

In consideration that Bill 135, the *Greenbelt Act, 2005* and the Greenbelt Plan came into effect subsequent to the completion of the staff report and the Submissions Matrix, as part of the presentation staff also advised that we would also be seeking to integrate the policy direction contained in the Province's Greenbelt Plan into a revised version of the Official Plan. Bill 135 requires that all municipal official plans be brought into conformity with the Greenbelt Plan. Subsequently, the Town retained Meridian Planning Consultants to update the Rural Area Study in the context of implementing the Greenbelt Plan into the Draft Halton Hills Official Plan in keeping with the information that has been provided to the Town by the Province at this time.

In accordance with the foregoing, a revised version of the Draft Halton Hills Official Plan dated May 2005 has been prepared for purposes of the Tuesday, June 28, 2005 statutory public meeting pursuant to Section 17 (15) of the *Planning Act*.

COMMENTS:

The Draft Official Plan dated May 2005 is similar in content and format to the April 2004 version of the document subject to the recommended changes set out in PD-2005-0011 and the related Submissions Matrix. Where appropriate, staff has incorporated the policy direction flowing from recent Amendments such as OPA 115 (Loblaws), OPA 119 (Sobeys), OPA 120 (Bennett Health Care), and OPA 122 (Adult Entertainment Study). We have also introduced a Residential Special Policy Area for lands on the south side of Guelph Street in Georgetown between the Community Node and Downtown Area designations which, in recognition of the high traffic location, provides a policy context for the conversion of residential dwellings, in whole or part, for offices subject to criteria. Council has approved site-specific amendments in this area in the past to allow for such uses, including the recently enacted OPA No. 125 (dental office).

In addition, the Draft Official Plan has been updated to reflect the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement, primarily in the areas of housing, employment, cultural heritage resources and definitions and, to the extent possible, the Greenbelt Plan. As noted in PD-2005-0011, staff was of the opinion that the draft Official Plan (April 2004) was in keeping with the overall intent of both the PPS and the Draft Greenbelt Plan. However with respect to the latter, it was noted that there might be policy areas, specifically agriculture, mineral aggregate resources and natural heritage that require clarification and/or refinements to achieve conformity. Through PD-2005-0015, which provided an overview of Bill 135, the *Greenbelt Act, 2005* and the Greenbelt Plan dated February 28, 2005, on a preliminary basis, staff advised that the Town's Official Plan would have to contain:

- a map(s) showing the boundaries of the Greenbelt Area, the Protected Countryside and the Natural Heritage System;
- a map showing the boundaries of key natural heritage and key hydrologic features and any minimum vegetation protection zone.

With respect to the above referenced items, staff noted that outside of the NEP Area and Settlement Areas, the Draft Official Plan currently designates natural heritage features as either Greenlands A or Greenlands B consistent with the Regional Official Plan. Appendix 1A also shows the spatial distribution of natural areas throughout the entire Town. Subject to the Province providing the necessary mapping, staff noted that the geographic extent of the Greenlands designations might have to be expanded within the Protected Countryside.

From a text perspective, staff advised that the major revisions would relate to the mineral aggregate extraction policies. In this regard, the Greenbelt Plan contains detailed direction regarding the relationship between mineral aggregate resources and key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features as well as rehabilitation requirements. The Greenbelt Plan does not permit municipal official plans to be more restrictive in this policy area.

As previously noted, the Town retained Meridian Planning Consultants to update the Rural Area Study in the context of the Greenbelt Plan. A copy of Meridian's report respecting this matter is attached to this submission as Schedule One and is intended to be read in conjunction with this report.

A summary of the Draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan (May 2005) is provided in the ensuing section.

DRAFT TOWN OF HALTON HILLS OFFICIAL PLAN (May 2005)

The draft Town of Halton Hills Official Plan consists of three parts as described below:

Part One – Preamble

The Preamble, which provides background information pertaining to the Official Plan vis a vis organization, location and the basis for the text and schedules that follow, does not form an operative part of the document.

Part Two – Town of Halton Hills Official Plan

The Official Plan contains an Introduction that provides the planning context for the document, as well as setting out the Plan Structure, followed by eight parts, each of which is described below:

➤ Part A (Vision, Goals and Strategic Objectives and Land Use Concept)

Part A contains the Vision of the Town. This Vision is closely tied to the Community Strategic Plan and is based on an understanding of past and future trends and the wishes of the Town's residents. The Goals and Strategic Objectives that form the basis of the Plan flow from the Vision and deal with the following matters:

- Natural Heritage
- Growth and Settlement
- Urban Character
- Rural Character
- Agriculture
- Cultural Heritage
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Mineral Aggregate Resources

These Goals and Strategic Objectives also establish a framework for the remaining policies in the Plan. This section of the Plan also describes how it is to be implemented through a series of land use designations. The land use designations in the Plan are divided into three broad categories. The *Environmental and Open Space Area* applies to lands throughout the Town that are considered to be significant from a natural heritage and/or open space perspective. The *Urban Area* applies to the three urban areas in the Town – Georgetown, Acton and the 401-407 Employment Area. The *Agricultural/Rural*

Area applies to lands located outside of the *Urban Area* excluding the *Environmental and Open Space Area*.

➤ **Part B (Environmental and Open Space Land Use Policies)**

Part B contains detailed policies that apply to the natural heritage features and public and private open space lands within the Town, including lands within the Niagara Escarpment Plan and those lands within the Town's Greenlands system. The specific land use designations incorporated under this section of the Plan are *Greenlands A*, *Greenlands B*, *Major Parks and Open Space Area*, *Private Open Space Area*, *Escarpment Natural Area*, *Escarpment Protection Area* and *Escarpment Rural Area*. The Niagara Escarpment Plan designations are primarily shown on Schedule A2 to this Plan. The other designations are shown on the various Schedules as appropriate.

➤ **Part C (Environmental Management Policies)**

Part C contains the policies dealing with watercourses, natural hazards, watershed planning and surface and groundwater resources throughout the Town. In addition, policies that specify the requirements for stormwater management reports, environmental impact studies, tree preservation, the development of contaminated sites, land use compatibility, noise and vibration reports and energy conservation are contained in this section.

➤ **Part D (Urban Land Use Policies)**

Part D contains the land use policies that apply to the urban areas of Georgetown, Acton and the 401-407 Employment Corridor. Three main urban categories have been developed as follows:

Living Areas

This designation applies to developed and undeveloped lands on municipal water and wastewater services in Georgetown and Acton. The *Living Area* designation is divided into *Low*, *Medium* and *High Density Residential Areas* as shown on Schedules A3 and A6. These designations are intended to provide opportunities for residential development at densities that ensure that a full range of housing types is provided.

Community Area

The Community Area designation applies to lands that serve primarily as community focal points in Acton and Georgetown and includes the following designations:

- *Downtown Area* (Schedules A3, A4, A6 and A7)
- *Community Node* (Schedule A3 and A5)
- *Secondary Node* (Schedule A3)
- *Corridor Commercial Area* (Schedule A3 and A6)
- *Local Commercial Area*
- *Major Institutional Area* (Schedule A3 and A5)

Employment Area

This designation recognizes the existing industrial areas in Acton and Georgetown and the emerging *401/407 Employment Corridor Area*. A *General Employment Area* designation has been applied to the Acton and Georgetown industrial areas (Schedules A3 and A6). The policy framework previously created for the *401-407 Employment Corridor Area* through Official Plan Amendment No. 94 has been carried forward into the new Official Plan (Schedule A8).

Special Study Area

Three Special Study Areas have also been incorporated into the draft Official Plan as described below:

The *South Acton Special Study Area*, which relates to the former Canada Packers Property located south of Agnes Street, east of Regional Road 25 in the southern part of Acton (Schedule A6), requires a review of which land uses are appropriate and how they are to be sited and serviced through the preparation of a Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) to the satisfaction of Council. The CDP will deal with issues such as:

- The proposed form of servicing;
- The protection and enhancement of any natural heritage features and related ecological functions;
- The nature, location and density of all uses and the manner in which they are integrated on the subject lands and with existing development;
- The nature, extent and timing of any required road improvements and the overall road pattern for the subject lands;
- The urban design standards that are to apply; and,
- The remediation of any potential site contamination in accordance with Ministry of Environment guidelines.

The CDP is intended to form the basis of an Official Plan Amendment that will ultimately place the lands in appropriate land use designations.

The *UCC Special Study Area* applies to lands in the southeastern part of the community of Georgetown focused at the intersection of Guelph Street and McFarlane Road as shown on Schedule A3. These lands are currently designated Low Density Residential Area in the existing Official Plan in accordance with the conclusions of the 1993 Urban Area Study (OPA No. 61). Through PD-2003-0057, staff advised Council of possible land use options for this property in context of emerging policy direction flowing from the Regional Official Plan review pertaining to Significant Woodlands and the refinement of the boundaries of the Georgetown Credit River Valley Environmentally Sensitive Area, the implications of the Silver Creek Subwatershed Study and the existing Low Density Residential Area designation. The *UCC Special Study Area* designation requires a more detailed Environmental Impact Statement to be prepared that determines whether this property has development capability in light of the emerging environmental policy direction as well as an analysis of land use options. The balance of UCC's lands within the Georgetown Urban Area are designated as Greenlands B in accordance with the Georgetown Credit River Valley Area of Natural and Scientific Interest.

Consistent with PD-2003-0025, staff has incorporated a *GO Station Study Area* into the Draft Official Plan. The policies in the draft Official Plan contemplate the undertaking of a Secondary Plan exercise in the future that evaluates in more detail the long term redevelopment potential of the area while addressing the protection of established residential neighbourhoods. The area subject to this Study Area is generally bounded by Mill and John Streets to the west and north, Guelph Street and Maple Avenue to the south and Mountainview Road to the east as shown on Schedule A3.

➤ **Part E (Agricultural/Rural Land Use Policies)**

Part E contains the land use policies that apply to the Town's *Agricultural/Rural Area*. As previously noted, the *Agricultural/Rural Area* designation applies to lands outside of the *Urban Areas* and the Niagara Escarpment Plan and includes the following specific designations as shown on Schedules A1 and A2.

- Agricultural Area
- Protected Countryside Area
- Hamlet Area
- Rural Cluster Area
- Country Residential Area
- Mineral Resource Extraction Area
- Rural Industrial Area

- Major Institutional Area

With respect to the *Hamlet Area*, a more detailed Land Use Schedule has been prepared for Stewarttown (Schedule A9). In our view, this schedule along with the detailed policies for the *Hamlet Area* designation contained in Section E3 of the Plan provides a sound basis for the repeal of the existing Stewarttown Secondary Plan (O.P.A. No. 1). Detailed policies for the Hamlets of Norval and Glen Williams are found in the Secondary Plans that have been recently prepared for those two communities. Given that expansions of these Hamlets into the Protected Countryside Area designation is precluded by the Greenbelt Plan, wording to that effect has been incorporated into the Draft Halton Hills Official Plan.

More detailed Schedules have been also prepared for the various communities that have been designated as *Rural Cluster Area* (Schedules A10-A18).

➤ **Part F (General Development Policies)**

Part F contains policies that, where appropriate, must be considered as part of the land use planning process. This includes subdivision of land, urban design, cultural heritage resources, transportation, parkland, community facilities, servicing, public uses and development phasing. These policies apply to the whole of the Town. With respect to Transportation, two schedules have been prepared. Schedule B1 outlines the Planned Function of Major Transportation Facilities and Schedule B2 outlines the Planned Right-of-Way Widths for the various roads in the Town.

➤ **Part G (Plan Implementation and Administration)**

Part G describes how the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Official Plan will be implemented. It sets out policies pertaining to:

- the consideration of Official Plan Amendments;
- the Official Plan Review process (i.e. five year review);
- Growth Management;
- Public Participation;
- the preparation of Secondary Plans and Block Plans;
- the preparation of Zoning By-laws;
- criteria for the use of Temporary Use By-laws, Holding provisions, Height and Density Bonusing and Interim Control By-laws;
- Legal non-conforming uses;
- the preparation of Community Improvement Plans pursuant to the *Planning Act*;
- Site Plan Control;

- Capital Works;
- Maintenance and Occupancy By-laws (Property Standards);
- Registration By-laws for Residential Care Facilities; and,
- Development Review Information Requirements.

An Interpretation section and Glossary has also been included under this section of the Plan.

➤ **Part H (Secondary Plans)**

Part H contains more detailed planning policies for specific geographic areas in the Town and is intended to include the Secondary Plans for the Hamlets of Norval (OPA No. 104) and Glen Williams (OPA No. 113), both of which will be consolidated into the document prior to Council adoption. It is proposed that the Norval and Glen Williams Secondary Plans be renumbered as Amendment Nos. 1 and 2 respectively to the Halton Hills Official Plan upon approval of the said Plan by the Region. The incorporation of these two Secondary Plans is considered appropriate, as they are the end products of recent comprehensive planning exercises and provide a degree of surety to local residents regarding the preservation of hamlet character. Any Secondary Plans undertaken by the Town in the future would also be consolidated in this Section of the Plan.

➤ **Schedules**

The following schedules, which are to be read in conjunction with the text of the Plan, also constitute an operative part of this document:

Schedule A1– Land Use Plan
 Schedule A2 – Greenbelt Plan
 Schedule A3 - Georgetown Urban Area Land Use Plan
 Schedule A4 – Georgetown Downtown Area Land Use Plan
 Schedule A5 – Community Node Land Use Plan
 Schedule A6 - Acton Urban Area Land Use Plan
 Schedule A7 – Acton Downtown Area Land Use Plan
 Schedule A8 - 401/407 Employment Area Land Use Plan
 Schedule A9 – Stewarttown Land Use Plan
 Schedule A10 – Ashgrove Land Use Plan
 Schedule A11 – Ballinafad Land Use Plan
 Schedule A12 – Bannockburn Land Use Plan
 Schedule A13 – Crewsons Corners Land Use Plan
 Schedule A14 - Henderson's Corners Land Use Plan
 Schedule A15 – Hornby Land Use Plan
 Schedule A16 – Limehouse Land Use Plan
 Schedule A17 – Silvercreek Land Use Plan
 Schedule A18 – Terra Cotta Land Use Plan

Schedule B1 – Functional Classification of Major Transportation Facilities
Schedule B2 – Planned Right-of-Way Widths

Part III – The Appendix

The Appendix does not constitute an operative part of the Official Plan. It does, however, contain additional information to assist in implementing specific Official Plan policies and includes the following maps:

Appendix 1A – Environment – Natural Areas which shows the location of wetlands, Environmentally Sensitive Areas as identified by the Region of Halton, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest and woodlands, 0.5 ha or larger. All of these features have been incorporated within the Greenlands system identified on the various Land Use Schedules save and except for woodlands. Woodlands generally require further study through Watershed, Subwatershed Studies and Environmental Impact Studies to determine whether they meet the criteria for Significant Woodlands as set out in the policies of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 25 and Section B1.3.5 of this Official Plan. It should be noted that within the Greenbelt Plan, significant woodlands are considered to be a Key Natural Heritage Feature, and are to be identified in accordance with criteria provided by the Province.

Appendix 1B – Environment & Water Resources delineates Wellhead Protection Zones as per the requirements of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 25. Land uses that have the potential to release or discharge contaminants to affect groundwater quality are to be prohibited or restricted in the Town's Comprehensive Zoning By-law within these areas in order to protect groundwater quality in accordance with Section C6.1 of this Plan.

Appendix 1B also identifies the location of watercourses and drainage features in the Town and is to be read in conjunction with the watercourse policies contained in Section C3 of this Plan.

Appendix 2 delineates High Potential Mineral Aggregate Resource Areas in the Town and is to be read in conjunction with the Section E6.4.5 of this Plan.

Appendix 3 shows the location of Waste Disposal sites in the Town and is to be read conjunction with Section C12 of this Plan.

Relationship Between the Draft Official Plan and Site Specific Development Applications

The Town's intent is to replace the current Official Plan with an updated document that implements Provincial and Regional Plans and policies including the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Provincial Policy

Statement and the Region of Halton Official Plan through more detailed policies that appropriately reflect the Town's character, role and location within the Region of Halton and the Greater Toronto Area. Major focus areas for the Town included the environment (Silver Creek Subwatershed Study), the review of the Town's rural area (Rural Study), urban design policies and guidelines (Urban Design Study) and revamping the Town's commercial policies (Commercial Study).

Based on the foregoing, staff continues to be of the opinion that the new Official Plan is not the preferred vehicle to address site-specific development applications. Most site-specific applications filed with the Town are the subject of detailed studies and require dedicated agency and public consultation to assist in determining the merits of the proposal. In general terms, we also do not anticipate recommending land use changes, save and except for those discussed in the various background studies and reports, that are intended to facilitate specific development proposals without the benefit of an appropriate application and relevant supporting documentation.

Next Steps

The Town has spent a considerable amount of time consulting with the agencies and the public on the development of a new Official Plan over the course of the last few years. This included carefully considering and responding to the various agency and public submissions prior to preparing the most recent draft Official Plan (May 2005) and proceeding with this statutory public meeting. The Draft Official Plan (May 2005) has been available since June 8, 2005. Given the foregoing, it is recommended that the deadline for comments on the Draft Official Plan be **Friday, July 29, 2005**. This will enable staff to apprise Council in September 2005 of the key issues raised in various submissions and make recommendations regarding the disposition of the Official Plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Strategic Plan sets out a broad vision for the community contained in six strategic directions. The relationship between the Strategic Plan and the Official Plan Program has been documented in various staff reports previously considered by Council during 2002-2005. The Community Vision within the Strategic Plan has been directly incorporated into the draft Official Plan. The Official Plan also relates extensively to the following Strategic Directions:

- Preserve and Enhance our Natural Environment & Cultural Heritage;
- Provide services to Support our Quality of Life;
- Manage Growth;
- Foster a Prosperous Economy;
- Work Together As One Town;

- Responsive, Effective Municipal Government

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The Official Plan Program expenditures have been in accordance with the Capital Budget previously approved by Council. The additional work relative to the update of the Rural Area Study in the context of implementing the Greenbelt Plan is primarily being funded from the Planning Department's approved 2005 Operating Budget.

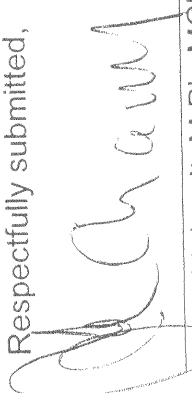
COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

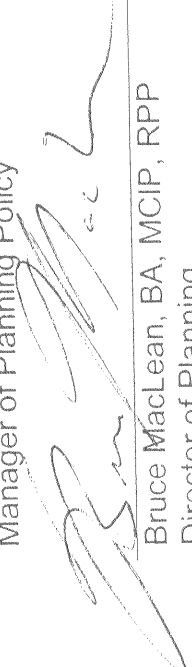
The Draft Official Plan (May 2005) has been posted on the Town's website. Notice of the statutory public meeting, which included a note advising the public that copies of the document were available at the Planning Department, was published in the Independent/Free Press on Wednesday, June 8, 2005. Three courtesy notices have been provided. In addition, notice of the statutory public meeting was provided to various agencies and individuals on the Town's Official Plan Mailing List.

CONCLUSION:

PD-2005-0045, along with the report prepared by Meridian Planning Consultants, has been prepared for purposes of the statutory public meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2005. It is recommended that the deadline for comments on the Draft Official Plan be **Friday, July 29, 2005**. This will enable staff to apprise Council in September 2005 of the key issues raised in various submissions and make recommendations regarding the final disposition (i.e. adoption) of the Official Plan.

Respectfully submitted,


John Linhardt, M.Pl., MCIP, RPP
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Robert C. Austin, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

SCHEDULE "1"
PD-2005-0045

- 8 E -

**INCORPORATING
THE GREENBELT PLAN (2005)
INTO THE HALTON HILLS
OFFICIAL PLAN**

**ADDENDUM TO
RURAL AREA STUDY
TOWN OF HALTON HILLS**

June 17, 2005



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Meridian Planning Consultants (Meridian) was retained by the Town of Halton Hills to make recommendations on a rural policy framework for the new Town Official Plan in early 2002. As the current Official Plan dates back to 1985, many of the existing policies are dated and require revision. In May 2002, Meridian prepared a discussion paper on rural policy issues in the Town of Halton Hills. The discussion paper reviewed all of the applicable policies at the Provincial and Regional levels and made a number of recommendations respecting policy approaches in the new Official Plan.

The four main policy areas that were reviewed specifically in the context of the discussion paper were:

- the delineation of prime agricultural areas and the rural areas and the uses to be permitted in each;
- the role and function of the rural area;
- the boundaries of the 14 rural clusters in the Town; and,
- the role and function of the Hornby rural settlement cluster

Following the release of the discussion paper, two open house/presentations were held in June 2002. Residents attending these meetings were given until the end of July 2002 to formalize their comments. Agencies were also provided with this deadline. Following the receipt of a number of comments, a report entitled "Review of Public/Agency Comments - Halton Hills Rural Study" was prepared by Meridian in late August 2002.

Since that time, Meridian has been assisting the Town with the drafting of policies that would apply to the rural area. In addition, Meridian has been assisting with the preparation of other Official Plan policies throughout the Town. Throughout this process, Meridian and staff have been meeting with the Official Plan Steering and Technical Committees to discuss various policy issues and making revisions to the draft Official Plan as required. The result was the preparation of a draft Official Plan dated April 2004.

Since the release of the draft Official Plan in April 2004, the Province of Ontario has:

1. released a new Provincial Policy Statement that significantly changes how planning authorities are supposed to plan for the future;
2. amended the Planning Act to change how Provincial Policy Statements are considered by planning authorities;
3. released a discussion paper identifying priority growth areas in the Greater Golden Horseshoe;

4. passed a Greenbelt Act that established the basis for a Greenbelt Plan;
5. introduced the Places to Grow legislation, which will provide the basis for the preparation of area and sub-area growth plans;
6. released a draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe; and,
7. introduced draft source water protection legislation that will require Conservation Authorities to prepare source protection plans that will need to be implemented through Official Plans.

While all of the above initiatives will have an impact on the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan, many of the initiatives related to the preparation of Growth Plans and Growth Strategies will be dealt with at the Provincial/Regional levels first and then at the local level.

However, there is one initiative that is proposed to be implemented in the new Halton Hills Official Plan. With the release of the Greenbelt Plan, all planning authorities now have to ensure that land use decisions and public works conform with the Greenbelt Plan. Given that the Town is in the midst of preparing a new Official Plan, it is our opinion that it would be appropriate to now incorporate provisions that implement the Greenbelt Plan into the new Town of Halton Hills Official Plan. This will ensure that all of the land use policies that have an effect on rural land uses in the Town are incorporated in one planning document.

On the basis of the above, it is the intent of this report to discuss the Greenbelt Plan and review the changes made to the draft Halton Hills Official Plan to implement both the Greenbelt Act, 2005 and the Greenbelt Plan. Prior to preparing this report, meetings were held with representatives of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Region of Halton to discuss implementation issues.

2.0 SUMMARY OF THE GREENBELT ACT, 2005 AND GREENBELT PLAN

Bill 135, the *Greenbelt Act, 2005*, which provides the legislative basis for the Greenbelt Plan received Royal Assent on February 24, 2005. Subsequently, on February 28, 2005, the Greenbelt Plan was enacted by an Order In Council by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. As such, the Act and the Greenbelt Plan are in full force and effect.

2.1 GREENBELT ACT, 2005

The area subject to the Greenbelt Act, 2005 includes the areas covered by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) and the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) and adjacent lands.

Highlights of the Greenbelt Act, 2005 are below:

- Land use decisions and public works must conform to the Greenbelt Plan (Sections 7 (1), 7 (3) and 7 (4));

- In the event of conflicts between the Greenbelt Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), Official Plans or Zoning By-laws, the Greenbelt Plan shall prevail (Section 8 (1));
- The ORMCP and the NEP prevail in their area of application in the event of a conflict with the Greenbelt Plan (Section 8 (2));
- Official Plans must be updated to conform to the Greenbelt Plan a) no later than the five-year review set out in Section 26 (1) of *The Planning Act*, if the Minister does not direct the council to make the amendments on or before a specified date or b) no later than the date specified by the Minister, if the Minister directs the council to make the amendments on or before the specified date (Section 9 (1));
- Provisions in Official Plans with respect to certain specified matters (agriculture and aggregate extraction) that are more restrictive or exceed the requirements of the Greenbelt Plan do not conform to the Greenbelt Plan (Section 9 (2));
- In conjunction with the reviews of the NEP and the ORMCP, ten year reviews of the Greenbelt Plan are required (Section 10);
- Only the Minister of Municipal Affairs may initiate amendments to the lands designated Protected Countryside in the Greenbelt Plan (Section 11 (1));
- The Minister may recommend the approval of an Amendment, in whole or in part, or appoint a hearing officer to conduct a hearing on the proposed Amendment (Section 12 (1)). In the case of the latter, the Minister shall consider the report of the hearing officer, which contains recommendations regarding the proposed Amendment, and submit it to the Lieutenant Governor in Council along with recommendations that the Minister considers appropriate (Sections 13 (5)) and (13 (6));
- The final decision on an Amendment is vested with the Lieutenant Governor in Council and is not subject to appeal (Section 14 (1) and 14 (2)); and,
- Applications, matters or proceedings that commenced on or after December 16, 2004 related to areas designated as Protected Countryside must conform to the Greenbelt Plan except as may be otherwise prescribed (Section 24 (1)).

2.2 GREENBELT PLAN

The Greenbelt Plan is comprised of lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), the Parkway Belt West Plan Area and lands designated as Protected Countryside. Within the Protected Countryside are the Agricultural System, Natural System and Settlement Areas.

2.2.1 Agricultural System

The Agricultural System is comprised of two Specialty Crop Areas, namely the Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape Area and the Holland Marsh, Prime Agricultural Areas as designated within municipal official plans, and Rural Areas that are comprised of a mixture of agricultural lands, natural features and recreational and historic rural

land uses. Municipalities may amend their Official Plan designations for Prime Agricultural Areas and Rural Areas when they bring their Official Plans into conformity with the Greenbelt Plan, only in the following circumstances:

- If the upper-tier or single-tier municipality has not amended the designation for its prime agriculture/rural lands to reflect the PPS;
- If an upper-tier or single-tier has completed a comprehensive official plan review; or,
- In order for a lower tier official plan to conform to an upper tier plan which has been amended in either of the above circumstances.
- Permitted uses in prime agricultural areas are limited to agriculture, agricultural-related uses and secondary uses.

2.2.2 Natural System

The Natural System is comprised of a Natural Heritage System and a Water Resource System that often coincide given the ecological linkages between terrestrial and water based functions. The Natural Heritage System includes areas with the highest concentration of the most sensitive and/or significant natural features and functions.

The Water Resource System is made up of ground and surface water features and their associated functions. In addition to primary recharge areas, headwater and discharge areas associated with lands subject to the ORMCP and the NEP, the Water Resource System includes the upper reaches of watersheds to the west of the Niagara Escarpment, lands around the primary discharge zones along the toe of the Escarpment and the base of the ORM, the major river valleys between the Moraine/Escarpment and Lake Ontario, the portions of the Lake Simcoe Watershed and the former Lake Algonquin Shoreline within York and Durham Regions and the former Lake Iroquois shoreline in Durham and Niagara Regions.

There are specific policies that apply to the Natural Heritage System, the Water Resource System, and Key Natural Heritage and Key Hydrologic Features. Of particular note:

- Municipalities together with conservation authorities should ensure that watershed plans are completed to guide planning and development decisions within the Protected Countryside;
- Municipalities shall, in accordance with any provincial directions on source water protection, protect vulnerable surface and ground water areas, such as wellhead protection areas, from development that may adversely affect the quality and quantity of ground and surface waters;
- Development or site alteration is not permitted within key hydrologic features or key natural heritage features within the Natural Heritage System including any associated vegetation protection zone with the exception of forest, fish and

wildlife management; conservation and flood or erosion control projects, infrastructure, aggregate, recreational, shoreline and existing uses as set out in the general policies of the Greenbelt Plan;

- Beyond the Natural Heritage System within the Protected Countryside, key hydrologic features are defined by and subject to the natural features policies contained in the Greenbelt Plan;
- Beyond the Natural Heritage System within the Protected Countryside, key natural heritage features are subject to the policies of the PPS;
- A minimum vegetation protection zone of 30 metres shall be required from the outside boundary of wetlands, seepage areas and springs, fish habitat, permanent and intermittent streams, lakes and significant woodlands;
- New development within 120 metres of Key Natural Heritage Features within the Natural Heritage System or a Key Hydrologic Feature anywhere within the Protected Countryside requires a natural heritage evaluation and hydrological evaluation which identifies a vegetation protection zone;
- Expansions to existing agricultural buildings and structures and farm and non-farm dwellings along with accessory uses are permitted in key natural heritage features subject to criteria; and,
- New buildings and structures for agricultural uses will generally be required to provide a 30 metre vegetation protection zone from a key natural heritage feature or key hydrologic feature.

At the time of writing this report, the Province had not provided the Town with any mapping showing the location of Key Natural Heritage or Hydrologic Features.

2.2.3 Settlement Areas

Settlement Areas include Towns/Villages and Hamlets.

Towns/Villages, as identified in municipal Official Plans and within their approved boundaries as they existed on the date the Greenbelt Plan came into effect, are subject to the policies of municipal official plans. Modest growth is contemplated for these communities, which include Acton, that is consistent with the role of these settlements as part of the Protected Countryside and the capacity to provide locally based sewage and water services. At the ten year review stage, settlement area expansions may be possible for Towns/Villages provided that the proposed growth:

- Is on municipal water and wastewater services;
- Would not exceed the assimilative and water production capacities of the local environment as determined on a watershed or subwatershed basis;
- Complies with any applicable watershed plan;
- Does not extend into the Natural Heritage System;

- Does not extend into the Specialty Crop Area; and
- Appropriately implements the requirements of any other provincial and municipal policies, plans, strategies or regulations including the assessment of need and locational considerations.

With respect to the Community of Acton, the Greenbelt Plan would mean that any future expansion beyond current approved boundaries could not occur until the ten year review stage of the Plan and only on the basis of locally based servicing.

Hamlets are substantially smaller settlement areas that are typically reliant on private services. As such, they are not intended to be a focus for growth. Hamlets are identified as dots on Schedule One to the Greenbelt Plan with more precise boundaries being identified through municipal Official Plans. The Greenbelt Plan permits infill and intensification within Hamlets along with the minor rounding out of Hamlet boundaries at the time of the municipal conformity exercise, subject to infrastructure policies contained in the Plan and municipal Official Plan policies.

There are seven hamlets as identified in the Greenbelt Plan in the Town of Halton Hills. These include Norval, Crewsons Corners, Bannockburn, Ballinafad, Limehouse, Silver Creek and Henderson's Corners.

Norval is considered to be a 'hamlet' according to the Region of Halton and Town of Halton Hills Official Plans. No changes are proposed to the Norval boundary as part of the Greenbelt conformity exercise, since a recently completed Secondary Plan established the boundaries of the Hamlet.

The remaining six hamlets identified by the Greenbelt Plan have been identified as 'rural clusters' by the Region of Halton and Town of Halton Hills' Official Plans. Three of these rural clusters are also identified as 'minor urban centres' by the Niagara Escarpment Plan. All six of these communities would continue to be subject to Regional and Town Official Plan policies and the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan as applicable. As each of these rural clusters were studied as part of the Rural Study, no changes are proposed to the boundaries of these rural clusters as part of the Greenbelt conformity exercise.

3.0 PROPOSED CHANGES TO DRAFT HALTON HILLS OFFICIAL PLAN

Below are the major changes to the draft Halton Hills Official Plan that are proposed as a result of the passage of the Greenbelt Act, 2005, and the implementation of that Act by the Greenbelt Plan:

1. A number of references have been included in the Introductory Section of the Official Plan to reflect the passage of the Greenbelt Act, 2005 and the necessity for all planning decisions within the Greenbelt Plan Area to conform to the policies of the Greenbelt Plan.

2. The Schedules to the Official Plan have been modified to clearly show the boundaries of the Greenbelt Plan in the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan. Within the Greenbelt Plan Area, the following designations are proposed:

- Protected Countryside (new);
- Greenlands (new);
- Rural Cluster Area (existing);
- Country Residential Area (existing); and,
- Mineral Aggregate Resources Area (existing).

As the above list indicates, two new designations have been added to the Official Plan. The Protected Countryside designation is new and replaces the Rural designation in the previous draft of the Official Plan. It also extends to lands south and east of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, and which were designated Agricultural Area in the Draft Official Plan dated April 2004.

The new single tier Greenlands designation is intended to apply to lands that were previously identified in the draft Official Plan as Greenlands A and Greenlands B within the Greenbelt Plan area. The other three designations (Rural Cluster Area, Country Residential Area and Mineral Aggregate Resources Area) are designations that were previously contained within the draft Official Plan. The extent of land to which these three designations apply has not changed. However, the policies of the Mineral Aggregate Resources Area designation have been modified to reflect the Greenbelt Plan.

3. The range of the uses permitted in the Protected Countryside Area designation is exactly the same as what was originally proposed in the Rural Area designation in the previous draft of the Official Plan.

The only change applies to lands within the Greenbelt Plan that are located south and east of the lands within the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area. These lands were proposed to be designated Agricultural in the draft Halton Hills Official Plan. This designation was intended to implement the policies of the existing Region of Halton Official Plan, which states that all lands below the Escarpment Brow are generally considered to be within the prime agricultural area of the Region.

As a result, the uses permitted in this area are restricted to agricultural uses, agriculturally related uses and secondary uses. Three of the uses that were permitted in the former Rural designation (cemeteries, small scale public uses and commercial animal kennels) are not proposed to be permitted south and east of the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area on lands subject to the Greenbelt Plan. These uses were not previously proposed to be permitted on these lands anyway since these lands were proposed to be designated Agricultural Area.

In addition, new golf courses or private recreation uses cannot be considered for lands south and east of the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area. This new policy

will be more restrictive than the policies of the Region of Halton Official Plan and the policies of the proposed Agricultural designation.

It is recognized that the policies of the Greenbelt Plan permit municipalities to refine or amend the location of the Prime Agricultural Area and Rural Area designations when an Official Plan is being brought into conformity with the Greenbelt Plan. However, on the basis of a review of the Greenbelt Plan, it appears as if any exercise to revise the location of the Prime Agricultural Area in a municipality can only be initiated by the upper tier, which in this case is the Region of Halton. In addition, the Region, through the adoption of Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 25 (Regional Official Plan Update) has reaffirmed through a text reference that the prime agricultural area in the Region is generally located below the Escarpment Brow. In the Halton Hills Official Plan, in order to properly implement the policies of the Regional Official Plan, a specific Agricultural Area designation was drafted and applied to land below the Escarpment Brow.

On the basis of the above, it is our opinion that the only way the limits of the Prime Agricultural Area in the Greenbelt Plan Area can be modified is if the Region initiates a study of the lands in the Greenbelt Plan Area to determine what areas are considered to be Prime Agricultural lands.

4. Additional criteria have been included within the Official Plan to deal with the development of new golf courses and other recreational uses within the Protected Countryside designation. Specifically, the new criteria require that an appropriate Vegetation Enhancement Plan be prepared. Such a plan shall identify opportunities for maintaining or enhancing the amount of natural self-sustaining vegetation on the site. In addition to a Vegetation Enhancement Plan, there is now a requirement for the preparation of a Conservation Plan that is intended to demonstrate how water use and nutrient biocide will be kept to a minimum.
5. A new Section on the Natural System identified in the Greenbelt Plan has been included within the draft Halton Hills Official Plan. The policies of the Natural System are intended to protect areas of natural heritage, hydrologic and/or landform features, which are often functionally interrelated and which collectively support biodiversity and overall ecological integrity.
The Natural System will be identified on the schedules to the Official Plan as an Overlay designation. This means that it will "sit on top of" other designations within the lands subject to the Greenbelt Plan.
6. A number of general policies regarding the Natural Heritage System have been added to the Plan. These policies indicate that:
 - new buildings and structures for agriculture, agricultural-related and secondary uses are not subject to the Natural System policies;
 - all development and site alteration within the Natural Heritage System shall demonstrate that there is no negative impact on key natural heritage features or key hydrologic features or their functions; and

- the disturbed area of any site should not exceed 25% and the impervious surface on any site should not exceed 10% of the total developable area.
7. The Natural System policies include references to key natural heritage features, which include:
- significant habitat of endangered species, threatened species and special concern species;
 - fish habitat;
 - wetlands;
 - life science areas of natural and scientific interest;
 - significant valleylands;
 - significant woodlands;
 - significant wildlife habitat;
 - sand barrens, savannahs and tall grass prairies; and,
 - alvars.

Mapping from the Province identifying where these key natural heritage features are has not been provided to the Town. As a result, it is currently proposed that all lands currently identified as being within the Greenlands A and Greenlands B designation in the Region of Halton Official Plan be incorporated within a single tier Greenlands system on Schedule A2.

Incorporating lands within the Greenlands B designation in the Region of Halton Official Plan as key natural heritage features means that the policies regarding the use of land will be the same in areas designated Greenlands A and Greenlands B. This is considered to be appropriate since the uses permitted in both the Greenlands A and Greenlands B designation are generally the same, except that single detached dwellings are permitted in Greenlands B. However, the policies of the Greenbelt Plan permit single detached dwellings on existing lots provided the Implementing Zoning By-law would have permitted them as-of-right on the date the Greenbelt Act, 2005 came into effect. In addition, it is clear that the Province is moving towards creating a single tier Natural System in the Greenbelt Plan that includes key natural heritage features that would have been located in both the Greenlands A and Greenlands B designations. It should be noted that all of the Greenlands B lands in the Greenbelt Plan area are within the Province's Natural Heritage System.

There are 6 areas identified as Greenlands B that are now proposed to be incorporated as key natural heritage features in the draft Halton Hills Official Plan. These 6 areas are described below:

- a) ESA No. 27 - Fairy Lake Marsh - The majority of this ESA is a Provincially Significant Wetland (Eramosa - Blue Springs Creek wetland) and is designated

Greenlands A in the Regional Official Plan. The remainder of the ESA is a candidate significant woodland and according to the Region of Halton Significant Woodlands Study data, meets 2 of the 4 criteria for significance (size and connectivity). It should be noted that only 1 criterion is required to qualify as a significant woodland, according to the Region of Halton Official Plan as amended by OPA 25.

- b) ESA No. 26 - Blue Springs Creek Valley - The majority of this ESA is a Provincially Significant Wetland (Eramosa - Blue Springs Creek wetland) and is designated Greenlands A in the Region of Halton Official Plan. The remainder of the ESA is a candidate significant woodland, and according to the criteria established by the Region of Halton meets all 4 of the criteria for significance (size, age, core habitat and connectivity).
- c) ESA No. 28 - Acton Swamp - The majority of this ESA is a Provincially Significant Wetland (Halton Escarpment Wetland), and is designated Greenlands A in the Region of Halton Official Plan. The entire ESA is made up of 2 candidate significant woodlands and according to the Region of Halton Significant Woodlands Study, 1 candidate area meets all 4 of the criteria for significance (size, age, core habitat and connectivity). The other candidate area meets 2 of the 4 criteria (size and connectivity).
- d) ESA No. 33 - Ballinifad Pond - The majority of the ESA is a Provincially Significant Wetland (Acton - Silver Creek Wetland Complex) and is designated Greenlands A in the Region of Halton Official Plan. The entire ESA is a Provincial life science ANSI (Ballinifad Swamp and Bog) but is designated Greenlands B in the Region of Halton Official Plan. Given that a Provincially significant life science ANSI is identified as a key natural heritage feature in the Greenbelt Plan, these lands have been identified as such in the draft Official Plan.
- e) ESA No. 36 - Georgetown Credit River Valley - A large portion of this ESA is in the Georgetown Urban Area, and is not subject to the Greenbelt Plan. However, a large portion of the remainder of the ESA is a Regional life science ANSI (Georgetown Credit River Valley) and qualifies as a key natural heritage feature in the Greenbelt Plan. The boundary of the ANSI also matches closely with a candidate significant woodland that meets each of the 4 criteria identified in the Region of Halton Significant Woodland Study (age, size, core habitat and connectivity).
- f) ESA No. 41 - Stewarttown Woods - A portion of this ESA is the floodplain of the Black Creek and is designated Greenlands A in the Region of Halton Official Plan. As a result, this area has the potential to meet the significant valleylands criterion of a key natural heritage feature in the Greenbelt Plan. In addition, the entire ESA is a candidate significant woodland that meets 3 of the 4 criteria for significance established by the Region of Halton (age, size and connectivity).

Until mapping has been provided by the Province indicating where key natural heritage features are located, all applications under the Planning Act in the Natural Heritage System will be required to be supported by an Environmental Impact Study which identifies whether the lands are within a Key Natural Heritage Feature. A key component of any Environmental Impact Study will be an assessment of the criteria established by the Province relating to the identification of a feature as a key natural heritage feature. For example, criteria for identifying significant woodlands established by the Province will be very important in determining whether a wooded area in the Protected Countryside is a Key Natural Heritage Feature according to the Greenbelt Plan. It should be noted that both the mapping of Key Natural Heritage Features and the criteria used to identify them are to be provided by the Province but at the time of the writing of this report, they were not available.

8. Key Hydrologic Features include:
- permanent and intermittent streams;
 - lakes (and/or littoral zones);
 - seepage areas and springs; and,
 - wetlands.

Mapping showing the location of Key Hydrologic Features was also not provided to the Town. At the time of writing this report, no area within the Natural Heritage System has been identified as a Key Hydrologic Feature.

9. A new section has been added that indicates that new development is not permitted within a Key Hydrologic Feature or Key Natural Heritage Feature with the exception of forest, fish and wildlife management, conservation and infrastructure, mineral aggregate extraction and existing uses.
10. A new policy has been added that requires the establishment of a minimum Vegetation Protection Zone that has a width of at least 30 metres around all key natural heritage and hydrologic features.
11. A new policy has been added that requires that all development within 120 metres of a Key Natural Heritage Feature and a Key Hydrologic Feature shall be supported by an Environmental Impact Study.
12. A new policy has been added that indicates that single detached dwellings are permitted on lands within the Natural System, provided the Zoning By-law applying to such lands would have permitted the construction of such a dwelling when the Greenbelt Plan came into effect.
13. A new section on Infrastructure has been included within the draft Official Plan. Given that public works are required to conform to the Official Plan as per the Planning Act, policies on infrastructure have been included. The policies are

general in nature and basically require that the location and construction of infrastructure:

- minimizes, wherever possible, the amount of the Greenbelt, on particularly the Natural Heritage System traversed and/or occupied by such infrastructure; and,
- minimizes the negative impacts and disturbance of the existing landscape, including, but not limited to, impacts caused by light intrusions, noise and road salt.

A number of exemptions are built into the policy to allow for infrastructure serving the agricultural sector.

14. A new policy has been added that indicates that changes to the urban boundary of Acton cannot be considered before the required ten year review of the Greenbelt Plan by the Province.
15. A number of specific stormwater management infrastructure policies have been included within the draft Official Plan. There is specific direction in these new policies on the location of stormwater management ponds. In addition, the policies set out the criteria that are required to be considered when reviewing or planning for the development of a stormwater management pond in the Natural Heritage System.
16. New policies on aggregate extraction have been included within the draft Official Plan. These policies primarily deal with extraction within the Natural Heritage System in the Protected Countryside designation. Highlights of the proposed policy framework for aggregate extraction in the Protected Countryside designation is below:
 - New mineral aggregate operations are not permitted within significant wetlands, significant habitat of endangered species and threatened species and significant woodlands. Criteria identifying what a significant woodland is have not been provided to the Town by the Province.
 - Notwithstanding the above, the policies do permit the expansion of an existing mineral aggregate operation into any Key Natural Heritage or Hydrologic Feature, but only if the decision is consistent with the PPS.
 - Applications to develop a new mineral aggregate operation in Key Natural Heritage Features or Key Hydrologic Features not identified above may be permitted provided certain criteria are met.
 - Specific criteria dealing with the connectivity between Key Natural Heritage Features and Key Hydrologic Features have to be satisfied before a new or expanded mineral aggregate operation is permitted.
 - New conditions of approval that deal with rehabilitation and the maximum allowable disturbed area associated with a mineral aggregate operation have been included. The policies also require that any excess disturbed area above

the maximum allowable disturbed area permitted will be required to be rehabilitated. The policy further indicates that for existing operations, this shall be completed within ten years of the date of approval of the Greenbelt Plan and 50% completed within six years.

- There are also a number of very specific rehabilitation policies that require rehabilitation as quickly as possible. In addition, the policies require that the disturbed area of any site be rehabilitated to a state of equal or greater ecological value.

4.0 SUMMARY

It is our opinion that the Greenbelt Plan has been appropriately implemented as proposed within the draft Halton Hills Official Plan (May 2005). It is also our opinion that it is appropriate to implement the Greenbelt Plan at this time so that all of the policies that have an effect on land use and which are intended to be implemented locally are contained in the Town's primary land use document.

It is recognized that some questions remain with respect to the implementation of the Greenbelt Plan in Halton Hills. Specifically, the Province has not provided any municipality with mapping showing the location of Key Natural Heritage or Hydrologic Features or any of the criteria used to identify these features. Once this information becomes available, a further review of the mapping and policies will need to be carried out.

In addition to the above, a decision will need to be made in the future on the desirability and need for a review of the location of prime agricultural lands within the Protected Countryside Area designation and located to the south and east of the lands within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area.