



# WE MAKE MILTON

## Living in Milton: Big Questions Report

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY



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Please note that at the time of writing this report, some census 2021 data had not been published and other reliable data sources were used. To the best of our ability, we have attempted to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. In the case of any errors or omissions, please contact [nancy.reid@milton.ca](mailto:nancy.reid@milton.ca) and they will be recorded.

# Introduction

This is the We Make Milton Big Questions Report for the theme of Living in Milton. It looks at eight Big Questions about land use planning matters related to our day-to-day lives in Milton (for example, where we live, socialize, play, and worship) and how residents meet their daily needs.

To explore the Big Questions, a review of current provincial, regional, and local plans/policies, as well as current planning practices from municipalities in other jurisdictions has been completed to help identify land use planning policy approaches and tools that must, should, or could be implemented through the new Official Plan to address local opportunities and challenges.

For each of the eight Big Questions, this report identifies a set of policy considerations for further discussion. They are the focus for further consultation and engagement with stakeholders and Milton residents.

## Background and information

The Background and Information Report for Living in Milton complements this document. The Background and Information report explores the current context for living in Milton and some of the planning opportunities and challenges related to this theme, which we heard in our previous (Stage 1 and 2) We Make Milton consultation and engagement work.

### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS respond to BIG QUESTIONS.**

BIG QUESTIONS focus on how to manage change and achieve our Council endorsed land use vision, Choice Shapes Us, to the year 2051. The Big Questions have no simple “right answer”, and different planning approaches and tools are available to address them.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS focus on potential land use planning approaches and tools for Milton’s new Official Plan. For each Big Question, policy considerations fall into three categories:

- 1) Things that must be done to conform to/be consistent with upper-tier policies;
- 2) Things should be done because they implement current/best practices; and
- 3) Things we could do because they are innovative and respond to specific local needs, opportunities, or challenges.

“In terms of housing for seniors, there are few low-rise apartment buildings and the ones that do exist are in poor condition.”

“Living would rank number one for the average rural resident. People move to the country for a certain quality of life. The rural area is a huge mixed-use area where there is a continual need to balance sustainability and prosperity with liveability.”

The Background and Information Report also identifies the eight Big Questions that are the focus of this report:

QUESTIONS	FOCUS
<p><b>Big Question #1</b> Affordability and Housing Choice</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan enable a wider choice of housing types, tenures, and affordability to meet the diverse housing needs of Milton?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #2</b> Climate Change and Resiliency</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan promote climate change mitigation and adaptation in our communities and neighbourhoods? How can we offer environmentally-friendly choices for living in Milton? How can we be more resilient to future environmental hazards and health risks?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #3</b> History, Cultural Heritage, and Archaeological Resources</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan better acknowledge and respect the many layers of Milton’s unique cultural heritage? How can we balance the need to conserve our built and cultural heritage resources with the need to adapt to modern lifestyle choices?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #4</b> Parks, Recreation and Active, Healthy Lifestyles</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan further support the availability of parks and recreational facilities across Milton’s communities? Are there any other ways to encourage healthy and active lifestyles choices in Milton?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #5</b> Places of Worship</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan help address the land needs of Milton’s diverse faith groups? How can we help provide more choice by facilitating and supporting the establishment of new places of worship?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #6</b> Rural Living</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan recognize and support Milton’s unique Rural Area? How can we improve livability, achieve healthy rural communities, and provide greater choice to rural residents?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #7</b> Urban Design and Creating Places</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan achieve urban design excellence? How can we create a cohesive and memorable built environment and strong sense of place? How can we provide more accessible and equitable spaces for all?</p>
<p><b>Big Question #8</b> Youth Living in Milton</p>	<p>How can the new Official Plan help provide for the living needs/wants of youth? How can our land use policies help make living in Milton more youth-friendly?</p>

# Organization

We have organized the remainder of this report into sections that focus on each Big Question. For each Big Question, we have reviewed and provided a detailed summary of the following:

## 1. Upper-tier policy requirements

An overview of key policy requirements coming from applicable Ontario Legislation, Provincial plans and policies, as well as the Regional Official Plan (ROP), which is currently under review as part of a [Municipal Comprehensive Review by the Region of Halton](#).

## 2. Policies in the existing Milton Official Plan

A brief look at how Milton’s existing Official Plan (OP) addresses the planning issue. Although We Make Milton is a new OP project, rather than a review and update of current OP and policies, if there are certain policy directions or approaches that already work (or don’t work), we have highlighted them.

## 3. Local direction from other Milton reports/ studies

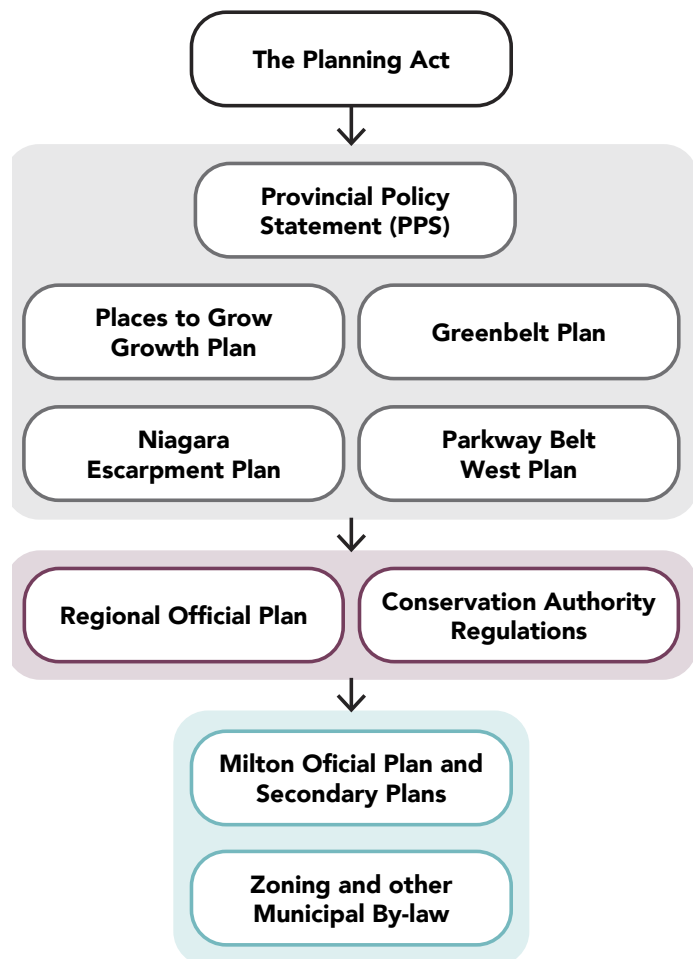
In some cases, other existing municipal studies and plans (such as our local Culture Plan or Green Innovation Plan) that provide direction for the new OP. Recent and on-going work at the Town provides strategic directions that the local OP can support and implement.

## 4. Relevant best practices from other municipalities

Examples of what other comparable municipalities are implementing in terms of OP policies and other strategic planning initiatives to address the Big Question/ issue. Best practices from other lower-tier municipalities in Ontario, other municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), and in different parts of the world are included, if relevant to the Milton context.

Figure 1 illustrates the different levels of planning policy in Ontario, and how they work together. As described in the Introduction to Stage 3 Report, the province and upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities all share the responsibility for long-term planning in Ontario. Milton’s local OP is required to conform to/be consistent with the direction of different levels of government.

Figure 1: Levels of Planning Policy in Ontario



## 5. Policy considerations for the new Official Plan

Based on our review of the above for each Big Question, our planning team has identified a set of policy considerations for the new Official Plan that we want your feedback and input on.

### How to provide feedback

We will be looking for your feedback on the policy considerations identified for each Big Question and there will be a number of opportunities to do so:

1. All community members should visit the [Let's Talk Milton web page](#) to learn about the project and find updates/opportunities to provide input.
2. All of our Living in Milton reports are available on Let's Talk Milton, with specific questions for you to consider and information about upcoming consultation events.
3. You can [register for email notifications](#) and we will let you know when future We Make Milton documents (focusing on other themes) are available.
4. We are always interested in talking to stakeholders and community groups to learn more about what you deem important and valuable. If you would like to be part of our stakeholder committee, please contact the email below.
5. If you have any other questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact our We Make Milton planning team at [nancy.reid@milton.ca](mailto:nancy.reid@milton.ca).

## Affordability and Housing Choice

### Big Question #1

How can the new Official Plan enable a wider choice of housing types, tenures, and affordability to meet the diverse housing needs of Milton?



## Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

### *Planning Act*

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* sets out a list of planning matters that are of 'provincial interest', and planning authorities and municipal Councils must have regard to these interests when carrying out their responsibilities under the Act. Section 2 identifies the following as a matter of Provincial interest:

*(j) The adequate provision of a full range of housing, including affordable housing.*

Section 16(1) of the *Planning Act* also sets out contents that must be included in a municipal Official Plan, including the following in subsection (a.1):

*An official plan shall contain such policies and measures as are practicable to ensure the adequate provision of affordable housing.*

#### **What do we mean by "Affordable" Housing?**

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Company (CMHC) housing is considered to be affordable when a household spends less than 30% of its pre-tax income on adequate shelter. Households that spend more than 30% of their income on shelter are deemed to be in core housing need.

#### **Many people think the term "Affordable Housing" refers only to rental housing that is subsidized by the government.**

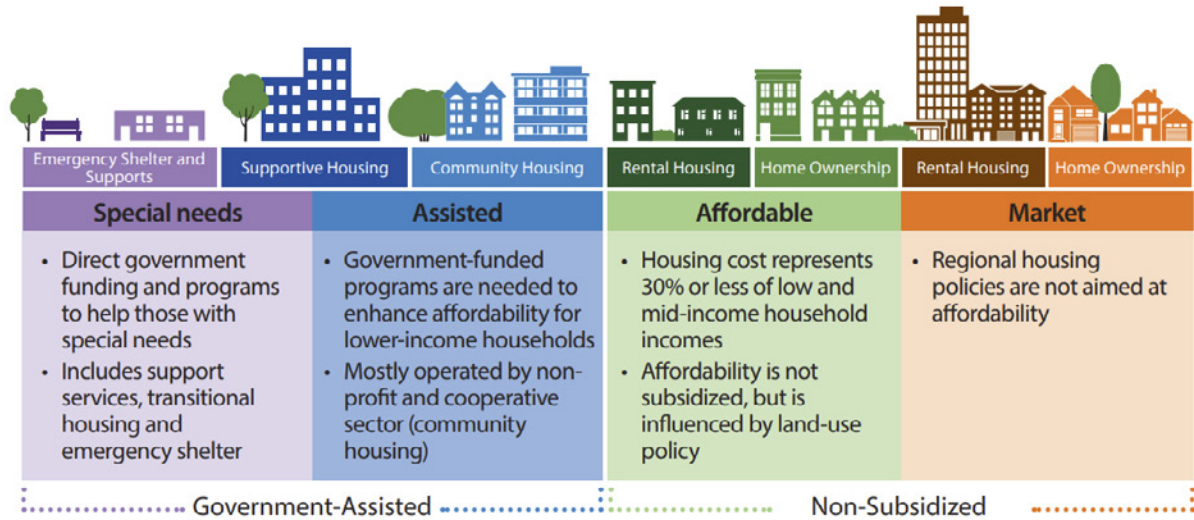
In reality, it's a very broad term that can include housing provided by the private, public and non-profit sectors. It also includes all forms of housing tenure: rental, ownership and co-operative ownership, as well as temporary and permanent housing. (CMHC)

#### **The term "Attainable Housing" is also used.**

Housing is considered to be attainable when a household is able to enter the local housing market and move up to successively higher levels. The concept of attainability assumes that a range of housing options (type, size, tenure, cost) exist. If that is the case, households at various income levels can find and attain suitable housing, and advance to a different level over time.

Figure 2 below is taken from the Region of Halton Comprehensive Housing Strategy and illustrates what is described by CMHC as the “housing continuum”, which follows a single, linear transition from homelessness to homeownership.

**Figure 2: The Housing Continuum**



The concept of the housing continuum recognizes that individual and household needs change as their circumstances shift and evolve over time. Figure 2 highlights that the needs and opportunities to provide support vary across the housing continuum - from direct funding (on the left) to policy and planning tool uses (on the right).<sup>1</sup>

The *Planning Act* also provides important direction on other key topics relating to affordability and housing choice, as summarized below:

### 1. Additional Residential Units

Section 16(3) of the *Planning Act* states that an official plan shall contain policies that authorize the use of additional residential units by authorizing the following:

- (a) the use of two residential units in a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse; and
- b) the use of a residential unit in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse.

**An “Additional Residential Unit” (ARU) means a dwelling unit that is self-contained, subordinate to and located within the same building or on the same lot of a primary dwelling unit. They are often referred to as “secondary units” “granny flats”, “accessory apartments”, “basement apartments” or “in-law suites”.**

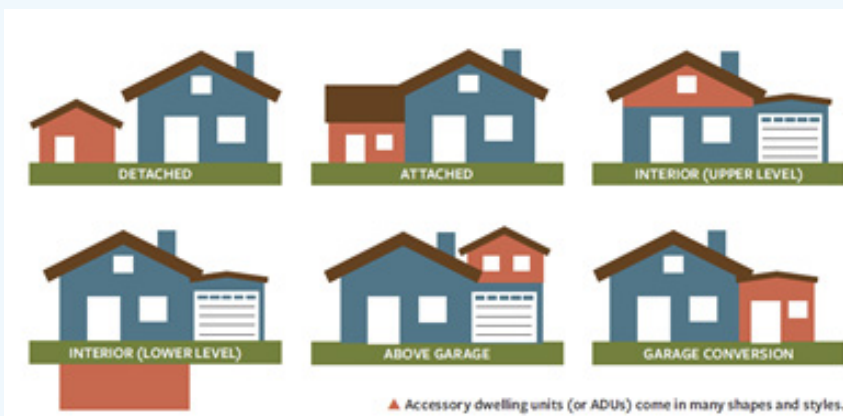
**More details about Additional Residential Units are provided over the following 2 pages to assist readers, including different forms of ARUs. All of the examples provided would be considered “gentle intensification”.**

<sup>1</sup> Halton Region, Comprehensive Housing Strategy Update (2014-2024)



## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS

An additional Residential Unit is a separate and complete dwelling unit which is subordinate to, and incidental to, the principal dwelling unit.



Through the *Planning Act*, the Province now requires municipalities to permit two additional residential units on lots with a detached, semi-detached, or townhouse building. Additional Residential Units come in many shapes and styles and are able to fit in all sort of communities.

### Types of Additional Residential Units

<b>Garden Suite</b>		A Garden Suite is a detached residential unit designed to be portable, usually located in the rear yard, and is separate, or detached from the main house. Units are generally smaller than the main house on the lot. Ontario's planning legislation requires they are a temporary use for 20 years maximum.
<b>Coach House</b>		A coach house is an additional residential unit that is self-contained and must have separate cooking, sleeping and bathroom facilities. It is generally accessory to, but detached from, the main unit. A unit above a garage can also be considered a couch house.
<b>Laneway Suite</b>		Self-contained residential unit located on the same lot as a detached house, semi-detached house, townhouse, or other low-rise house. The unit is typically located in the back yard next to a public laneway and is generally smaller in size, and completely detached from the main house on the lot.
<b>Garage Conversion</b>		A garage unit makes use of an attached or detached garage by converting the space into a residential unit.
<b>Basement Apartment</b>		A self-contained dwelling unit created by converting a total or part of the basement of an existing dwelling. The unit is occupied by a separate household.

## Types of Additional Residential Units

### Internal Apartment



A ground floor or upper level unit within the main envelope of the principal unit can be provided through an independent entrance and/or stairway inside the main dwelling or directly from an exterior staircase.

## 2. Inclusionary Zoning

According to Section 16(4) of the *Planning Act*, some municipal Official Plans can implement inclusionary zoning policies in order to require new development/ redevelopment to dedicate and maintain a portion of new residential units to be affordable by people with low to moderate incomes.

***“Inclusionary Zoning” is permitted by the Planning Act. According to current legislation, this tool can be implemented in major transit station areas or in areas where a community planning permit system has been adopted or established. In order to implement an inclusionary zoning by-law, a municipality’s official plan must also contain policies authorizing inclusionary zoning. In order to implement, a municipality must first conduct an assessment report that considers, amongst other things, housing supply, population, household incomes, and the potential market impacts.***

## 3. Community Improvement Plans

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities to provide grants and loans to landowners for the purpose of revitalizing a certain defined area of a municipality in order to meet a set of defined goals and objectives. Section 28(1.1) clearly states that community improvement tools can be used for the provision of affordable housing.

### ***Housing Affordability Task Force Report and Ontario Bill 109***

In December 2021, Ontario’s Housing Affordability Task Force (HATF) was created by the Provincial government to explore measures that will address housing affordability and to identify a set of recommendations for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. On February 8, 2022, the Report of the HATF was published, which included recommendations to increase the supply of market housing in Ontario. The full HATF report can be viewed [here](#). Notably, the task force recommended a significant increase to housing of 1.5-million homes over the next 10 years.

**In terms of financial incentives, the Town of Milton currently provides development charge exemptions for rental and additional units, as required by the Development Charges Act.**

**According to the 2022 HATF report, over the span of ten years average house prices have climbed 80% while average incomes have grown roughly 38%.**

On April 14, 2022, [Ontario's Bill 109 \(the More Homes for Everyone Act\)](#), which takes a first step in implementing the recommendations of the HATF, received Royal Assent. Bill 109 amends five pieces of legislation, including the *Planning Act*. The following is a summary of key *Planning Act* changes, which municipalities across the Province are required to implement, including Milton through the new Official Plan:

1. **Refunds for Application Fees:** The *Planning Act* now requires that municipalities refund fees, up to 100%, if they fail to meet statutory deadlines for decisions on zoning by-law amendment or combined zoning by-law/official plan amendment (currently 90 to 120 days) and site plan applications (being revised from 30 days to 60 days).
2. **Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator Tool:** A framework for a municipally initiated request for a zoning order is called the "Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator". The legislation requires public consultation and is not permitted to apply to any lands within the Greenbelt. In making a decision under this new power, the following will not apply: a provincial policy statement, a provincial plan, or an official plan.
3. **Ministerial Approval:** The Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT)<sup>2</sup> is reintroduced into matters where the Minister is the approval authority. The Minister can direct matters to the OLT for recommendations prior to rendering approval decisions. The Minister can also direct matters to the OLT for final decisions. It will be up to the Minister to determine when he/she will involve the OLT.
4. **Site Plan:** Municipalities must delegate authority to approve site plan applications to a designated authorized person (officer, employee, or agent of the municipality)<sup>3</sup>. A new complete application process for site plan applications is proposed. This process is like the complete application process that applies to official plan amendment applications and zoning bylaw amendment applications.
5. **Draft Plans and Lapsed Plans of Subdivision:** The Minister may prescribe matters that are not permitted to be imposed as conditions to subdivision approval. What these matters are have not yet been disclosed. An approval authority may deem a subdivision application that lapsed within the past five (5) years to not have lapsed provided that such subdivision application had not previously been deemed to not have lapsed.

### *Provincial Policy Statement*

Section 1.1.1 of the PPS states that healthy, livable, and safe communities are sustained by accommodating an appropriate market-based range and mix of residential types, including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing, and housing for older persons.

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<sup>2</sup> Formerly called the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

<sup>3</sup> At present, municipal council may, but is not obligated to, delegate its authority to approve site plan applications.

“Market-based housing” is not specifically defined by the PPS; however, the term emphasizes the role of market conditions (i.e., supply and demand) in developing a strategy for housing. It means housing that would normally be delivered by the private sector, without cost or rent interventions from the public sector/social housing providers.

**Special needs housing means: any housing, including dedicated facilities, in whole or in part, that is used by people who have specific needs beyond economic needs, including but not limited to, needs such as mobility requirements or support functions required for daily living. Examples include long-term care homes, adaptable and accessible housing, and housing for persons with disabilities such as physical, sensory or mental health disabilities, and housing for older persons. In 2019, Milton completed a Supportive Housing Study to ensure the existing Official Plan meets certain housing needs and complies with legislation.**

Section 1.4 of the PPS is entirely dedicated to providing direction on how to achieve a wider range of housing options. ‘Housing options’ is defined by the PPS as:

*A range of housing types such as, but not limited to single-detached, semi-detached, rowhouses, townhouses, stacked townhouses, multiplexes, additional residential units, tiny homes, multi-residential buildings. The term can also refer to a variety of housing arrangements and forms such as, life lease housing, co-ownership housing, co-operative housing, community land trusts, land lease community homes, affordable housing, housing for people with special needs, and housing related to employment, institutional or educational uses.*

**In Milton, a 30% affordable housing target has been established by Halton’s ROP.**

To achieve a range and mix of housing options, Section 1.4.3 of the PPS provides the following direction, to be implemented through Milton’s new Official Plan:

- Establish and implement a minimum affordable housing target;
- Permit and facilitate the development of special needs housing, and housing responding to demographic changes and employment opportunities;
- Permit and facilitate all types of residential intensification and redevelopment;
- Permit additional residential units;
- Direct new housing to locations served by existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities;
- Promote residential densities that use land, resources, infrastructure, and public service facilities efficiently, and support the use of active transportation and transit in areas where it exists or is to be develop
- Establish development standards for residential intensification, redevelopment, and new residential development that minimize housing costs and facilitate compact form.

The PPS provides a definition for “affordable”, which is similar to the CMHC definition:

Affordable means:

a) in the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:

1. housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or

2. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area;

b) in the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:

1. a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or

2. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

## Growth Plan

Under Section 1.2.1, an overall Guiding Principle of the Growth Plan for the GGH is to:

*Support a range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and affordable housing, to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households.*

**The Growth Plan emphasises the use of the existing urban land supply as part of an ‘intensification first’ approach to development and city-building, one which focuses on making better use of existing infrastructure and public service facilities, and less on continuously expanding the urban area. Intensification is an important topic for future growth in Milton and is explored in detail through the Growing in Milton Reports.**



As described in the Growth Plan, many communities in the GGH are facing issues of housing affordability, which are being driven primarily by sustained population growth and factors such as a lack of housing supply with record low vacancy rates. The Growth Plan intends to address this challenge by providing direction to plan for a range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and affordable housing and, in particular, higher density housing options that can accommodate a range of household sizes in locations that can provide access to transit and other amenities.

Section 2.2.6.1 of the Growth Plan requires that upper- and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, align land use planning with applicable housing and homelessness plans and support housing choice through the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets by:

- *Identifying a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities, including second units and affordable housing to meet projected needs of current and future residents;*
- *Establishing targets for affordable ownership housing and rental housing;*
- *Identifying mechanisms, including the use of land use planning and financial tools, to support the implementation; and,*
- *Implementation through appropriate policies and regulations.*

Section 2.2.6.2 states that Municipalities will support the achievement of complete communities by:

- *Planning to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of the Growth Plan;*
- *Planning to achieve the minimum intensification and density targets of the Growth Plan;*
- *Considering the range and mix of housing options and densities of the existing housing stock; and,*
- *Planning to diversify their overall housing stock across the municipality.*



**The Growth Plan identifies minimum intensification and density targets for the Region of Halton, as well as population and employment growth forecasts. The Region further distributes/ allocates these targets and forecasts across the local municipalities through ROP policies. All of this will be explored in more detail through the topic of Growing in Milton.**

### **Who Does What When it Comes to Providing Housing Choice?**

- The **Federal Government** (i.e., Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation), provides mortgage insurance to homeowners and their financial support helps build social housing.
- The **Provincial Government** has legislated responsibility for housing and can offer legislative tools and financial support.
- The **Region of Halton** sets affordable housing priorities and collects and receives funds to address local affordable housing needs.
- **Milton** is responsible to zoning of land and the processing of development applications and has an opportunity to provide a supportive policy framework for the delivery of affordable housing.
- **Non-profit Organizations and Cooperatives** provide subsidized housing as well as emergency shelters and transition housing.
- The **private sector** responds to market demand and delivers ownership and rental housing for profit.
- **Individuals** purchase investment properties that provide rental accommodation at market rates. Other homeowners create additional units in their homes.

To support the achievement of complete communities, Policy 2.2.6.3 directs municipalities to consider the use of available tools to require that multi-unit residential developments incorporate a mix of unit sizes to accommodate a diverse range of household sizes and incomes.

Finally, Policy 2.2.6.4 states that Municipalities will maintain at all times where development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units. This supply will include, and may exclusively consist of, lands suitably zoned for intensification and redevelopment.

## Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

### Regional Official Plan

The ROP establishes the following goal for housing across the Region (Section 84):

*Supply the people of Halton with an adequate mix and variety of housing to satisfy differing physical social and economic needs.*

A set of housing objectives are also identified in Section 85, as well as policies in Section 86, to achieve this goal. The following table provides a summary of policies in the ROP that Milton is required (or encouraged) to implement in order to address/provide housing affordability and choice.

**Table 1: Summary of ROP Housing Policies and Direction**

Policy Topic	ROP Section	Direction
<b>Targets</b>	86(6)	a) At least 50 per cent of new housing units produced annually in Halton be in the form of townhouses or multi-storey buildings; b) At least 30 per cent of new housing units produced annually in Halton be Affordable or Assisted Housing.
	86(6.1)	Establish, in conjunction with the Local Municipalities, annual targets for the production of housing units by density type and affordability for each Local Municipality, based on the Regional targets under Section 86(6).
<b>Additional/Second Residential Units</b>	86(10)	Require Local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws to permit second residential units within an existing dwelling in residential neighbourhoods as of right, provided that health, safety and other reasonable standards or criteria (e.g. the provision of parking or adequacy of services) are met.
	86(10.1)	Ensure that the standards or criteria identified in a Local Official Plan or Zoning By-law shall not preclude or prohibit the establishment of second residential units, as provided for in Provincial legislation, policy or plans.
<b>Intensification</b>	86(11)	Permit intensification of land use for residential purposes such as infill, redevelopment, and conversion of existing structures provided that the physical character of existing neighbourhoods can be maintained.

Policy Topic	ROP Section	Direction
<b>Innovative Design</b>	86(13)	Encourage the Local Municipalities and the development industry to provide innovative building design that will facilitate subsequent conversion to provide additional housing units.
	86(23)	Encourage the Local Municipalities and the development industry to consider innovative residential development designs which contribute to affordability and energy and natural resource conservation.
<b>Redevelopment</b>	86(13.1)	In partnership with the Local Municipalities, other government agencies and the private sector, identify brownfield and greyfield sites outside Employment Areas and work towards making them available, where appropriate, for development or redevelopment for housing purposes with components of Assisted, Affordable and Special Needs Housing. Such sites or lands may be declared as Community Improvement Project Areas under the <i>Planning Act</i> to facilitate their development or redevelopment.
<b>Incentives</b>	86(16)	Encourage the Local Municipalities and other commenting agencies to expedite planning approvals and provide other incentives in the provision of Assisted, Affordable and Special Needs Housing and further to give priority to planning approval of those receiving government funding.
<b>Vacancy Rate</b>	86(19)	Require the Local Municipalities to use a rental housing vacancy rate of 3 per cent as the minimum threshold to permit the conversion of existing rental housing to ownership tenure or other uses or the demolition of such housing.
<b>Mix of Housing</b>	86(20)	Require the Local Municipalities, in developing phasing strategies, to ensure that a full range and mix of housing types can be provided in each development phase in accordance with Table 2a.
	86(21)	Require Local Official Plans to provide an appropriate mix of housing by density, type and affordability in each geographic area, consistent with current and projected demands reflecting socio-economic and demographic trends.
<b>Special Needs Housing</b>	86(22)	Require Local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws to permit Special Needs Housing as of right in all residential neighbourhoods subject to reasonable planning standards and design criteria.

The ROP also provides definitions for terms like Affordable Housing, Assisted Housing, Low and Moderate Income Households, Special Needs Housing, Market Housing, etc., to help implement policies related to affordability and housing choice.

### ***Comprehensive Housing Strategy Update (2014-2024)***

In 2006, Halton Region developed a [Comprehensive Housing Strategy \(CHS\)](#) that served as Halton Region's 10-year strategic road map to address local housing needs with innovative made-in-Halton approaches. In 2013, Regional Council approved a CHS Update 2014-2024 to address updated Provincial legislation and provide a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.



The directions in the CHS 2014-2024 were developed with the goals of:

- Creating a range and mix of new housing to meet the needs of the Halton community.
- Protecting existing rental housing so that it continues to be available to Halton residents.
- Providing coordinated services to residents who need support to obtain or maintain their housing.

The CHS 2014-2024 contains five strategic directions to address the diverse housing needs of all Halton residents, which are:

**1. Promote complete and healthy communities.**

Work with the local municipalities, the development community and the non-profit sector to ensure the communities we are building meet the physical, social and economic needs of current and future Halton residents.

**2. Encourage and protect affordable housing.**

Use municipal and regional policy tools to encourage the private sector to provide unsubsidized rental and ownership housing options.

**3. Encourage and protect community housing.**

Create, directly or through partnerships, new supply and protect the existing government assisted housing stock.

**4. Support independent living.**

Work with homeowners, building owners, and agencies to increase the ability of Halton residents with disabilities or special needs to live independently.

**5. Assist Halton residents to maintain their housing and prevent homelessness.**

Provide programs and coordination with other agencies to help at-risk residents maintain their housing, and prevent homelessness.

Some of the tools in the CHS 2014-2024 that specifically address affordability include: a development charges deferral program; supporting local Community Improvement Plans; programs to stimulate additional residential units; and the development and implementation of a benefit program to assist Halton residents with their monthly rents. A five-year review of the CHS 2014-2024 was released in 2019 and noted some key accomplishments since the launch of the plan including 33% of new housing sales over the period were affordable, exceeding the target of 30%.

### *Report on Housing 2020*

Since 2006, Halton Region has prepared the State of Housing Report annually to provide a review of the Region's housing supply and demand. The 2020 Report on Housing was reviewed as part of the preparation of the Living in Milton Background and Information Report and more detailed summary can be found there. However, the following findings are notable, and support the need for Big Question #1 as part of Milton's new Official Plan project.

- Oakville had the highest share of new housing completions in Halton at 56.9 per cent, followed by Milton at 26.9 per cent.
- 76.3 per cent (686 units) of housing completions in Milton were higher density units (townhouse and apartments).
- 23.4 per cent of the new sales in Milton were at or below the affordable threshold with an average price of \$324,094.
- In 2020, the vacancy rate in Milton was the lowest at 0.9 per cent, a decrease from 1.6 per cent in 2019.

### Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC)

The Region does have options available to residents to help them meet their affordable housing needs. The Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) provides housing in communities that include townhouses, apartments, single and semi-detached dwellings, as well as condominium units. HCHC is committed to sustaining communities that are healthy and safe and enjoyable places to live. Through the HCHC, residents can apply for subsidized housing through the Halton Access to Community Housing tool (HATCH). Support includes rent-geared-to-income, which provides safe rental housing for individuals and families with low incomes or financial assistance where they are currently renting. However, all applications are currently assigned to a waitlist with some waiting times taking several years for units highest in demand, such as for single non-senior individuals.

## Local Policies and Directions

Section 2.7 of the current Official Plan sets out the goals, objectives, and policies that deal broadly with the provision of housing in the urban area. It starts by saying:

*The Town of Milton is committed to the provision of opportunities in the Town for the creation of housing which is affordable, accessible, adequate and appropriate to the full range of present and expected households.*

A brief summary is provided in Table 2 below to highlight key planning directions for urban residential areas in Section 2.7 of the existing Official Plan.

**Table 2: Summary of Policy Directions for Housing in the Current Official Plan**

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and Implementation To-Date
<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	2.7.1 and 2.7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A set of goals are set out to meet Milton’s current and future housing needs. They address: housing mix, innovation, intensification, and supportive housing, for example.</li> <li>• A set of objectives are also set out addressing: housing targets, monitoring, phasing, tenure, supportive housing, and intensification.</li> </ul>

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and Implementation To-Date
<b>Housing Targets</b>	2.7.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 50 per cent of new housing units produced annually be in the form of townhouses or multi-storey buildings.</li> <li>At least 30 per cent of new housing units produced annually be Affordable or Assisted Housing.</li> <li>Annual targets for the production of housing units by density, type and affordability are to be set.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing Mix</b>	2.7.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Town will require an appropriate mix of housing by density, type and affordability throughout the Urban Area.</li> </ul>
<b>Demolition and Conversion</b>	2.7.3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The demolition or conversion of rental housing to condominium, equity co-ops or other forms of ownership tenure or other uses shall not be permitted unless the rental housing vacancy rate threshold in the Town is a minimum of 3% as determined by the Regional Official Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Affordability</b>	2.7.3.8 and 2.7.3.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Town will review on an annual basis the housing mix provided by density, type and affordability to determine whether it is consistent with current and projected demands.</li> <li>The Town will seek to assist groups in the community to receive the maximum amount of funding from senior levels of government for the development of affordable.</li> </ul>
<b>Residential Intensification</b>	2.7.3.13 to 2.7.3.16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The present and future demand for housing in Milton will be accommodated, in part, through forms of intensification, which include the efficient use of vacant residential lands, underutilized lots and existing housing stock in all neighbourhoods, while recognizing the flood susceptibility in the urban core.</li> <li>A set of criteria are established dealing with servicing, parking, compatibility, and flood hazards.</li> </ul>
<b>Conservation and Rehabilitation</b>	2.7.3.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports the conservation, rehabilitation and reuse of housing stock.</li> </ul>

**In 2019, Milton completed a Supportive Housing Study to ensure the existing Official Plan meets certain housing needs and complies with legislation. Policies updated through the study will be carried forward in the new Official Plan. [Click here to view Report PD-010-19](#), which provides background to the study and an overview of updated Official Plan policies.**

In the current Official Plan, outside of Milton's Secondary Plan Areas, there are two Residential Designations that apply to the Urban Area. There is also a Hamlet Residential Area designation that applies to Brookville, Campbellville, and Moffat. A summary of these designations is below, and to read more about the Hamlet designation, and a set of policy considerations for the new Official Plan that are specific to the Hamlets, readers should refer to Big Question #6 (Rural Living).

**Table 3: Summary of Residential Designations in the Current Official Plan**

Residential Designation	Policy Directions	Permitted Uses	Development criteria
<p><b>Residential Area (Urban Area)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies establish directions for residential areas in Urban Milton, which are intended to provide a mix of low, medium and high density residential development.</li> <li>The policies encourage infill and intensification within the built-up area, generally directed to intensification areas and to nodes and corridors. When intensification occurs outside of intensification areas, it will generally occur through compatible infilling.</li> <li>The policies also establish a housing mix that applies to greenfield (or undeveloped urban areas) of Milton.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-rise, mid-rise and High-rise Residential Uses</li> <li>Assisted and Shared Housing</li> <li>Residential care facilities</li> <li>Rooming, boarding, and lodging houses</li> <li>Bed and breakfast establishment</li> <li>Secondary Residential Units</li> <li>Local Institutional Uses</li> <li>Local Commercial Uses</li> <li>Home Occupation</li> <li>Parks and Open Spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Density ranges</li> <li>Site</li> <li>Location</li> <li>Height</li> <li>Services</li> <li>For Secondary Units: criteria addresses servicing, access to transit, character, and zoning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Residential/ Office Area (Urban Area)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide direction for the development of residential/office areas as a focal point in the community, where higher density development will be achieved and where other uses, including commercial and office uses and institutional uses may be permitted to encourage a mix of uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High density residential uses</li> <li>Office uses</li> <li>Assisted and Shared Housing</li> <li>Local Institutional Uses</li> <li>Local Commercial Uses</li> <li>Parks and Open Spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential and Employment Density</li> <li>Location</li> <li>Mix of Uses</li> <li>Height</li> </ul>

Residential Designation	Policy Directions	Permitted Uses	Development criteria
<b>Hamlet Residential</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To accommodate future residential growth in the rural area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single detached dwellings and existing semi-detached and duplex dwellings subject to Milton's zoning by-law.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established in the Hamlet Secondary Plans.</li> </ul>

In 2019, Milton completed a Supportive Housing Study to ensure the existing Official Plan meets certain housing needs and complies with legislation. Policies updated through the study will be carried forward in the new OP. [Click here to view Report PD-010-19](#), which provides background to the study and updated OP policies.

## Current Planning Practices

At the time of writing this report on Affordability and Housing Choice, there are many changes happening at the Provincial level (such as Bill 109), with respect to providing for a wider choice of housing types, tenures, and affordability, and meeting diverse housing needs. The following is a review of current land use planning practices in other places, which Milton can consider for the new Official Plan as it relates to Living in Milton. We recognize that current practices will continue to evolve over the coming months as municipalities explore ways to implement new legislation and tools and will continue to learn from their approaches and experiences. Current planning practices are organized into the following themes/topics:

1. **AMO Blueprint for Action;**
2. **Local Housing Strategies;**
3. **Official Plan Policies;**
4. **Additional Residential Units;**
5. **Planning Tools; and**
6. **Housing for Certain Age Groups/Populations.**

The current practices review provided here and throughout this report is a starting point. It helps us identify policy considerations that could be applied to the Milton context. Additional planning documents have also been reviewed, and will continue to serve as resources as we begin to draft new Official Plan policies. The purpose of this section of the report is to highlight some of the most relevant current practices for engagement and discussion.

## Association of Municipalities (AMO) of Ontario's Blueprint for Action

In February 2022, the AMO released a [Blueprint for Action](#) that outlines nearly 90 recommendations for all levels of government and the development sector, as an integrated approach to addressing Ontario's housing crisis. While not an exhaustive list, these recommendations are said to act as a starting point for conversation between governments, industry, and other stakeholders.

**Notably, Ontario is the only Canadian province or territory where municipal governments are responsible for the funding and delivery of community housing.**

According to the AMO Blueprint for Action, housing pressures are most keenly felt as a local issue because municipal governments are closest to the people. This role puts municipal Councils at the forefront of the housing crisis in Ontario, as they work to balance pressures for growth while preserving existing housing stock and mix.

Table 4 provides a summary of actions recommended for municipal levels of government by the AMO Blueprint for Action.

**Table 4: Summary of AMO's Recommended Housing Actions for Municipalities**

Action Area	Recommended Actions for Municipal Governments
<b>Collaboration &amp; Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with developers to encourage innovative housing while still conforming to the standards of the Ontario Building Code.</li> </ul>
<b>Innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the province to fund municipalities to accelerate the development of new housing supply by supporting new technology and methods (e.g., e-permitting and Lean Sigma methodologies, etc.), as well as the dissemination of best practices that could assist in more efficient planning and development approval processes while respecting sound planning practices.</li> <li>• Consider whether adopting a Community Planning Permit System would meet the needs of their local communities, and advocate for provincial funding to implement and review how this would impact the Ontario Land Tribunal.</li> <li>• Revisit zoning best practices to explore planning solutions that could include zero-lot-line housing, community improvement plan (CIP), reduced parking minimums, tiny homes, laneway housing, flex housing, shared housing, and other types that reduce land costs and increase density.</li> <li>• Work with the province to raise awareness among municipalities about the potential benefits of as-of-right zoning and inclusionary zoning bylaw that reflect a diverse mix of housing.</li> </ul>

Action Area	Recommended Actions for Municipal Governments
<b>Streamlining Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that zoning bylaw are up to date with official plans and reflect best practices for development that respects local decision making while prioritizing housing development that best meets local needs.</li> <li>• Have the flexibility to attract development in accordance with local municipal objectives without prescribed one size fits all solutions that don't work.</li> <li>• Ensure their zoning by-law and planning processes reflect the requirement under Bill 108 to permit additional residential units (secondary suites) in single, semi-detached and row homes and in accessory buildings or structures, for a total of three residential units on a property.</li> <li>• Consider and implement as-of-right zoning where feasible to facilitate 'missing middle' housing.</li> <li>• Consider and implement inclusionary zoning by-laws to increase housing affordability, including in places outside of major transit station areas (MTSAs).</li> </ul>

## Local Housing Strategies

### City of Mississauga

In October 2017, the City of Mississauga released its Housing Strategy called "[Making Room for the Missing Middle](#)".

According to the Strategy, goals and actions tackle the housing challenge head-on. The Strategy recommends a change to traditional approaches to planning and states that the City should no longer be simply a passive facilitator of housing development. Best practices research and a growing body of evidence shows that in the absence of policy intervention and actions, the housing market will not correct itself. The Mississauga Housing Strategy acknowledges the limitations of a second tier municipality, like Milton, but defines the actions we can take. Table 5 below provides a snapshot of the most relevant land use planning related actions that are identified in the Housing Strategy (organized into four separate goals).

**The City of Mississauga is currently preparing an Official Plan update and the Housing Strategy provides the basis of key directions for policy, as updated in the following sections.**

#### What is the 'Missing Middle'?

**As shown in Figure 3 below, the Missing Middle refers to building typologies that contain a higher density than a single-family house and a lower density than a mid-rise building. This type of typology includes laneway housing, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes (and other 'plexes'), townhouses, and low-rise apartment buildings. Because of the relatively small scale of Missing Middle typology (compared to mid- and high-rise) and its harmonious fit into the surrounding context, the Missing Middle can help existing neighbourhoods intensify and help facilitate new housing alternatives in desirable neighbourhoods which otherwise would have been out of reach to many young couples and families.**

**Figure 3: Illustration of Missing Middle Housing**



According to data on housing types from Environics, Milton has a relatively healthy stock of the “missing middle”. In 2020, semi-detached housing and rowhouses made up 33% of the housing stock. By comparison, our neighbouring municipality, the City of Mississauga’s “missing middle” made up 24% of the housing stock.

**Table 5: Summary of Actions for GOAL 1 - REMOVE BARRIERS**

Principles	Actions
<b>Create a supportive policy environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend the official plan to strengthen existing and add new policies supporting affordable home ownership and rental housing for moderate income households and the development of family-size units</li> <li>Review development standards and requirements to encourage the development of housing that is affordable to middle income households (e.g., parking standards, Section 37 contributions)</li> </ul>
<b>Make certain lands development ready</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement tools such as pre-zoning, inclusionary zoning and a development permit system for lands in appropriate locations across the city and in proximity to transit services to allow the built forms and densities needed to produce affordable housing and to support the development of family-sized housing units</li> <li>Review the zoning of Region-owned lands for additional development opportunities for housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Optimize City assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a “housing first” policy for surplus City lands</li> <li>Investigate infill opportunities and co-development of affordable housing with City facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Encourage second units</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and simplify processes and regulations for legal second units</li> </ul>
<b>Reassess City charges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Development Charges By-law to identify opportunities to promote a broad mix of affordable units.</li> </ul>
<b>Preserve purpose built rental</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a demolition control and replacement bylaw.</li> <li>Develop a condominium conversion control by-law.</li> </ul>



**Table 6: Summary of Actions for GOAL 2 - CLOSING THE MISSING MIDDLE GAP**

Principles	Actions
<b>Encourage diverse supply of safe second units</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the Region in implementing second unit grant and loan programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Make the pro forma work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Region should consider the deferral of development charges on the portion of affordable units provided in new construction.</li> <li>Establish a Property Tax Deferral Program in partnerships with the Region for the production of new affordable housing to the middle income households.</li> <li>Explore incentives to support inclusionary zoning.</li> </ul>

**Table 7: Summary of Actions for GOAL 3 - CHAMPION SYSTEM REFORM**

Principles	Actions
<b>Secure additional financial resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Petition senior levels of government (Peel, Provincial and Federal Governments) to create enduring and sustainable funding programs that realize developer timeframes and financial needs.</li> <li>Appeal to senior levels of government (Peel, Province and Federal Governments) to provide affordable home ownership assistance to individuals.</li> <li>Investigate incentives provided by upper tier governments for upgrades to rental stock.</li> <li>Petition the Province to expand municipal revenue tools.</li> </ul>
<b>Make surplus land available</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with senior levels of government to make their surplus land available for affordable housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Create a culture of action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote affordable housing programs to development proponents</li> <li>Promote Regional programs to development proponents</li> <li>Provide landlord education (e.g., rights and responsibilities)</li> <li>Provide a communication and education plan for realtors, builders and potential landlords</li> </ul>

**Table 8: Summary of Actions for GOAL 4 - BE ACCOUNTABLE**

Principles	Actions
<b>Measure the affordability gap</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish interim housing unit production targets based on Regional requirements.</li> <li>Establish long-term housing unit production targets.</li> </ul>
<b>Maintain visibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with senior levels of government to make their surplus land available for affordable housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Create a culture of action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and report on affordable housing: annual investment, unit retention and production, status of the affordability gap for low and middle income households, uptake of housing programs, market conditions.</li> <li>Continue to engage with housing development stakeholders (e.g., Housing Affordability Advisory Panel, housing events and forums).</li> </ul>

## City of Brampton

“Housing Brampton” is the City’s Housing Strategy and Action Plan, a blueprint to address its housing goals. The Vision of Housing Brampton as below is a culmination of the input received from the stakeholders on the desired outcome of Housing Brampton: “Brampton will be a vibrant, inclusive and thriving city with a wide range of housing options that are affordable, diverse and innovative”. Based on the housing and population data, technical stakeholder input and policy options review, Housing Brampton established four Big Moves - areas that need fundamental shifts and a commitment to immediate action.

### 1. Increase in Purpose-built Rental Housing:

- Commit to Brampton-specific Incentives within the Region of Peel Incentive Program for Rental Housing
- Facilitate a Wide Range of Rental Housing Near Transit
- Single Room Occupancy (SRO) and Co-living Housing
- Support Non-profits in Acquiring and Operating Lodging Houses, Hotels and Other Rentals as Affordable Housing
- Allow Addition of Rental Housing in Commercial and Other Areas

### 2. Use of Public Land for Housing:

- Prioritise Affordable Housing on Suitable Surplus City Land
- Explore Co-location of Housing in New City Facilities
- Acquire or Lease Land for Partnership Projects
- Support Adaptive Reuse for Housing
- Support Land Banking Efforts

### 3. Attainable Home Ownership Options

- Encourage Shared Equity Developers to Invest in Brampton
- Plan for a Full Range of Affordability Options in Key Growth Areas
- Allow for House-Scale Infill Options in Lower Density Built-up Areas
- Support Modular and Flexible Housing

### 4. Clear Housing Targets

- Align Housing Targets with Growth Forecasts, Intensification Plans and Region’s Targets
- Monitor and Report Annually to Council

## HOUSING BRAMPTON

Housing Strategy and Action Plan  
April 2021



City Planning and Design  
Planning, Building and Economic Development  
City Of Brampton



**Land banking is the practice of buying land as an investment, holding it for future use and making no specific plans for its future development.**

**The City of Burlington is also in the process of preparing a local Housing Strategy that works with and implements the Region of Halton Housing Strategy.**

## Official Plan Policies

Both the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton (lower-tier municipalities in the Region of Peel) are preparing Official Plan updates at the same time as the Region of Peel's upper-tier Official Plan Review. In terms of updating policies in regard to housing affordability and choice, their municipal housing strategies are providing specific local direction. A summary of housing policy updates and priorities for each local Official Plan review, based on the housing strategies, is provided below.

### City of Mississauga

In June 2021, Mississauga released a series of Official Plan Review memos including one focused on housing. The following four key policy areas and strategic directions have been identified as important to address during the City's Official Plan Review.

**Table 9: Strategic Housing Directions for the City of Mississauga Official Plan**

Official Plan Housing Policy Themes	Strategic Directions
<b>More Affordable Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the amount of affordable housing for low and middle income households</li> <li>• Introduce Inclusionary Zoning policies that will require affordable housing within major transit station areas</li> <li>• Permit &amp; encourage second and third units for lots with detached, semi-detached and townhouse units to align with provincial requirements</li> <li>• Encourage a mix of both affordable ownership and rental for low and middle income household in new housing projects</li> <li>• Establish greater certainty around development requirements (reduced risks/costs)</li> </ul>
<b>More Rental Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase and protect the amount of purpose-built market rental units</li> <li>• Strengthen policies to encourage new purpose built rental housing at strategic locations</li> <li>• Include new policy related to preserving rental units</li> </ul>
<b>More Diverse Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the range and mix of housing options</li> <li>• Encourage more diversity in the housing supply, with a variety of dwelling types, tenures and sizes in order to meet housing needs</li> <li>• Encourage a variety of housing arrangements and forms such as life lease housing, coownership housing, co-operative housing, community land trusts, and land lease community homes</li> <li>• Explore policy options to encourage large, multi-bedroom units designed for families</li> <li>• Encourage housing for seniors and those with special needs, including long term care homes</li> <li>• Encourage mid-rise, mixed-use buildings in strategic growth areas</li> </ul>

Official Plan Housing Policy Themes	Strategic Directions
<b>Revitalized Neighbourhoods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reverse the population decline of neighbourhoods through sensitive infill Policy Considerations</li> <li>• Consider policies to introduce a broader mix of housing forms in low density neighbourhoods (e.g. new detached dwellings on smaller lots, semi-detached, duplex, triplex, and low -rise apartments) in strategic locations</li> <li>• Introduce policies to make more efficient use of existing neighbourhood infrastructure (e.g. schools, parks, libraries, transit, roads, etc.)</li> <li>• Review the term “neighbourhood character” in MOP</li> </ul>

### City of Brampton

The City’s Official Plan Review was launched in fall 2019 to build on the work completed through an extensive visioning exercise. A series of discussion papers identify policy recommendations that build on the City’s new vision, and recommendations identified in Housing Brampton, as summarized above.

**Table 10: Policy Recommendations for Brampton’s Official Plan Update\ Additional Residential Units**

Recommended Policy Direction	Explanation/Justification
<b>Designation of Land for Strategic Intensification in Key Growth Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic intensification policies and programs can direct, prioritise, and promote medium to high density housing and a diverse housing supply in key growth areas.</li> <li>• Brampton Plan, through its City Structure, will indicate and propose policies, densities, and housing typologies suitable for strategic intensification to occur in key growth areas in Brampton.</li> </ul>
<b>Discouragement of Downzoning in Intensification Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downzoning is the reduction of density allowed for a certain property under zoning by-laws, such as from high density to medium density.</li> <li>• Depending on the context, prohibition, or discouragement of downzoning in intensification areas can ensure the efficient use of land and can address and prevent ‘leakage’ of designated land areas that can accommodate affordable housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning for Neighborhood Growth Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Brampton, planning for and understanding built-up area neighborhood growth in the form of infill developments has been challenging.</li> <li>• Growth options can be accompanied by user-friendly design guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Family-friendly Apartments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and provisions in Brampton Plan and Secondary Plans will support the creation of family friendly (2 and 3+ bedrooms) multi-unit housing (condominiums/ purpose-built rental apartments).</li> <li>• This is anticipated to provide moderate-income and multi-generational households an opportunity to enter the homeownership market. It will also support diversification of the rental stock to suit the needs of larger families in Brampton.</li> </ul>

Recommended Policy Direction	Explanation/Justification
<b>Housing Mix and Tenure in New Large Site Developments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brampton will explore how large new development applications can provide a diverse range and tenure of mid to high density residential and mixed-use developments, including affordable and rental housing.</li> <li>• The policies could be based on several criteria, including location and project size.</li> </ul>
<b>Rental Conversion and Demolition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of new rental housing within Brampton has been minimal over the past few year, with the demand outpacing supply.</li> <li>• Amendments to the Official Plan are required to provide greater protection of Brampton’s rental housing stock. The policy will seek to prohibit future conversions of purpose-built rental units to condominium tenure.</li> <li>• The policy will also propose to prohibit the demolition of rental units if it adversely affects the City’s supply of affordable rental housing unless replacement rental units are provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Mixed Uses</b>	Brampton will create policies to promote a range of mixed-use designations. These will allow for various land uses to be combined within a single development or larger land area and may create new housing opportunities in areas where such opportunities may have previously not existed.
<b>Adaptive Reuse</b>	Brampton will prepare adaptive reuse policies that support the conversion of vacant or underutilized publicly or privately-owned buildings for affordable housing (for operation by non-profit organizations).
<b>Accessible and Adaptable Housing</b>	Policies that encourage and incentivise enhanced accessibility features and designs in qualifying development proposals will be included in Brampton Plan. Brampton will address this concept in the policy and design guidelines frameworks.
<b>Climate-friendly Neighborhood Design</b>	Policies that encourage the application of energy saving strategies and technologies in the construction of new affordable housing buildings, and the promotion of sustainable retrofitting for older residential buildings can lead to more climate friendly neighborhoods, and these will be included in the Brampton Plan review.
<b>Amenity Areas</b>	Amenity Area policies and requirements can make multi-unit living more attractive and convenient, support age-friendly initiatives and create complete communities. Brampton will explore policies, design guidelines and zoning regulations for amenity areas for each residential typology.

### **Additional Residential Units**

Many municipalities across Ontario have already updated their Official Plans to permit additional residential units in accordance with the *Planning Act*, and others are in the process of updating them right now. The City of Kitchener is an example of a local municipality that has contemporary Official Plan policies and zoning regulations for additional residential units, to which the community has responded with great enthusiasm.

In October of 2019, the City of Kitchener adopted OPA 8, which updated the Official Plan as follows, in accordance with changes to the *Planning Act* as a result of Bill 108:

- Adding terminology regarding additional dwelling units;
- Permitting detached additional residential units without the need for a site specific zoning by-law amendment; and
- Provided criteria to be considered for implementation in the Zoning By-law.

As a result of OPA 8, the following is a summary of the City of Kitchener's permissions for additional residential units in residential land use designations:

*15.D.3.8. The Low Rise Residential land use designation will accommodate a full range of low density housing types which may include single detached dwellings, additional dwelling units, attached and detached, semi-detached dwellings, street townhouse dwellings, townhouse dwellings in a cluster development, low-rise multiple dwellings, special needs housing, and other forms of low-rise housing.*

#### ***Additional Dwelling Units, Attached and Detached***

*4.C.1.23. The City will support the addition of an additional dwelling unit(s), attached, within residential unit, where desirable and appropriate unless otherwise limited by the policies of this Plan, and in accordance with the City's Zoning By-law, in order to provide another housing option to Kitchener homeowners and residents.*

*4.C.1.24. The City, in accordance with Planning Act and other applicable legislation, will permit a stand-alone additional dwelling unit (detached), as an ancillary use to single detached dwellings, semi-detach dwellings and street townhouse dwellings. The following criteria will be considered as the basis for permitting an additional dwelling unit (detached).*

- a. the use is subordinate to the main dwelling on the lot;*
- b. the use can be integrated into its surroundings with negligible visual impact to the streetscape;*

**According to the City of Kitchener, there are approximately 57,000 properties that could accommodate additional residential units, and 25,000 of these already meet important zoning requirements and are eligible to obtain a site plan and building permit.**

**The City has a dedicated webpage for promoting additional residential unit permissions. The website states:**

**Tiny houses, laneway suites and backyard homes all fall under the permit category of Additional Dwelling Units (Detached). Our zoning bylaw allows for these buildings on most properties zoned R-1 through R-7.**

**To build an Additional Dwelling Unit (Detached) on your property, you'll need an approved site plan application and building permit.**

**The City has outlined the application process for homeowners [here](#).**

- c. *the use is compatible in design and scale with the built form on the lot and the surrounding residential neighbourhood in terms of massing, height and visual appearance; and,*
- d. *other requirements such as servicing, parking, access, stormwater management, tree preservation, landscaping and the provision of amenity areas.*

*Additional dwelling units (detached) will be subject to site plan control.*

In October of 2021, the City and local media celebrated approval of the City's first 'tiny home', as housing prices in the Region of Waterloo continue to climb. According to the City, there are an additional eight tiny home applications "in the works".

**The City has a dedicated webpage for promoting additional residential unit permissions. The website states:**

***Tiny houses, laneway suites and backyard homes all fall under the permit category of Additional Dwelling Units (Detached). Our zoning bylaw allows for these buildings on most properties zoned R-1 through R-7.***

***To build an Additional Dwelling Unit (Detached) on your property, you'll need an approved site plan application and building permit.***

**The City has outlined the application process for homeowners [here](#).**

**Figure 4: A tiny home under construction in the City of Kitchener**



## *Planning Act Tools*

### **Community Improvement Plans**

In October 2020, the Town of Cobourg adopted a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) aimed at incentivizing the development of affordable and rental housing. The CIP provides a toolbox of financial incentives designed to achieve community goals and priorities as set out in the Northumberland County Housing and Homelessness Plan 2019-2029, the County and Town Affordable Housing Strategies, and Official Plans in order to assist in the development of affordable and rental housing across the Town.

The goal for [Affordable and Rental Housing CIP](#) is to:

*Minimize financial barriers to the creation of affordable and rental housing in order to ensure an appropriate range and mix of dwelling types across the housing continuum are provided throughout the Town, provide opportunities for financing development and redevelopment on brownfield sites and projects that incorporate sustainable design and/or accessible design features.*

Financial incentives are aimed at assisting to provide for the creation of at least 38 affordable units within the Town on an annual basis, consistent with the target set out by the County Affordable Housing Strategy. The incentive programs are listed below, and additional details can be reviewed in the CIP document.

1. *Rental Housing Planning and Building Fee Waiver Program*
2. *Rental Housing Cash-in-Lieu of Parking Reduction Program*
3. *Rental Housing Development Charge Grant Program*
4. *Rental Housing Property Tax Increment Grant Program*
5. *Second Unit Planning and Building Fee Reduction Program*
6. *Second Unit Renovation and Construction Grant/ Loan Program*
7. *Emergency and Transitional Housing Planning and Building Fee Waiver Program*
8. *Emergency and Transitional Housing Development Charge Grant Program*
9. *Affordable Housing and Home Ownership Planning and Building Fee Reduction Program*
10. *Affordable Housing and Home Ownership Development Charge Grant Program*
11. *Brownfield Redevelopment Grant Program*
12. *Universal Design Grant/ Loan Program*
13. *Sustainable Design Grant/ Loan Program*

**Under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, municipalities are permitted to provide financial assistance to landowners to assist with improvements to private property, provided a CIP has been adopted by Council. Once a CIP is adopted, grants and loans can be provided for things like façade improvements, building/structural improvements, landscaping, parking, tax increases as a result of redevelopment, etc. Many municipalities use community improvement plans to help achieve local planning goals, identified through Official Plans and other planning documents, such as supporting the creation of affordable and rental housing.**

## **Housing for Certain Age Groups/Populations**

### **Housing for Older Adults**

As discussed in the Living in Milton Background and Information Report, Milton has a growing population of older adults and what we heard from the community is that there is a need to provide housing for this specific age-group.

The City of Brampton undertook a Seniors' Housing Study, which was endorsed by Brampton



City Council in 2016 and completed in December 2018. The purpose of the study was to identify potential sites and areas in the Brampton that could be suitable for seniors' housing, and to propose recommendations that could improve the availability of seniors' housing in Brampton. The Study included a benchmarking exercise of what constitutes a suitable site for seniors' housing based on a best practice study in Vaughan, Toronto, Mississauga and Hamilton. Consultation was conducted with several key stakeholders such as faith-based and community organizations representing seniors, the Region of Peel, the City of Brampton, CMHC and providers of seniors' housing in Brampton.

Based on this work, the study identified 15 sites that would be suitable for seniors housing and the following recommendations for the City to take into consideration:

1. *Additional affordable housing for seniors is needed to respond to challenges with affordability for seniors' housing;*
2. *Culturally-sensitive seniors housing is needed given the City's growing level of diversity;*
3. *Development applications for seniors' developments should be assessed against site selection criteria, with consideration for socio-economic or market studies as a requisite submission report for seniors housing development applications;*
4. *The City should continue to support the creation of local partnerships which address the housing needs of local seniors, particularly partnerships that support the not-for-profit and faith community;*
5. *The City's official plan policies should be strengthened to support the direction of Provincial Policy to provide a range of housing options for residents, as well as consideration for pre-zoning the potential sites identified through the study; and,*
6. *Incentives and tools to promote the development of seniors housing sites should be explored as part of the development of the City's affordable housing strategy.*

## **Housing for Students**

The Government of Ontario announced its approval at a news conference on June 17, 2021 for Laurier University to develop this milestone project in collaboration with the Town of Milton and Conestoga College. The campus, which is a key element of Laurier's strategic multi-campus growth, will focus on planetary health and offer programming, research and experiential learning in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) fields. As the development of the Milton Education Village and our new post-secondary intuitions begin, Milton will also need to consider additional opportunities to provide for a wider range of student housing in Milton.



**In addition to the policies of the Milton Education Village Secondary Plan, we will further explore land use planning opportunities associated with a local university and college campus in Milton through the Working in Milton Report.**

The City of Brampton also undertook a Student Housing Policy review in 2018 to assess the impacts of post-secondary institutions, such as Ryerson University and Sheridan College, have on the demand, supply and type of housing options

available. In June 2018 staff formed an internal steering Committee (comprised of Planning, Building & Zoning, By-Law Enforcement, Fire and Emergency Services) to undertake a student housing review.

- The review included a benchmarking exercise outlining the policies related to student and rental housing in the Cities of Waterloo, Oshawa, Guelph, Mississauga and Hamilton.
- In late 2019 and 2020 staff also met with the main post-secondary institutions located in Brampton (Sheridan College, Algoma University and Ryerson University) to start fostering a relationship and understanding of the various challenges faced by these institutions.
- During this time, Policy staff attended two housing fairs held at Sheridan College to speak with students one-on-one to develop a greater appreciation of their housing concerns in the community.

The findings of the study were implemented through 'Housing Brampton', which addresses student housing as affordable housing for singles, through various recommendations including the introduction of a new rental typology- Single Room Occupancy housing, and initiatives such as Additional Residential Units. The strategy also calls for policies that establish a balanced supply of housing typologies and unit mix in new developments. These are currently being implemented by the City of Brampton through its on-going Official Plan Review.

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

Milton is committed to improving housing affordability and creating land use planning policies that will lead to a wider range of housing choices. The following policy options have been identified for Milton's new Official Plan, based on the information presented above, and will be shared for consideration and further discussion through the We Make Milton process:

### ***1. The new Official Plan MUST provide for a full range of housing, including affordable housing and additional residential units.***

Planning for a full range of housing in Milton is not optional. The *Planning Act*, PPS, Growth Plan and ROP all require the new OP to ensure a full range of housing types. Doing so is critical in meeting the needs of current and future residents of all incomes, ages, lifestyles, and abilities. A diversity of housing types will assist the Town in welcoming new residents and make it possible for them to stay within their community as their needs and preferences change throughout their lifecycle.

Providing for a sufficient supply of affordable housing is also an important goal, and recognized by Halton Region, with the current ROP stating that a minimum of 30 percent of new housing units across the Region must be affordable. The new Official Plan must implement Regional targets for affordable housing, and other targets identified by the Regional Housing Strategy.

Additional residential units must also specifically be permitted throughout Milton to be consistent with Provincial requirements. The facilitation of additional residential units has the potential to help increase the range of housing options and in particular introduce additional rental options in existing low rise neighbourhoods.

## *2. The new Official Plan **MUST** include policies to authorize inclusionary zoning, and provide direction for the completion of an assessment report.*

In order to implement an inclusionary zoning by-law, a municipality's official plan must contain policies authorizing inclusionary zoning policies that require the inclusion of affordable housing units within certain residential projects, and maintenance of those units over time. The Town is exploring the feasibility of implementing Inclusionary Zoning within our existing Major Transit Station Area.

As a prerequisite to implementation of inclusionary zoning policies, a municipality must first conduct an assessment report, which then needs to be updated every 5 years to determine whether amendments are required. Such reports need to consider, amongst other things, housing supply, population, household incomes, and the potential impact of such policies on the housing market. Municipalities must also prepare status reports every 2 years after passing an inclusionary zoning by-law.

Policies that encourage the future use of the Community Planning Permit System should also be included in the new Official Plan to ensure that this tool can be used for other appropriate strategic growth areas, as discussed further below. Through use of this tool, Milton will be permitted to implement inclusionary zoning in these areas as well.

## *3. The new Official Plan **SHOULD** provide direction for the completion of a local housing strategy to assist in understanding and addressing locally-specific needs.*

A Housing Strategy, similar to the Brampton and Mississauga examples provided, sets out policies, tools and actions to address residents' housing needs now and in the future. A Housing Strategy could be prepared locally by Milton to build on and support the Region's Housing Strategy through the development of local solutions to housing issues. The new Official Plan should provide direction for the completion of a Housing Strategy.

The key outcomes of a Housing Strategy include:

- Understanding the key players and their respective roles in housing;
- Understanding the current state of housing in Milton and identifying current and future housing needs;
- Establishing a toolbox of best practices in housing, focusing on innovative practices and new, pioneering ideas;
- Developing of a set of action-oriented housing objectives and an associated implementation plan;
- Establishing where the Town wants to focus or prioritize efforts to address housing issues in the Town.

A Housing Strategy provides an opportunity to understand the current state of housing identify housing needs and to look for innovative solutions through the consideration of a variety of planning policy and financial tools, partnership, collaboration and advocacy opportunities,

strategies and initiatives. The Housing Strategy might focus on the Urban Area of Milton, where the majority of growth will be directed.

***4. Through We Make Milton, we SHOULD provide direction for alternative development standards and requirements that will encourage more affordable housing options.***

The term “alternative development standards” means two things. First, it is a philosophy of taking a new, more flexible look at how land is developed. Second, it means specific ideas for standards that will allow communities to better meet the needs of today than may be possible with current standards.

Reviewing the Milton’s existing regulations and by-laws, with an affordable housing lens, may identify barriers to the creation of smaller units and primary rental housing units. Overcoming these barriers could lead to the creation of a greater range of housing types. For example:

- establishing minimum density and height standards generally has the effect of reducing land and site development costs as costs can be spread over a larger number of units;
- zoning regulations can be updated with reduced parking requirements for certain types of units and in certain parts of the Milton, as well as landscaping, building design and finish standards.

Alternative development standards should be identified to replace traditional standards with more flexible and innovative regulations and save on development costs. Milton’s new Official Plan should provide support to establish alternative development standards, and directions for where they may be appropriate.

***5. The new Official Plan SHOULD provide direction for local monitoring and reporting on housing targets.***

Active management and monitoring of housing targets in Milton will help the Town understand progress on the recommendations and action items of applicable Regional and local Housing Strategies. The Region of Halton supplies the local municipalities with an annual measuring and monitoring report and Milton should also do the same to inform Council on locally-specific housing market information, demographic data, housing supply and housing affordability. The report should provide an update on the status of the housing typology mix, housing densities, affordable ownership stock, market rental stock, market ownership stock, and affordable rental stock by type and across income deciles.

To monitor the diversity of housing stock, Milton should also require Housing Analysis / Housing Impact Statements from development applications to identify the number of proposed new residential units by type, size and tenure.

**6. The new Official Plan *SHOULD* consider when and where a Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) might be implemented in order to streamline processes and further implement inclusionary zoning.**

A CPPS is a community-building tool that:

- integrates zoning, site plan and minor variance approvals into one application and approval process
- can help to significantly improve review and approval timelines (45 days for a development permit as compared to 120 days for a rezoning)
- can provide more certainty and cost savings through early community participation, upfront development rules and, once the system is in place, eliminating third party appeals to the OLT on specific development permit applications that meet the requirements and community vision set out in the official plan and development permit by-law
- provides for a more flexible approval process whereby municipalities can incorporate a specified range of variation for development standards

Ontario municipalities can use the CPPS within all or parts of a municipality through the adoption of Official Plan policies and the passing of a By-law. Together OP policies and the By-law would set out the requirements describing how the CPPS will be used in that local municipality.

A CPPS can influence housing affordability in a positive manner. A CPPS can prezone specific lands for the desired housing typology and mix; focus public participation and appeal process at the front-end of the process; integrate policy, regulations, and design guidelines into one document, expedite development; and specify flexible standards to encourage development (e.g., parking, permitted uses).

Policies that enable and provide for the use of a CPPS in Milton should be included in the new Official Plan.

**7. The new Official Plan *SHOULD* provide direction for the use of community improvement tools to assist with the provision of affordable and rental housing.**

Although the new Official Plan would not include the details of a community improvement plan (such as location, incentive programs, grant values, eligibility), it should provide supportive policies for the use of community improvement tools (under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*) to support market developers, private non-profits and charities with the costs associated with affordable and rental housing types. Financial incentives can be provided through grants and low or no interest loans, charge/fee cancellations/rebates, and tax assistance. Financial incentives could offset the development costs of different types of affordable/rental housing, such as additional residential units, purpose built-rentals, and even not-for-profit housing.

***8. The new Official Plan SHOULD include language that seeks partnerships and encourages senior levels of government to participate in the provision of policies and incentives for affordable housing.***

Municipalities are using partnerships to better integrate responses and leverage tools and resources available to stakeholders (e.g. Town, Service Manager, Nonprofit agencies, developers and builders). The development of affordable housing is one key area where partnerships can be essential, especially in finding and financing suitable land and the expertise to develop it to address the community's affordable market housing needs.

Milton's new Official Plan should provide supportive policy language to help build relationships with housing providers whose official mandate includes housing affordability and who have expertise in innovative partnership formats to deliver such housing.

Milton's new Official Plan should also advocate for funding and investment from higher levels of government, for example through relevant programs under Canada's National Housing Strategy.

***9. The new Official Plan COULD provide direction for preserving purpose built rentals through conversion and demolition by-laws.***

Purpose-built rental housing contributes to a full range of housing types and tenure. Given market influences over the past several decades, the creation of new rental housing within Milton has remained minimal, with the demand for rental outpacing supply.

New Official Plan policies could provide protection of Milton's rental housing stock. The policies would seek to prohibit future conversions of purpose-built rental units to condominium tenure if it has been determined by CMHC that the Town's vacancy rate is below 3%.

Policies could also propose to prohibit the demolition of rental units if it adversely affects the Town's supply of affordable rental housing (as determined by vacancy rates and Regional/local housing targets); unless replacement rental units are provided. Replacement criteria would not be included in the new Official Plan, but could be developed in consultation with the development industry and residents, and a rental protection by-law would be required.

# Climate Change and Resiliency

## Big Question #2:

How can the new Official Plan promote climate change mitigation and adaptation in our communities and neighbourhoods? How can we offer environmentally-friendly choices for living in Milton? How can we be more resilient to future environmental hazards and health risks?



### Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

#### *Planning Act*

Section 16(14) of the *Planning Act* states that “an official plan shall contain policies that identify goals, objectives and actions to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and to provide for adaptation to a changing climate, including through increasing resiliency.

What do we mean by resilience? According to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry’s *Naturally Resilient: Natural Resource Climate Adaptation Strategy (2017-2021)*, resilience is: “the capacity of a community, business, or natural environment to anticipate, prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a climate change related disruption or impact.”<sup>1</sup>

**The following matters of provincial interest are related to the above Big Question:**  
**(o) the protection of public health and safety;**  
**(q) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable; and (s) the mitigation of greenhouse gas emission (S.2 Ontario Planning Act)**

#### *Other Relevant Legislation*

In 2018, the Province of Ontario introduced the Green Energy Repeal Act, which, restores municipal planning authority related to the siting of renewable energy generation facilities, and restrict appeals on municipal refusals and non-decisions. Previously, the Green Energy Act, 2009 exempted renewable energy generation projects from being regulated by a municipal Official Plan/Zoning By-law. By repealing the Green Energy Act, municipalities once again have the authority to permit, block, alter, or control renewable energy generation projects through the Official Plan.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Natural Resources, *Naturally Resilient*, 2017, page 14.

## Provincial Policy Statement

Several PPS policies require Milton to plan and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate, as summarized below:

- Policy 1.1.3.2 states that land use patterns within settlement areas shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:
  - c) *minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency; and*
  - d) *prepare for the impacts of a changing climate.*
- Section 1.8 requires Milton to:
  - f) *promote design and orientation which maximizes energy efficiency and conservation, and considers the mitigating effects of vegetation and green infrastructure; and*
  - g) *maximize vegetation within settlement areas, where feasible.*

## Growth Plan

The GGH Growth Plan is based on a set of Guiding Principles, one of which is to:

*Integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and infrastructure - that are adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate - and moving towards environmentally sustainable communities by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*

Under section 4.2.9 of the Growth Plan, municipal official plan policies are required to support more environmentally sustainable ways of living, including:

- *Water conservation (i.e., water demand management and water recycling);*
- *Energy conservation for existing buildings and planned developments (i.e., conservation, energy efficiency and demand management, district energy generation, renewable energy systems, alternative energy systems and distribution, and land use patterns and urban design standards that support energy efficiency and demand reductions);*
- *Air quality improvement and protection including emissions reduction; and*
- *Integrated waste management.*



**Section 3.0 of the PPS also outlines measures to mitigate potential risk to public health or safety due to natural flooding hazards. Homes and other uses located near rivers and valleys like the Sixteen Mile Creek are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events. Heavy storms that result in significant precipitation over a short period of time increase the chance for flooding because the land cannot absorb water fast enough. This is even more difficult in the winter when the ground is frozen. Planning for natural hazards such as flooding is explored further in the Growing in Milton paper.**

**Urban centres will be vibrant and characterized by more compact development patterns that support climate change mitigation and adaptation, and provide a diversity of opportunities for living. (Ontario's Vision for the GGH, A Place to Grow, 2020).**



Additionally, per Section 4.2.10, municipalities must develop official plan policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change adaptation. Under these policies, related to the theme of Living, Official Plans are required to:

- a) Support the achievement of complete communities and minimum intensification and density targets;*
- h) Promote local food and support local food security;*
- i) Provide direction that supports a culture of conservation; and*
- j) Generally reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience.*

**Urban centres will be vibrant and characterized by more compact development patterns that support climate change mitigation and adaptation, and provide a diversity of opportunities for living. (Ontario's Vision for the GGH, A Place to Grow, 2020).**

Under policy 4.2.10.2, municipalities are also encouraged to:

- a) Develop strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve resilience;*
- b) Develop greenhouse gas inventories for transportation, buildings, waste management and municipal operations; and*
- c) Establish greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that consider the goal of low-carbon communities and monitor and report on progress made.*

**Recognizing that watersheds are the most important scale for protecting water quality and quantity, Section 4.2.1.2 of the Growth Plan requires municipalities, in partnership with Conservation Authorities, to identify Water Resource Systems and provide watershed planning for the long-term protection of key hydrologic features, areas, and functions. In addition, a Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System is identified by the Growth Plan for the GGH, which must be implemented through Official Plans. The relationship between our watersheds, these important large-scale systems, and climate change adaptation and mitigation are explored further in the Growing in Milton Reports.**



### **Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan**

In 2018, the “Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan” was released by the Province. Chapter 3 (Addressing Climate Change) is said to act as Ontario’s climate change plan, which fulfills the commitment under the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018. Several Provincial actions are identified, including:

- *Completion of a provincial-level climate change impact assessment;*
- *Helping Ontarians understand the impacts of climate change; and*
- *Updating government policies (such the Ontario Building Code) and building partnerships to improve local climate resilience. The “Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan” also sets a greenhouse gas reduction target that aligns with Canada’s target under the Paris Agreement. The target states that Ontario will reduce its emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.*

# Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

## Existing Regional Official Plan

The Vision Statement for the Regional Official Plan broadly promotes the concept of sustainable development across Halton. According to policy 25:

*Regional Council subscribes to the following principles of sustainability: that natural resources are not being over-used; that waste generated does not accumulate over time; that the natural environment is not being degraded; and that this and future generations' capacity to meet their physical, social and economic needs is not being compromised. The overall goal is to enhance the quality of life for all people of Halton, today and into the future.*

The Region's Vision describes a future landscape that will always consist of three principal land use categories: (1) settlement areas (2) a rural countryside and (3) a natural heritage system. According to policy 27:

*The land uses in these categories are complementary to each other and will together move Halton towards the goal of sustainability.*

Notwithstanding the concept of sustainable development, which is highlighted with prominence throughout the current ROP, policies specific to climate change mitigation and adaptation are limited to the following in Part IV (Environmental Quality):

- *It is a policy of the Region to engage the Halton community in the pursuit of measures, including the undertaking of pilot projects, to address climate change, improve air quality, promote energy and water conservation, pursue the use of renewable energy sources, and generally improve environmental quality in Halton (s. 141(6));*
- *It is an objective of the Region to improve air quality and to address the impact of climate change (s. 142(2)); and*
- *It is a policy of the Region to, in consultation with the Halton community, develop a Halton*

**The Region's Natural Heritage System (RNHS) is important when it comes to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The RNHS protects about 50.6% of the Region and provides for more resilient environments and can reduce impacts of flooding and other risks associated with extreme weather events. The RNHS can also play an important role in acting as a carbon sink to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The current Milton Official Plan implements the existing RNHS, and we'll explore this topic further in the Growing in Milton Report.**



**To enhance the sustainability framework of the ROP, Halton Region is currently applying a climate change lens to the ROPR. While specific policy recommendations have yet to be identified, Milton will be required to implement new Regionally focused climate change policies; however, there may also be an opportunity to craft locally-focused approaches to climate change through We Make Milton.**

*Response Plan to climate change, including measures and best management practices the Halton community can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon dioxide in Halton (s. 143(2)).*

A set of policy areas/themes that could be strengthened to respond better to climate change have been identified by Halton Region in its June 2020 ROPR Climate Change Discussion paper ([which can be viewed here](#)). According to the Region's Climate Change Discussion paper:

*Addressing climate change through the ROPR is important given the significant impact land use policies have on the environment. It has been shown that land use planning decisions have lasting impacts on the environment by creating a "lock-in" effect whereby past decisions have a lingering impact that limits future options and drives costs thereof. This is particularly important since land use policies shape communities, determine population densities and address connectivity to goods and services; these factors influence lifestyles for decades to follow.*

## Other Regional Initiatives

**Halton Regional Council also passed a resolution to declare a climate change emergency on September 11, 2019. The resolution followed similar ones declared by each of the Region's four municipal Councils**

**Halton's Strategic Business Plan 2019 - 2022 also lists environmental sustainability and climate change as one of its five themes and highlights the importance of responding to climate change and reducing the Region's carbon footprint.**

**Other Regional climate change responses include the Corporate Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP), the Basement Flooding Mitigation Program, and the LED Street Light Conversion Program.**

## Local Policies, Plans, and Directions

### Current Official Plan

Milton's current Official Plan establishes an overall planning framework that is based on a set of directions and strategic objectives (Section 2.1.2) that were established by the community at the time it was written. The following are most closely related to the topic of climate change mitigation and adaptation:

- *Maximize community safety and security (S.2.1.2.10);*
- *Protect and enhance natural heritage (S.2.1.2.15); and*
- *Encourage new development to be integrated with the natural environment (S.2.1.2.16).*

In the Environmental Control Section of the current Official Plan (Section 2.3) there are a limited number of policies that address conservation and environmental sustainability:

- *Section 2.3.3.2 makes several references to the Green Energy Act (which was repealed by the Province in 2018, as mentioned earlier);*
- *Section 2.3.3.5 promotes, encourages, and supports energy conservation measures through new development; and*
- *Sections 2.3.3.6 - 2.3.3.8 encourage water conservation and efficiency in new development/ retrofits, landscaping, and municipal servicing systems.*

**The current Milton Official Plan also implements the existing RNHS. However, in order to prepare for new greenfield growth in our urban area, refinements to the RNHS are made through detailed subwatershed studies and environmental management systems which are prepared for Secondary Plans, in accordance with the ROP. This is discussed further in the Growing in Milton Report.**



In recent years, other local initiatives have been undertaken in Milton to respond to the climate change emergency, as summarized below. These initiatives can also inform new Official Plan policies.

### **2020/21 Climate Action Plans**

Milton Council declared a Climate Change Emergency on July 22, 2019 and, on April 27, to support its commitment to protect the environment and mitigate the impacts of changing climate, a 2020 Climate Change Action Plan was endorsed through report COMS-001-20 ([click here to review](#)). On November 16, 2020, through report COMS-007-20 ([click here to review](#)), a status update was provided to Council and the following actions were identified for 2021 (in addition to continuing many of the 2020 actions):

#### **1. Undertake the following specific environmental initiatives:**

- *Continue to advocate for forestry / tree canopy health*
- *Continue to build upon renewable energy sources where opportunities are available*
- *Continue to implement climate change lens application to all work plans, capital works, operational activities and events*
- *Sustainable planning policies will be reviewed, enhanced and updated where applicable*

#### **2. Various green infrastructure projects and capital and maintenance programs.**

### **2018 Green Innovation Plan**

Council approved the Milton Green Innovation Plan (GIP) through ES 017-181<sup>1</sup> on September 24, 2018. Its overall purpose is to provide a baseline review of energy usage and emissions from

<sup>1</sup> This report can be obtained by contacting Milton's Policy planning staff.

the town's assets and the community at large, and to identify actions to increase conservation awareness and reduce emissions. Under the umbrella of the GIP, the following were also prepared:

1. a Corporate Energy Plan; and
2. a Community Energy Plan.

While the scope of each plan differs, the ultimate goal is that they work together to establish a consistent vision, targets and actions to conserve and reduce emissions in Milton. A brief summary of some of the relevant land use planning actions identified in each plan, which can help inform the new Official Plan, is provided below.

### 2018 Corporate Energy Plan

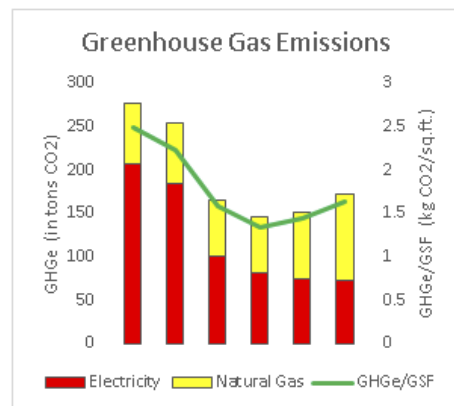
Milton's Corporate Energy Plan [can be accessed here](#). It provides an overview of the Corporate assets of the Town of Milton, looking at energy trend data and setting a baseline to measure against future performance, and then presents a plan on how to manage energy and emissions over a 5-year period.

Taken from the Corporate Energy Plan, Figure 5 shows overall corporate facility emissions across the town from 2012 to 2017; however, it is noted that the sharp increase in 2015 is the result of several new facilities beginning full-scale operations that year, among other growth-related factors. On the other hand, when we look at GHG emissions for individual facilities across Milton, which is a large focus of the Corporate Energy Plan, many experienced significant emission reductions between the same time period. Figure 6 looks at Milton Town Hall (150 Mary Street), where significant reductions are the result of municipal investment in more efficient equipment, such as mechanical, lighting, HVAC, building controls, solar panels, and grey water recovery.

**The Corporate Energy Plan focuses on municipal facilities, which make up a large portion of the Town's assets by energy usage, and can present significant opportunities for reductions.**



**Figure 5: Change in Total Corporate Facility Emissions (2012-2017)**



**Figure 6: Change in Total Facility Emissions for Town Hall (2012-2017)**

## 2018 Community Energy Plan

Milton's Community Energy Plan [can be accessed here](#). It provides an overview of current energy usage, GHG emissions, and conservation programs in place across the Milton community (outside of public facilities). It also outlines the roles of the Town and its partners/stakeholders in managing emissions, and an action plan for creating a culture of conservation and responsible energy management across Milton.

An energy baseline for Milton is provided in the Community Energy Plan, using the utility data from Milton Hydro and Union Gas usage totals. Figure 7 shows the baseline for energy usage within our residential areas. As shown, emissions increased in Milton from 2016 to 2017; however, the data must again be considered within the context of Milton's growth, which is much higher than the provincial average.

Both the Corporate Energy Plan and the Community Energy Plan are to be reviewed every five years, which means that more current energy usage and emissions data will likely be available in the coming years.

Figure 7: Community Energy Plan Baseline Emissions for Milton's Residential Uses

GHG Emissions (kg CO2e per year)			
	2015	2016	2017
<b>Residential</b>			
Electricity	13,295,162	13,804,370	12,900,463
Natural Gas		112,094,274	119,159,298
Total Residential		125,898,645	132,059,762
Percentage of Total		24%	24%

Milton Council adopted the MEV Secondary Plan on December 14, 2020, which provides a framework for sustainable infrastructure and innovative, green building technologies. The 'deep green' planning policies of the MEV can be reviewed to help inform new Town-wide Official Plan policies.

The Community Energy Plan states that "responsible land use management and conservation can have significant impacts on both emissions reduction and long-term management of climate adaptation and mitigation" and the following objective is identified:

*Ensure land use policies and plans enhance community energy efficiency, climate change adaptation and mitigation, through linking land use to buildings and transportation.*

The following specific actions are identified:

1. Achieve carbon offsets through promotion of Urban Forest Management Strategy; and
2. Use the Milton Education Village (MEV) Secondary Plan as a pilot for Deep Green planning.

Notably, in establishing local targets, both the Corporate Energy Plan and the Community Energy Plan state that Milton is committed to moving towards the emissions reduction targets established in the Ontario Climate Change Action Plan (OCCAP), which is no longer in effect.



This objective will also be explored in the Moving in Milton Discussion Paper, as it relates to linking land use to transportation.

## Other Milton Initiatives

Other recent sustainability/climate change responses implemented by Milton, which can help reduce emissions, enhance our local resiliency, and inform the new Official Plan project, include:

- **Facility Design and Retrofits:** new facilities have been designed to LEED Certified standards. Energy efficiency measures have been implemented across existing facilities including low flow fixtures, energy efficient lighting, occupancy controls and geothermal heat recovery system. Solar panels, gray water recovery systems, water bottle refill stations, and electric vehicle charging stations have also been implemented at public facilities.
- **Private Development Applications:** Green building principles (based on LEED) are encouraged through site plan approval.
- **Tree planting:** In 2020, Milton planted 731 trees in streetscapes and parks and an additional 600 potted trees are being planted in partnership with Conservation Halton, Sustainable Milton and Anne J. MacArthur Public School.
- **Community Gardens:** Milton has undertaken two joint projects with the Milton District Horticultural Society to provide gardening plots for residents: the Allendale Community Garden and Sunny Mount Park Community Garden.

**LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Available for virtually all building types, LEED provides a framework for healthy, highly efficient, and cost-saving green buildings. LEED certification is a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement and leadership.**

## Current Planning Practices

The following is a review of current planning practices in other jurisdictions, which Milton can consider for the new Official Plan as it relates to Living in Milton. Examples are organized into the following categories:

1. Setting Goals, Objectives, and an Approach to More Sustainable Homes and Neighbourhoods;
2. Implementing Local Energy and Emissions Targets;
3. Creating Complete Communities;
4. Promoting Sustainable Sites and Greener Homes;
5. Supporting Residential Building Retrofits;
6. Enhancing Urban Tree Cover and Vegetation; and
7. Growing Community Resiliency.

**Reducing emissions and being prepared will also contribute to a vibrant urban environment, improve public health outcomes, reduce municipal operating and capital costs, and support innovation. These additional benefits are known as co-benefits. (Region of Peel Climate Change Master Plan).**

While the *Planning Act* and relevant provincial policies set a minimum standard, some of the current practices reviewed

have gone beyond these standards in order to align with broader community vision and goals - while still remaining consistent with legislation.

## **Setting Goals, Objectives, and an Approach to More Sustainable Homes and Neighbourhoods**

In 2018, the Clean Air Partnership (CAP) conducted a preliminary scan exploring how Ontario municipalities are integrating climate change into their Official Plans and the results were published in a report that can be accessed [here](#). The following policy suggestions were identified:

- *The OP should reference language for why climate action is important to the municipality and why climate change needs to be incorporated into OPs.*
- *There is the opportunity for the insertion of the above climate change language to serve as an educational opportunity describing the context, science, roles and commitments of different orders of government, social, economic and environmental connections and synergies.*
- *The OP should define what climate change means to the municipality and what they see as their role, what they will do, and how they will report on it.*

For example, in order to define the City of Guelph's role as it relates to climate change, its current Official Plan, [which can be viewed here](#), sets out the following strategic goals for 'Protecting What is Valuable' (Section 2.2):

*d. Establish and implement policies and actions that will contribute to achieving the targets of the City's Community Energy Plan.*

*e. Support an integrated approach to meeting the energy needs of the community by designing places and buildings in a way that minimizes consumption of energy and water and production of waste whereby supporting an increasingly low carbon footprint.*

*f. Promote opportunities for the use and generation of renewable and alternative energy systems.*

*g. Decouple energy consumption from population growth.*

*h. Advance innovation by building on the synergies between infrastructure, built form and climate change imperatives.*

**Guelph also provides Section 4.6 which explains why climate action is important and Section 4.7 which is dedicated to implementing the local Community Energy Plan, as discussed below.**

In November 2020, the City of Ottawa introduced a draft new Official Plan that also identifies planning for climate change as a strategic direction:

*A Strategic Direction of the plan is to embed environmental, climate and health resiliency and energy into the framework of our planning policies. Energy and Climate Change is described in Section 2.2.3 as one of six 'cross cutting issues' or themes that are essential to the achievement of a liveable city. Using a climate lens, a set of goals were applied to multiple sections in the Plan using two distinct pathways:*



1. *Mitigation: Actions that reduce the amount of greenhouse gases the city emits, and;*

2. *Adaptation: Actions that prepare us for the impacts of a changing climate.*

Ottawa has also taken the approach of embedding environmental, climate and health resiliency and energy policies into the overall framework of the Official Plan, as opposed to dedicating an entire chapter to climate change policies. A summary of how these topics have been integrated into the new Draft OP has been prepared by City of Ottawa staff and [can be reviewed here](#).

**Figure 8: City of Ottawa Proposed Strategic Goals for Adaptation and Mitigation**



On the other hand, the Town of Ajax is an example of how climate change policies can be organized into one dedicated section – rather than integrating and embedding them throughout the plan, as shown in Figure 9, below, which is an excerpt from the Town of Ajax Official Plan table of contents.

**Figure 9: Town of Ajax Official Plan Climate Change Section**

York Region can also be highlighted in terms of the overall approach it has taken to address climate change and sustainability in its Official Plan ([which can be accessed here](#)). According to

<b>2.1 CLIMATE CHANGE CONTEXT AND GENERAL ENVIRONMENT POLICIES .....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1.1 Goals .....	13
2.1.2 Climate Change Protection .....	14
2.1.3 Air Quality and Urban Heat Island .....	15
2.1.4 Tree Canopy .....	16
2.1.5 Energy Conservation .....	16
2.1.6 Water Conservation .....	17
2.1.7 Urban Agriculture .....	18
2.1.8 Outdoor Lighting .....	19
2.1.9 Renewable Energy .....	20
2.1.10 Lake Ontario Waterfront .....	21
2.1.10.1 Goals .....	21
2.1.10.2 Policies .....	22
2.1.11 Watershed Planning .....	24
2.1.11.1 Goals .....	24
2.1.11.2 Policies .....	25
2.1.12 Petroleum Resources .....	27
2.1.13 Flood Risk Reassessment .....	27
2.1.14 Health Impact Assessment .....	27

Section 1.2 (Introduction), the Region uses a 'Triple bottom Line' approach as a lens to implement land use policy:

*Sustainability is the lens through which York Region formulates, enhances and implements policy. The award-winning York Region Sustainability Strategy: Towards a Sustainable Region, provides a long term framework for making smarter decisions about all municipal responsibilities that fully evaluates economic, environmental and community considerations. This "triple bottom line approach" will be used to evaluate a number of key emerging trends facing York Region, including:*

- *an aging and diverse society*
- *an urbanizing region defined by vibrant centres*
- *the impact of the built environment on social cohesion among/within communities*
- *climate change, energy conservation and renewable sources of energy*
- *societal health issues such as obesity, mental illnesses, and cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.*

### **Implementing Local Energy and Emissions Targets**

Again, according to CAP's research on integrating climate change into municipal Official Plans, the following is suggested:

*If the Municipality already has a council approved Climate Mitigation/Adaptation Plan then integration into appropriate sections of the OP could include any of the following:*

- *Summarize community energy and emissions;*
- *Identify GHG targets (and any other corresponding targets);*
- *Set-out actions that the municipality has prioritized in the Climate Action Plan;*
- *Summarize the priority risks and actions to address and mitigate risk; and*
- *Outline monitoring, evaluation, progress reporting.*

Looking at Guelph again, Policy 4.6.1 of the Official Plan recognizes that climate adaptation is particularly important to infrastructure planning, flood protection, emergency management and planning for secure access to water and food. The following targets are established in the current Official Plan based on the City's Community Energy Plan:

**What does Triple Bottom Line mean? Triple bottom line (abbreviated as TBL or 3BL, and also known as people, planet, profit) was first coined in 1994 by John Elkington, the founder of a British consultancy called SustainAbility. It describes values and criteria for measuring business performance inclusive of economic, ecological and social factors and impacts. It implies that when companies measure their social and environmental impact, the outcome will be socially and environmentally responsible organisations. Other similar concepts and terms include full cost accounting, natural capital and human capital, and corporate social responsibility (CSR).**

*The City will establish policies and undertake programs to target reducing annual greenhouse gas emissions by 60% from 2007 levels to 7 tonnes of carbon dioxide (equivalent) per capita by 2031.*

The current Guelph OP also includes policies on Community Energy (Section 4.7), which recognize the integrated nature of land use, transportation and energy when planning to reduce energy use and for climate change mitigation, and state that the City will target reducing Guelph's overall energy use by 50% from 2007 levels to 34 megawatt hours (equivalent) per capita by 2031.

**Guelph's local energy plan was recently updated to state that Guelph will become a net zero carbon community by 2050 and that it will strive to achieve one hundred percent of its energy needs through renewable sources by 2050. The City is also undertaking an Official Plan review, which states that Section 4.7 of the OP will be updated to implement this target.**

### *Creating Complete Communities*

As mentioned in the Living in Milton Background and Information Paper, and to be discussed in more detail in the Growing in Milton Reports, the population of the Region of Halton is projected to grow by more than half a million people by the year 2051. As we grow, Provincial directions require us to reduce the travel distance between homes, workplaces, and institutional areas and places for shopping and recreation. The result will be more compact and complete communities.

**According to the Province, "complete communities support quality of life and human health. Whether they are urban, suburban or rural, complete communities:**

- are compact
- foster vibrant public interaction and give residents a sense of place
- encourage active transportation
- make efficient use of infrastructure
- support transit
- provide a mix of housing types and offer a range of affordability
- offer a range of employment opportunities
- offer access to healthy local food
- are designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change."

**(Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=15007>)

As an example of current planning practices, the entire Chapter 7 of the current City of Mississauga Official Plan is dedicated to the creating complete communities/completing existing communities. Section 7.1.3, for example, states:

*In order to create a complete community and develop a built environment supportive of public health, the City will:*

- a. encourage compact, mixed use development that reduces travel needs by integrating residential, commercial, employment, community, and recreational land uses;*
- b. design streets that facilitate alternative modes of transportation such as public transit, cycling, and walking;*
- c. encourage environments that foster incidental and recreational activity; and*
- d. encourage land use planning practices conducive to good public health.*

**Promoting a compact urban built form and an energy efficient pattern and mix of land-uses within existing and new neighbourhoods close to centres of activity and transportation corridors and within walkable neighbourhoods will have a significant impact on reducing emissions associated with growth.**

The City of Mississauga is also in the process of an Official Plan Review and has noted in a June 2021 [policy brief](#) on the topic of planning for a changing climate that updates are required to Chapter 7 to “reinforce the importance of complete communities in addressing climate change both through mitigation (i.e. compact and diverse communities have lower GHG levels) and adaptation (i.e. protecting important and biodiverse natural areas from development encroachment strengthens the City’s resilience).”<sup>2</sup> For example, the City’s policy brief states that changes to create more complete communities may include “encouraging, where feasible, alternative and renewable energy systems (ex. district energy) consistent with provincial direction.”

### **Promoting Sustainable Sites and Greener Homes**

In 2020, the CAP also released a municipal toolkit entitled “Towards Low Carbon Communities: Creating Municipal Green Development Standards”, [which can be accessed here](#). This toolkit is intended to help municipalities achieve Official Plan goals and objectives related to planning for climate change and GHG reductions. The toolkit considers how we can encourage the development of healthy, well-designed buildings and sites that contribute overall to healthier and more complete communities - specifically through the use of Green Development Standards.

**What are Green Development Standards (GDS)? They are voluntary or mandatory measures developed by municipalities to encourage developers and builders to create thoughtful and innovative developments using sustainable design. GDS are a critical policy tool for municipalities to achieve their GHG reduction targets, their Official Plan goals, and their goals in many areas of sustainability. (Clean Air Partnership, 2020)**

<sup>2</sup> <https://yoursay.mississauga.ca/9182/widgets/35619/documents/59420>

According to the CAP, GDS are one of the most powerful tools municipalities have for fighting climate change. Since municipalities have the authority over local planning decisions, including the ability to approve new developments, GDS can be used to require improved and more sustainable design features for residential building, site, and streetscape features. The goal of GDS is to increase the uptake of measures within new developments that improve the environmental performance of new developments. Municipalities can use GDS to evaluate documents and technical reports that describe the sustainable aspects of proposed developments and how local goals will be achieved.

**The authority to implement GDS comes from:**

- **Provincial interests established by Section 2 of the *Planning Act*;**
- **The Municipal Act, which provides municipalities with the ability to:**
  - a. **pass a by-law respecting the environmental well-being of the municipality, including climate change;**
  - b. **require the construction of green roofs/ alternative roof surfaces that achieve similar performance to green roofs;**
- **Powers under the *Planning Act*, such as Section 41 (Site Plan Control), which allow a municipality to influence the design of development sites, including external building design details; and**
- **Many PPS policies that identify the need to plan for sustainable development and resiliency.)**

**The Ontario Building Code (OBC) also establishes standards that match industry best practices in energy and water conservation. Municipalities have authority beyond the OBC when it comes to shaping their communities. Recent proposed changes to the current Code, intended to step-up the requirements of new houses and large buildings towards net-zero, but these have not yet come into effect.**

As an example, in 2010, the Town of Halton Hills developed a voluntary Green Development Evaluation Checklist, which was later updated and became a mandatory set of standards for new developments. The Halton Hills Thinking Green Development Standards (TGDS), which [can be reviewed here](#), apply within the Town's urban boundaries to applications for new residential development of all types.

**Low Impact Development (LID) is an approach for dealing with stormwater mimicking natural water cycles. According to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, LID increases the infiltration of stormwater into the soil, where it can be filtered and/or absorbed by plants. LID is a lower-cost alternative to conventional infrastructure. Examples include: rain gardens, bioswales, infiltration trenches, permeable pavement, and rainwater harvesting.**

The Halton Hills GDS use a checklist approach whereby applicants can choose the most appropriate criteria for the project, so long as a minimum point threshold is achieved. The checklist addresses the following from the building, site, and broader design level:

- Energy conservation measures such as: building to the EnergyStar standard; solar panel streetlights; and site layout/building orientation to maximize solar gain.
- Water conservation and quality measures such as: water-efficient fixtures; rain barrels; subdivision and site design to reduce impermeable surfaces; stormwater runoff through the use of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques; and use of native drought tolerant plant material.
- Community design such as: encouraging grid or modified grid patterns; bicycle and pedestrian connections; and streetscapes.
- Air quality such as: use of low or no VOC paints and finishes and the provision of additional street trees and shade trees.
- Innovation and other green features: which requires the builder to provide and promote other green technologies, or implement other innovative design features.
- Waste management: which includes the use of a minimum of 25% certified wood-based products; and
- Communication: which requires that the building's green development features are explained to the occupants.

**Green Development Standards can be applied to residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, mixed-use, and any other type of new development in Milton. This is a current practice that will also be explored as we talk about other land uses in the We Make Milton Big Question Reports.**

Importantly, the Halton Hills Official Plan contains policy requiring compliance with the Green Development Standards. Policy C19.1 notes that a development application will only be deemed to have met the Town's sustainability goals if it meets the requirements of the Green Development Standards adopted by Council, and as amended from time to time, to provide detailed direction for the implementation of this policy. The implementation process is shown in Figure 10.

Finally, when looking at how to encourage and promote the creation of more sustainable residential buildings, some municipalities also encourage and support retrofits and enhancements to existing residential/mixed-use building stock to enhance energy efficiency. Once again, according to CAP:

*Addressing emissions from residential buildings is critical, as they represent one of the biggest sources of GHG emissions in municipalities. However, this has been historically difficult to do, as it requires convincing many thousands of homeowners to invest in energy retrofits – measures to increase the energy efficiency of their homes – which are often disruptive and costly for homeowners.*

## Supporting Residential Building Retrofits

Several retrofit programs from upper levels of government and utility companies across Canada provide financial assistance to homeowners for energy efficient retrofits. For example, although Milton Hydro does not provide incentive programs, it does refer residents to the provincial SaveONenergy program. Through this program, depending on eligibility, Ontario building owners may receive the following at no cost:

- ENERGY STAR®-certified LED light bulbs
- High-efficiency showerheads
- Faucet aerators (kitchen and bathroom)
- Drying line for clothes
- Energy-efficient refrigerator
- Window air conditioner
- Smart power strip
- Additional attic or basement insulation
- Weatherstripping around doors and windows
- Smart thermostat(s)

In addition to programs from upper-tier governments and utility providers, some municipalities have developed their own retrofit programs. For example, the City of Toronto offers three options for building retrofits, as summarized in Table 11 below.

**Table 11: City of Toronto Building Retrofit Options**

Program Name	Grant Details	Eligible Projects and Costs
<b>The Home Energy Loan Program (HELP)</b>	<p>Toronto homeowners can apply for a low-interest loan of up to \$75,000 to cover the cost of home energy improvements.</p> <p>To be eligible, homeowners must own a detached, semi-detached, or row house in the City of Toronto.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-efficiency furnaces/boilers/air conditioners</li> <li>• Window/door replacements</li> <li>• Basement/attic/exterior wall insulation</li> <li>• Air sealing (e.g. weather stripping or caulking)</li> <li>• Geothermal systems</li> <li>• Solar hot water systems</li> <li>• Rooftop solar panels</li> </ul>

**Figure 10: Halton Hills GDS Checklist Implementation Process**



Program Name	Grant Details	Eligible Projects and Costs
<b>Energy Retrofit Loans program</b>	<p>Land owners can apply for loans to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. The City offers financing for up to 100% of project costs, at a rate equal to the City's cost of borrowing, with repayment terms up to 20 years</p> <p>All buildings located in Toronto are eligible, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-Family Residential</li> <li>• Condominium buildings (common areas only, not individual units)</li> <li>• Social Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting retrofits</li> <li>• High-efficiency boilers, chillers and HVAC</li> <li>• Building automation systems and controls</li> <li>• Renewable energy projects</li> <li>• Energy storage</li> <li>• Fuel switching</li> <li>• Other retrofit measures/ technologies</li> </ul>
<b>Eco-Roof Incentive Program</b>	<p>Provides grants for Green Roofs and Cool Roofs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For green roofs, the incentive is \$100 per m<sup>2</sup> of vegetated area to a maximum of \$100,000.</li> <li>• Cool roof incentives are \$5 per m<sup>2</sup> for a cool roof with a new membrane, or \$2 per m<sup>2</sup> for a cool roof coating over an existing roof, up to \$50,000.</li> </ul> <p>All existing or new residential buildings are eligible for the program.</p>	<p>Green roofs, which support the growth of vegetation.</p> <p>A cool roof or white roof is a roofing system with an exterior surface that reflects the sun's rays and reduces heat build-up from the sun's thermal energy.</p>

Under Section 83(1) of the *City of Toronto Act*, the municipality is able to provide loans and grants to any person, group or body, within or outside the boundaries of Toronto for any purpose that council considers to be in the interests of the City. While the Town of Milton is also able to provide grants and loans, it is only permitted to do so for certain properties and/or uses under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* which provides the authority for Community Improvement Plans (CIPs).

**A federal program called the 'Canada Greener Homes Grant' is also currently available, which provides eligible participants with up to \$5,600 to make energy efficient retrofits**

<https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy-efficiency/homes/canada-greener-homes-grant/23441>

**Section 28 of the *Planning Act* states:**

**"Grants or loans can only be provided to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the area to which a Community Improvement Plan applies, and to any person to whom such an owner tenant has assigned" and "Grants and loans may only be provided for costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities."**



Many CIPs across Ontario have programs that provide grants and loans for energy efficiency retrofits under the *Planning Act*, which are structured similar to the City of Toronto, such as the Towns of Caledon, Meaford, Blue Mountains, and the Cities of Hamilton, Kitchener of Waterloo - to name only a few. Grant values for energy efficiency retrofit programs often range anywhere from \$3,000 to \$25,000.

### ***Enhancing Urban Tree Cover and Vegetation***

According to Section 2.1.4 of the Ajax Official Plan, the extent of tree cover across the Town will help improve air quality and lower air temperature during summer months. By expanding and providing a more robust tree cover, bird and wildlife habitat is created, the urban heat island effect is reduced, and it helps connect/link open spaces and other natural areas.<sup>3</sup>

**What does 'urban tree cover/canopy' mean? According to the City of Hamilton, it is the area of leaves and branches (tree crowns) measured, when viewed from above, as a proportion of total land area. It is usually expressed as a percent of total ground area covered by tree crowns.<sup>4</sup> For example, in 2018, the City of Hamilton had 21.2% canopy cover. It also has a future cover target identified in its Urban Official Plan, as discussed below.**

**What does 'urban heat island effect' mean? The urban heat island (UHI) effect is another factor known to magnify health impacts during extreme heat events. UHIs are defined as urban areas that are hotter than surrounding rural areas (US EPA, 2008). The average air temperature of medium to large cities in North America is generally 1°C to 3°C warmer than the surrounding countryside, and up to 12°C warmer in some places (Oke, 1997; Oke et al., 2017). Built surfaces such as roofs, paved roads, and parking lots can absorb large quantities of radiant heat from the sun, resulting in increases in both surface and air temperatures. The higher air temperatures in cities, particularly at night, can limit the body's ability to cool down during extreme heat events (Laaidi et al., 2012), magnifying the risks of adverse health impacts during such events.**

To maintain, protect, and enhance the existing tree canopy, the Ajax Official Plan provides the following policies:

- a. *Develop and implement an Urban Forest Management Plan;*
- b. *Encourage the planting of native or non-native non-invasive tree species and vegetation that are resilient to climate change and provide high levels of carbon sequestration, subject to the Town's approval, particularly through new development and on municipally-owned land;*

<sup>3</sup> Town of Ajax Official Plan.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2019-08-12/urban-forest-strategy-public-workshop-june19-presentation.pdf>

- c. Consider enacting a Town-wide tree-cutting by-law to regulate the destruction or injury of trees;
- d. Encourage the use of water-conserving irrigation systems and the provision of adequate permeable surfaces around newly planted trees to establish a secure root system;
- e. Require reimbursement, in the form of new trees or financial compensation, for all healthy trees proposed to be removed in development applications, based on the findings of a Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan;
- f. Encourage tree planting by local residents and organizations, and educate residents about the benefits of planting trees versus the environmental impact of removing trees; and,
- g. Implement measures to protect, enhance, and expand the tree canopy, including but not limited to:
  - i. requiring tree planting in areas of extensive surface parking;
  - ii. promoting development that maximizes areas for tree plants; and
  - iii. preserving the existing tree canopy.

**The City of Hamilton Draft Urban Forest Strategy focuses on trees and woodlands in maintained parks, green spaces, natural areas and ravines, and on the escarpment, along streets, and in neighbourhoods, commercial, institutional, and industrial areas. It also addresses trees and woodlands on public and privately owned lands. The Hamilton Urban Forest Strategy provides the vision and strategic direction for long-term planning, protection and maintenance of trees and forests in Hamilton's urban area.**

The City of Hamilton goes further by identifying a tree canopy target of 30% in the Urban Area Official Plan, which is based on the minimum amount of forest cover needed to sustain basic watershed function. The City has also prepared a Draft Hamilton Urban Forest Strategy (January 2021) [which can be viewed here](#).

The amount of tree cover can also have positive health impacts. In 2020, Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) released its 2020 Prevention System Quality Index which focuses on policy and program indicators to reduce cancer risk factors and exposures in Ontario. The report identifies 8 cancer risk factors, including Ultraviolet radiation. According to CCO, "built structures and dense tree canopies can provide shade and protect people from UVR exposure. Shade can protect from UVR exposure more reliably than sunscreen. Policies focusing on shade can help increase the availability of effective shade structures and trees in places where people spend time outdoors, such as public parks, bus stops and children's play areas."

CCO suggests that local planning documents such as Official Plans can contain statements on shade to help increase shade in new developments and renewal projects. The Town of Ajax is identified as a municipality with strong shade policies in its Official Plan, which are summarized here:

2.1.1. To achieve the environmental principles of this Plan, the Town shall: m) Provide shade, using natural and artificial structures placed in convenient, accessible locations in a manner that is sensitive to the surrounding environment to create protection against ultraviolet radiation at the right time of day and at the right time of year.

2.1.3 The Town recognizes that poor air quality and the urban heat island effect have adverse effects on both human health and the natural environment. Accordingly, the Town shall: e) Promote the installation of artificial shade, such as covered walkways, awnings and canopies, in appropriate locations.

2.5.2.1 The Town intends to enhance the connectivity, sustainability and aesthetics of streetscapes and landscaping throughout the Built Environment, and strengthen connectivity to the Greenlands System by ensuring proper attention to detail is provided in the design and implementation of streetscapes and landscaping. Accordingly, the Town shall: c) Require all new development to provide amenity for the adjacent public realm to render these areas attractive, interesting, comfortable and functional for pedestrians by providing: iii) weather protection and shade, such as canopies and/or awnings.

**Urban agriculture refers to the growing, processing and distribution of food and food-related products in and around municipalities, for commercial or non-commercial uses. It can take place in backyards, community gardens, on balconies, rooftops or city lots. The term commonly refers to fruit and vegetable production, but can also include raising urban hens and beekeeping. (SustainOntario)**

Finally, when looking for ways to increase vegetation in urban areas, municipalities can promote urban agriculture activities. According to a 2017 municipal toolkit ([click here to view](#)) prepared by SustainOntario:

*Urban agriculture increases a city's greenspace, provides green infrastructure to filter pollutants, captures rainwater, builds rich soil, and creates habitats for insects and birds.<sup>17</sup> It can also contribute to decreasing direct solar radiation by providing shade, and can lower temperatures through evaporative cooling. This primarily impacts larger cities where the urban heat island effect, combined with climate change raises temperatures above the norm.<sup>5</sup>*

One of the most practical ways that municipalities can support urban agriculture is by defining, permitting, and regulating land uses like community gardens, urban farms, hydroponics and farmers markets; however, urban agriculture activities like these must first be encouraged by the Official Plan. The City of Guelph is an example of a municipality with an Official Plan that strongly encourages and supports these activities. In fact, an entire Section of the Official Plan is dedicated entirely to Urban Agriculture, and includes the following key directions:

- Section 9.1.3 establishes the following objectives for Urban Agriculture across the City:
  - a) To encourage urban agriculture throughout the city in appropriate locations.
  - b) To support a local food system including the cultivation of food within the urban environment.

<sup>5</sup> [https://sustainontario.com/custom/uploads/2017/02/SustainOntario\\_UrbanAgToolkit.pdf](https://sustainontario.com/custom/uploads/2017/02/SustainOntario_UrbanAgToolkit.pdf)

- Policy 1 permits urban agriculture, including community gardens, in all land use designations with the exception of Natural Areas and Significant Natural Areas unless otherwise limited by the provisions of this Plan and will be subject to City by-laws and guidelines.
- Policy 2 prohibits livestock-based agricultural operations in all land use designations.
- Policy 5 indicates that the City is supportive of a local food system that includes access to healthy foods at a neighbourhood level, the Guelph Farmers' Market, temporary farmers' markets and community gardens.
- Policy 6 promotes the use of underutilized sites and long-term development parcels for urban agriculture where appropriate and feasible, without limiting the potential for future development.
- Policy 7 states that locations for community gardens may be identified as part of the development approvals process. The City encourages the provision of space for community gardens, including roof top gardens, in addition to community amenity area requirements for new multiple residential development sites.
- Policy 8 states that the City will encourage community gardens by facilitating the use of parks and underutilized public lands for community gardens and by providing water, wood mulch or other forms of in-kind support.

**The City of Mississauga's Parks, Forestry & Environment Division is currently creating an Urban Agriculture Strategy that will help identify the City's role in supporting Corporate and community efforts to increase urban-scale food production across Mississauga.**

**Through the strategy, the City of Mississauga aims to encourage healthier lifestyles, empower the community to learn new skills about growing and harvesting produce and support local businesses with ties to urban agriculture.**

**As part of Mississauga's Urban Agriculture Strategy, the City has launched a public engagement campaign to determine the receptiveness of a city-wide Urban Hen Program. While it is noted that the keeping of hens in urban residential areas is growing in popularity in some places, this activity is typically not dealt with through local Official Plans. Rather, places like the City of Brampton and the Town of Caledon permit and regulate this activity through their animal control by-laws.**

- Policies 9 and 10 indicated that the City may partner and collaborate with other stakeholders to develop mechanisms to promote urban agriculture and to mitigate or remove barriers to urban agriculture.

### *Growing Community Resiliency*

As mentioned earlier, when we talk about uncertain and changing global conditions and the need to adapt and be resilient, we should also consider the long and short-term impacts of COVID-19 on land use planning across Milton. In fact, when we talk about growing resiliency, we should be planning for not only extreme weather as a result of climate change, but also a wider range of

threats, including viruses. According to the [Ryerson University Urban Resiliency Group](#), this approach is called ‘urban resiliency planning’, which is defined broadly as:

*Planning for mitigation, adaptability, and recovery from change. It centers around the ability for a community or area to bounce back and resume a business-as-normal pace following a drastic event or environmental shift. The focus is not a return to the status quo, but rather an effective adaptation to new circumstances. Resiliency thinking encompasses all scales and scopes, and so it must be understood at a high-level, systems-based scale, as well as a place-based, local context.<sup>6</sup>*

**“When it comes time to drive Canada’s post-COVID recovery, it won’t be enough to return to the status quo. Canadians will want us to build their country back better. After seeing inequality on such vivid display in these tough times, they’ll want an inclusive recovery whose benefits are widely shared. They’ll want a country that’s more sustainable and resilient to the next threat, be it a virus or climate change.” (Federation of Canadian Municipalities <https://data.fcm.ca/documents/COVID-19/fcm-building-back-better-together.pdf>)**

**In the Fall 2020 issue of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute ‘Y Magazine’ (a publication that explores emerging trends in the planning profession), several of Milton’s current planning projects were highlighted from the perspective of helping our community recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and planning for resiliency. We Make Milton, the Mobility Hub Study, and Milton’s recently adopted Culture Plan were all identified as some of the ways planning projects can contribute to resiliency and recovery. [The full article can be accessed here \(refer to page 18\)](#).**

Milton’s new Official Plan provides an opportunity to create a place-based, local approach to urban resiliency, specifically as it relates to building better communities and environments; however, since we are only nearing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the discussion around planning for urban resiliency will certainly evolve. Based on research on case studies of urban resiliency projects and practices by the Ryerson University Urban Resiliency Group in 2019, the following set of best practices and resiliency principles were identified, which can be applied to future planning processes:

<sup>6</sup> <https://ontarioplanners.ca/blog/planning-exchange/august-2019/urban-resiliency-what-is-it-and-why-does-it-matter>

## Figure 11: Guiding Principles for Urban Resiliency Planning

- (1) **Decentralization:** Systems shouldn't be reliant on a single part of the network to react to shocks and stresses. Resources and assets should be diversified and have redundancy built in, having multiple fail safes that mitigate adverse effects from shocks and stresses.
- (2) **Collaboration:** Involvement and contribution from a diversity of stakeholders is essential. Integrating the interests of stakeholders through an inclusive process is necessary to generate buy-in amongst those who will be implementing resiliency measures.
- (3) **Multifunctionality:** Uses need to be layered to adapt to unpredictable changes and provide co-benefits. Designing for multifunctionality identifies opportunities to efficiently use resources today, while preparing to be flexible and ready to transition to the future.
- (4) **Proactivity:** Systems need to be designed to anticipate potential shocks and stresses. They assess the likelihood and impact of a disruptive event, and plan accordingly.
- (5) **Inclusivity:** Truly resilient systems are barrier-free and inclusive to everyone. This includes a barrier-free physical environment, the inclusion of vulnerable populations, and public accessibility to the decision-making process.
- (6) **Financial Feasibility:** Resiliency needs to be viewed as a long-term investment that requires capital and operational funding in order to be financially sustainable. This requires innovative funding models and the efficient allocation of resources.
- (7) **Measurability:** Clear targets with specific, measurable outcomes are required. Standardized baselines and indicators ensure that data is shared with those who need it to inform evidence-based decision-making.

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

The following considerations have been identified as result of the above exploration of Big Question #2, for further discussion through We Make Milton:

### *1. Climate change policies are not optional, and must be addressed through our new Official Plan.*

Addressing climate change through our new Official Plan is not optional. In order to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and to conform/not conflict with provincial plans, Milton is required to:

- Prepare for the impacts of a changing climate;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Plan for more resilient, environmentally sustainable, and complete communities; and
- Support more sustainable ways for living, including energy and water conservation measures.

As it relates to living in Milton, the new Official Plan will have to address the above through new policies that provide for greener, healthier and more resilient ways of living. The following is a preliminary list of policy areas related to living in Milton that can be addressed in the new Official Plan to help conform to current requirements:

**Because climate change is being explored through all of the Living, Moving, Working, and Growing themes for We Make Milton, additional policy areas and options will be identified in other Big Questions Reports related to planning for a changing climate. The list presented here focuses on policy areas related to the Living theme; however, there will be overlap between themes and policy areas.**

- Air quality
- Complete communities
- Green infrastructure
- Green building and site design for new residential development
- Low carbon communities
- Renewable energy sources
- Shade
- Tree canopy/urban forest
- Urban agriculture
- Urban heat island
- Water and energy conservation

***2. Our overall approach, goals, and objectives regarding climate change and community resiliency should be articulated in the new Official Plan.***

While there is a need to meet the planning policy requirements of upper-tier governments, there is also a need to prepare for climate change in a way that is unique to Milton and responds to our local circumstances.

- What is our overall approach to sustainability from a land use planning perspective?
- What are our goals for growing complete communities and building community resiliency?
- What are our objectives for reducing green house gas emissions from residential areas and developing greener homes?

These are examples of questions that should be determined through We Make Milton, and they should be set out in the new Official Plan so it is clear what we are working towards together to the year 2051, and how we will do it through land use planning policies and tools. The context and rationale for why Milton needs to address climate change adaptation and mitigation could also be provided through a non-statutory/introductory section of the new Official Plan.

***3. Climate change and resiliency policies could be included in a separate stand-alone policy section, or integrated throughout appropriate sections of the new Official Plan, or a combination of both.***

In terms of planning for the impacts of a changing climate, Milton could:

- Organize all of the climate change related goals, objectives, and policies in a dedicated section of the new Official Plan, to emphasize and highlight the importance Milton places on this planning matter. All of the climate change policies for living, working, moving, and growing would be presented together; OR
- Integrate climate change goals, objectives, and policies in relevant sections of the new Official Plan by applying a climate change lens to other policy areas. This avoids isolating them from other policies. Climate change policies related to living in Milton would be organized into specific policy sections on topics like complete communities, housing, energy and water conservation, etc.; OR

- c. A combination of 1 and 2 to highlight the importance of adaptation and mitigation and still ensure that a climate change lens is applied and important linkages to related policy areas are made.

#### ***4. The Official Plan could implement local targets from the Community Energy Plan, the Corporate Energy Plan, and other local plans/studies, as appropriate.***

There is an opportunity for the new Official Plan to summarize Milton's community energy usage and emissions and GHG targets (as presented and reported in our Community Energy Plan and our Corporate Energy Plan) and any other relevant land use planning actions as identified in our 2021 Climate Action Plan. In fact, the following directions from these documents could be implemented through policy:

1. GHG targets (and any other corresponding targets);
2. Actions that the we've already prioritized;
3. Priority risks and actions to address and mitigate risk; and
4. Monitoring, evaluation, progress reporting commitments.

However, it should be noted that the targets currently identified by Milton's Community Energy and Corporate Energy Plans are no longer in-effect at the Provincial level and might require updating.

#### ***5. The new Official Plan could provide direction and enabling policies to the extent possible for: future planning studies; zoning regulations; design guidelines; and the use of tools to achieve local goals and objectives for living in Milton.***

There are a wide range of municipal plans, studies, projects and guidelines that can help Milton achieve our overall goals, objectives, and policy requirements as they relate to living more sustainably in Milton, contributing to overall greenhouse gas emission reductions, and adopting and promoting a culture of conservation. The new Official Plan could include enabling policies and/or policies that provide direction for the completion of future planning initiatives that will help address and plan for the impacts of climate change, such as:

- A Community Improvement Plan under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, which would allow Milton to provide grants and loans to homeowners for home retrofits for energy efficiency, renewable and district energy systems, water conservation and low impact development strategies;
- Green Development Standards, which establish a set of criteria or metrics that can be used to evaluate the sustainable performance of new residential development or redevelopment;
- Direction for the Town's zoning by-law(s) to require enhanced residential building and site design, where appropriate, through form based zoning standards; and
- Direction for the consideration of green building principles to be encouraged through site plan approval process.
- Other broader municipal strategies such as an Urban Agriculture Strategy, for example.



Since only certain land use topics can be addressed through the Official Plan, and since other municipal departments/divisions are not governed by the OP, there may also be an opportunity to encourage climate change planning across municipal departments through the new Official Plan.

*6. What should be the strength of our policy language? Is there a desire to explore opportunities to go beyond basic conformity requirements?*

As discussed in the 'Introduction to Stage 3' Report for We Make Milton, when writing policy, it is important to consider the specific language used. Provincial plans and policies contain minimum requirements that municipalities are expected to meet, and in those cases, words like 'must', 'shall', and 'required' are used. Milton can also use supportive language to encourage landowners and developers to go beyond the minimum requirement, by using words like 'should', 'promote' and 'encourage' in the new Official Plan, in order to support local goals and objectives. In some cases, Milton can also choose to implement more stringent requirements to achieve local climate change and resiliency goals. For example, by stating that a development application will only be deemed to have met the Town's sustainability goals (as outlined in the Official Plan) if it meets the requirements of the Green Development Standards adopted by Council, and as amended from time to time, the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan exceeds minimum upper-tier requirements.

Through We Make Milton, there is an opportunity to determine if there is a desire to use stronger language, and to even go beyond the basic conformity requirements, where appropriate and possible. Where that is the case, where, when, and how should Milton do so?

# History, Cultural Heritage, and Archaeological Resources

## Big Question #3:

How can the new Official Plan better acknowledge and respect the many layers of Milton's unique cultural heritage? How can we balance the need to conserve our built and cultural heritage resources with the need to adapt to modern lifestyle choices?



## Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

### *Planning Act*

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* identifies the following matter of provincial interest related to this Big Question:

*d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest.*

### *Ontario Heritage Act*

The *Ontario Heritage Act (OHA)* is the key legislative document that provides the basis and tools for the protection and conservation of properties with cultural heritage value or interest and archaeological resources. For example, the OHA offers different levels of protection for heritage properties, such as:

1. Individual designation (Part IV);
2. Designation of a larger area or Heritage Conservation District (Part V); or,
3. Including the property on a Heritage Register of cultural heritage value or interest (Part IV).

The OHA also sets out standards and guidelines for general maintenance of heritage properties and processes to help manage changes to these resources.

**The *Planning Act* also provides for the protection of archaeological sites through zoning. Section 34(1) 3.3 states that zoning by-laws may be passed by the Councils of local municipalities for prohibiting any use of land and the erecting, locating or using of any class or classes of buildings or structures on land that is the site of a significant archaeological resource.**

The Ministry of Heritage, Sports Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI) has published a Heritage Tool Kit which includes a series of guides for municipal councils, municipal staff, Municipal Heritage Committees, land use planners, heritage professionals, heritage organizations, property owners and others to assist in the understanding of the heritage conservation process in Ontario. The toolkit, which is currently being updated by the Province, can be viewed here:

[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage\\_toolkit.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_toolkit.shtml)

While the OHA came into force in 1975, it has been amended several times to enhance the ability for municipalities to identify, designate, and prevent the demolition of heritage properties. Most recently, amendments to the OHA (together with implementation Regulation 385/21) came into force on July 1, 2021, enforcing Bill 108, the *More Homes, More Choice Act*. Key changes are highlighted in the following table.

**Table 12: Summary of Recent Amendments to the OHA and Implementing Regs.**

Summary of OHA Amendments	Summary of Regulation 385/21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ontario Land Tribunal is now responsible for processing appeals of municipal decisions regarding the designation, amendment, repeal and alteration of heritage properties.</li> <li>Changes to the process for listing a property on the Register of Cultural Heritage Resources, including notification to the property owner and an objection process.</li> <li>New applications for alteration or demolition are deemed approved should Council not make a decision within specified time periods.</li> <li>Municipalities have 90 days to issue a notice of intention to designate a property upon notice of a complete application, subject to exceptions.</li> <li>Designations must occur within 120 days of a notice of intention to designate, subject to exceptions.</li> <li>The Province may now prescribe a set of decision-making principles (through regulation) that Municipal Council must consider when making decisions for certain OHA matters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandatory contents for heritage designation by-laws have been identified.</li> <li>Exceptions to the 90-day timeline for issuing a notice of intention to designate have been prescribed.</li> <li>Exceptions to the 120-day timeline to pass a designation by-law after a notice of intention to designate have been prescribed.</li> <li>The process of amending/repealing a designation by-law following a consent for demolition now requires notification to property owners if no changes are made to the by-law.</li> <li>Minimum requirements for complete applications for alteration, demolition or removal, of heritage properties, which include photographs, reasons for the proposal and potential impacts, and all technical cultural heritage studies that are relevant to the proposal.</li> <li>Transition matters are identified and outlined.</li> </ul>

Archaeology is also mandated under the OHA. Part VI addresses the conservation of resources of archaeological value and gives the MHSTCI responsibility for issuing archaeological licences to undertake archaeological fieldwork as specified under [Ontario Heritage Act Section 48\(1\)](#) and [Ontario Regulation 8/06](#). Without a license, the alteration of an archaeological site (through excavation, site looting, or development) is prohibited. With a licence, under [Section 65](#), licensees must file project reports. The Ministry reviews the reports to determine whether the

report complies with the [Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists](#) as issued under Part VI of the OHA. When the report is accepted by the Ministry, following approval from the Region of Halton, the report is entered into the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports.

**Under Section 39 of the OHA, the Council of a municipality may also pass by-laws for the provision of grants or loans “to the owner of a designated heritage property for the purpose of paying for the whole or any part of the cost of alteration of such designated property on such terms and conditions as the council may prescribe”. The Ontario Municipal Act also enables financial tools to support heritage conservation, as discussed below.**

### **Municipal Act**

The Municipal Act 2001 allows municipalities to provide financial incentives to owners of designated heritage properties. Section 365.2 of the Municipal Act establishes the [Heritage Property Tax Relief Program](#). The program encourages the maintenance and conservation of locally designated heritage properties by allowing municipalities to pass a by-law to provide tax relief (10 to 40 percent) to owners of eligible heritage properties, subject to agreement to protect the heritage features of their property. The Province also shares in the cost of the program by funding the education portion of the property tax relief.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

Milton’s cultural heritage and archaeological resources provide important environmental, economic and social benefits, and the wise use and management of these resources over the long term is a key interest for both Milton and the Province. As part of the PPS, which was recently updated in 2020, long-term prosperity for both Milton and the Province is supported by conserving features that help define character, including built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.

Policy 2.6 is entirely devoted to cultural heritage and archaeology, and states:

*2.6.1 Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.*

*2.6.2 Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on lands containing archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential unless significant archaeological resources have been conserved.*

*2.6.3 Planning authorities shall not permit development and site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage property except where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.*

**There are many related terms explicitly defined by the PPS, including: ‘archaeological resources’, ‘built heritage resources’, ‘conserved’ ‘cultural heritage landscapes’, ‘heritage attributes’, and ‘protected heritage property’.**

2.6.4 *Planning authorities should consider and promote archaeological management plans and cultural plans in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources.*

2.6.5 *Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.*

The 2020 PPS also recognizes the important role Indigenous communities have in land use planning and development, as well as the contribution of Indigenous communities' perspectives and traditional knowledge on land use planning decisions.

**"The Province's rich cultural diversity is one of its distinctive and defining features. Indigenous communities have a unique relationship with the land and its resources, which continues to shape the history and economy of the Province today. Ontario recognizes the unique role Indigenous communities have in land use planning and development, and the contribution of Indigenous communities' perspectives and traditional knowledge to land use planning decisions. The Province recognizes the importance of consulting with Aboriginal communities on planning matters that may affect their section 35 Aboriginal or treaty rights. Planning authorities are encouraged to build constructive, cooperative relationships through meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities to facilitate knowledge-sharing in land use planning processes and inform decision-making." (Vision in the 2020 PPS).**

Specifically, the PPS requires municipalities to consult with Indigenous communities on land use matters that may affect treaty rights under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Section 1.2.2 states that:

*Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters.*

Section 2.6.5 further states:

*Planning authorities shall engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.*

### **Truth and Reconciliation**

In 2008, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was created to inform Canadians about what happened in Indian residential schools and document the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone affected by their experience with residential schools. Released in 2015, the TRC recommends 94 Calls to Action aimed at federal, provincial, municipal and community levels and are intended to create and renew relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Many of these calls support Indigenous cultural resurgence and recovering access to language, traditions and art forms for future generations. For more information, [visit this website](#).

## Growth Plan

One of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan for the GGH is to “conserve and promote cultural heritage resources to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Métis communities.” To support this principle, policies are provided for “protecting what is valuable”. Section 4.2.7 of the Growth Plan sets out the following policies:

1. *Cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.*
2. *Municipalities will work with stakeholders, as well as First Nations and Métis communities, in developing and implementing official plan policies and strategies for the identification, wise use and management of cultural heritage resources.*
3. *Municipalities are encouraged to prepare archaeological management plans and municipal cultural plans and consider them in their decision-making.*

Under Section 5.2.3 of the Growth Plan, the following policies are provided to ensure co-ordination and engagement with Indigenous communities:

4. *Municipalities shall engage Indigenous communities in local efforts to implement this Plan, and to provide the necessary information to ensure the informed involvement of these communities,*
7. *Planning authorities shall co-ordinate planning matters with Indigenous communities throughout the planning process to ensure that appropriate engagement is undertaken. Municipalities are encouraged to build constructive, cooperative relationships with First Nations and Métis communities and to facilitate knowledge sharing in growth management and land use planning processes.*

## Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

### Existing Regional Official Plan

In Halton Region’s planning vision, Section 26 of the Official Plan states:

*Halton will undertake the necessary steps to ensure that growth will be accommodated in a fashion that is orderly, manageable, yet sensitive to its natural environment, heritage and culture.*

**“The goal for Cultural Heritage Resources is to protect the material, cultural and built heritage of Halton for present and future generations.” (Section 165, Halton ROP)**

**“The objectives of the Region are: (1) To promote awareness and appreciation of Halton’s heritage, and (2) To promote and facilitate public and private stewardship of Halton’s heritage.” (Section 166, Halton ROP)**

To achieve the above, Section 167 of the ROP states that is the policy of the Region to:

1. *Maintain, in conjunction with the Local Municipalities, local historical organizations, and municipal heritage committees a list of documented Cultural Heritage Resources in Halton.*
2. *Inform promptly the appropriate government agencies, First Nations and Municipal Heritage Committees of development proposals that may affect defined Cultural Heritage Resources and known archaeological sites.*
- 2.1 *Establish and implement guidelines (protocol) for consulting with First Nations on relevant planning applications in accordance with Provincial legislation, regulations and guidelines.*
3. *Require that development proposals on adjacent lands to protected Cultural Heritage Resources do the following:*
  - a. *study and consider the preservation, relocation and/or adaptive re-use of historic buildings and structures based on both social and economic costs and benefits;*
  - b. *incorporate in any reconstruction or alterations, design features that are in harmony with the area's character and existing buildings in mass, height, setback and architectural details; and*
  - c. *express the Cultural Heritage Resources in some way, including: display of building fragments, marking the traces of former locations, exhibiting descriptions of former uses, and reflecting the former architecture and uses.*
4. *Prepare an Archaeological Management Plan to inventory, classify and map significant archaeological resources and areas of archaeological potential in Halton and to provide direction for their assessment and preservation, as required, and update such a Plan as part of the statutory five-year review of this Plan.*
5. *Encourage the Local Municipalities to prepare, as part of any Area-Specific Plan or relevant Official Plan amendment, an inventory of heritage resources and provide guidelines for preservation, assessment and mitigative activities.*
6. *Prior to development occurring in or near areas of archaeological potential, require assessment and mitigation activities in accordance with Provincial requirements and the Regional Archaeological Management Plan.*

**According to the ROP, "Heritage Feature" means a feature of the Regional landscape which, by itself, or together with its associated environment, is unique or representative of past human activities or events. Such a feature may include a site or area of archaeological or historical value and it may include a building or structure of architectural and/or historical importance.**

## Region of Halton Master Plan of Archaeological Resources

In 1998, Halton Region completed its first Master Plan of Archaeological Resources, which was later updated in 2008. The Master Plan does the following:

- 1) Provides an inventory of registered and unregistered archaeological sites within the Region based on archaeological assessments carried out between 1998 and the spring of 2008;
- 2) Establishes an archaeological site potential model, based on known site locations, past and present land uses, and environmental and cultural-historical data; and
- 3) Identifies a recommended management strategy for known and potential archaeological resources within the Region.

The Master Plan of Archaeological Resources is used by Regional and local planning authorities in order to direct the preparation of archaeological assessments within Halton.

**With respect to archaeological resources, there is a formal duty to consult with First Nations communities anytime field work uncovers human remains; when an alternate strategy for an archaeological assessment is proposed; when assessing the cultural value or interest of an archaeological site that is known or appears to have sacred or spiritual importance; and when deciding whether to protect aboriginal archaeological sites of cultural heritage value or interest.**

## Local Policies and Directions

### Current Official Plan

Section 2.10 of Milton's current Official Plan outlines the Town's objectives regarding cultural heritage resources. Milton, in concert with individual property owners, aims to achieve an awareness of its history among its residents and visitors, and through the conservation of cultural heritage resources to provide a sense of place and community. Section 2.10.1 states that the Milton's goals are to provide for:

- a. *The conservation of the Town's cultural heritage resources by identifying, recognizing, preserving, protecting, improving and managing those resources, including the potential of their adaptive reuse.*
- b. *The integration of the conservation of cultural heritage resources into the Town's general planning approach.*
- c. *The promotion of an understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage resources of the Town to both residents and visitors.*

**In Section 2.1.3.2, the history of growth of the Milton's Urban Area is very briefly mentioned. Section 2.1.3.3 provides a description of the context for Rural Milton; however, there is no recognition of the history (indigenous and/or European settlement) of the hamlets/villages or original Town site.**



To meet these goals, the Town establishes specific objectives under section 2.10.2:

- *To continue the identification, management and protection of cultural heritage resources and other heritage matters which affect the Town.*
- *To continue to develop a comprehensive inventory of the Town’s cultural heritage resources and to update the Heritage List, as appropriate.*
- *To continue to recognize individual heritage buildings, structures, sites, natural features and landscapes by designating them as heritage properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.*
- *To recognize groups of buildings or areas of the Town as heritage areas by designating them as Heritage Conservation Districts under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.*
- *To promote the development of private and public financial resources for the preservation and rehabilitation of cultural heritage resources.*
- *To promote the conservation of archaeological resources on lands destined for development or site alteration by requiring their identification, documentation and removal, if necessary.*

The policies of the current Official Plan also implement heritage planning requirements and tools, as established by the OHA and other legislation. Table 13 below provides a summary of existing policies.

**Table 13: Cultural Heritage Policies in the Existing Milton Official Plan**

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and mplementation To-Date
<b>Heritage Milton</b>	2.10.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy states that: <i>The Town shall continue to maintain a citizens heritage advisory committee known as Heritage Milton, to advise and assist Town Council on all cultural heritage matters which affect the Town.</i></li> <li>• Together, members from each of the Historical Societies and other volunteers form Heritage Milton. The group works with Town staff to advise on the heritage significance of properties and review studies about the impact of development on heritage,</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage Register</b>	2.10.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy states that: <i>The Town of Milton shall keep a register of properties that are of cultural heritage value or interest. This shall include properties that are designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and properties that are included on the Council approved Heritage List. In addition the register shall also include all heritage conservation districts as designated under the provisions of Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.</i></li> <li>• Milton staff have created a Heritage Register, which identifies properties that have historic interest or architectural value in our community and help us to protect heritage resources when they are affected by development proposals. There are close to 1,000 properties included on the Register, and it continues to grow.</li> <li>• While the bulk are in Downtown Milton and within the mature neighbourhood area, there are other significant heritage clusters are in the hamlets of Campbellville, Moffatt and Brookville.</li> <li>• The Heritage Register is updated periodically through staff report to be approved by Council.</li> </ul>

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and mplementation To-Date
<b>Heritage List</b>	2.10.3.3 to 2.10.3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies state: <i>The Town of Milton shall, in consultation with Heritage Milton and other interested groups or individuals and public agencies, maintain and update, as necessary, a list of properties that contain one or more buildings structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history. This is to be known as the Heritage List.</i> And: <i>If a resource is not on the Town’s Heritage List, it does not necessarily mean that the property and/or resource is not of cultural heritage interest.</i></li> <li>See notes under Heritage Register (above) regarding implementation.</li> </ul>
<b>Designation of Individual Buildings</b>	2.10.3.6 to 2.10.3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies state: <i>In order to promote the preservation of cultural heritage resources, the Town may designate significant heritage properties and districts by by-law (pursuant to Sections IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act), following consultation with Heritage Milton.</i></li> <li>A set of criteria is also identified for evaluation to determine whether a resource is considered significant and worthy of designation.</li> </ul>
<b>Designation of Heritage Conservation Districts</b>	2.10.3.9 to 2.10.3.17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies provide direction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designating a Heritage Conservation District, pursuant to Part V of the OHA;</li> <li>Undertaking a Heritage Conservation District Study; and</li> <li>Preparing and adopting a Heritage Conservation District Plan.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Protection of Resources</b>	2.10.3.18 to 2.10.3.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies provide direction for conserving significant cultural heritage resources and protecting cultural heritage resources designated under Parts IV and V of the OHA.</li> <li>They address: Heritage Impact Assessments, demolition permits, and development proposals.</li> </ul>
<b>Signage</b>	2.10.3.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policy requires signs on designated properties and on properties in Heritage Conservation Districts and Heritage Conservation District Study Areas shall be subject to the approval of Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Special Resources</b>	2.10.3.26 to 2.10.3.28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies provide direction on special cultural heritage resources, including pioneer and small cemeteries, and mature trees and other vegetation of heritage significance.</li> </ul>

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and mplementation To-Date
<b>Archaeological Resources</b>	2.10.3.29 to 2.10.3.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies state: <i>Where there is information available that indicates that an archaeological potential exists on a site, the Town shall, prior to any development, require an archaeological assessment.</i></li> <li>And: <i>Archaeological resources that are located on a proposed development site shall be conserved in accordance with the recommendations of the approved assessment.</i></li> <li>And: <i>The Town shall not permit any development or site grading prior to the approval of the archaeological assessment by the appropriate approval authority.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Funding and Advocacy</b>	2.10.3.31 to 2.10.3.34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies state: <i>The Town may assist in efforts to obtain funding and may also provide loans and/or grants to property owners or groups undertaking restoration or rehabilitation of designated or significant cultural heritage properties.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Character Area Plans</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies state that the Town, in consultation with Heritage Milton, may recognize and designate “Character Areas” and require the completion of studies for these areas.</li> <li>Character Areas are existing developed or planned areas within the Town, which have a distinct land use function and a unique, identifiable character that is different from the surrounding area.</li> <li>Currently, 6 Character Areas are identified in the Official Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Downtown Character Area, CBD</li> <li>– Fourth Line Character Area, Bristol Survey</li> <li>– Sixteen Mile Creek Road Character Area, Bristol Survey</li> <li>– Peru Road Character Area, Milton Heights</li> <li>– Main Street Character Area, Milton Heights</li> <li>– Tremaine Road Character Area</li> </ul> </li> <li>Omagh is also undergoing a study to determine its status as a historical Character Area.</li> </ul>

### Heritage Master Plan

In October 2012 Council approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Task Force to draft a Heritage Master Plan for Milton. In 2016, the Plan was completed and presented to Council through Report PD-039-16. The Heritage Master Plan is intended to serve as a strategy for the management heritage resources and to ensure that resources are not lost but integrated into new development proposals as they take place.

The Master Plan focuses on how the Town’s rich history and heritage should be conserved, recorded, understood and promoted. It recognizes that conservation of heritage resources is not solely a matter for municipal government, but that voluntary organizations and educators also play

**To-date, not all of the six areas identified in the current Official Plan have been studied to define the existing character.**

important roles. A great deal of work can also be completed as part of the normal planning and development processes.

The following is a list of ten recommendations for action that are identified in the Heritage Master Plan, for implemented by various levels of government and community groups:

1. Engage the public through education
2. Identify a Heritage Conservation District
3. Identify Character Areas outside a proposed Heritage Conservation District
4. Acknowledge the distinct character of Rural Milton
5. Refine the Heritage List
6. Preserving isolated heritage properties within new development areas.
7. Preservation of our archives
8. Marking our significant heritage through a signage program
9. Encourage voluntary heritage designation
10. Establish incentive programs

### *Milton Culture Plan*

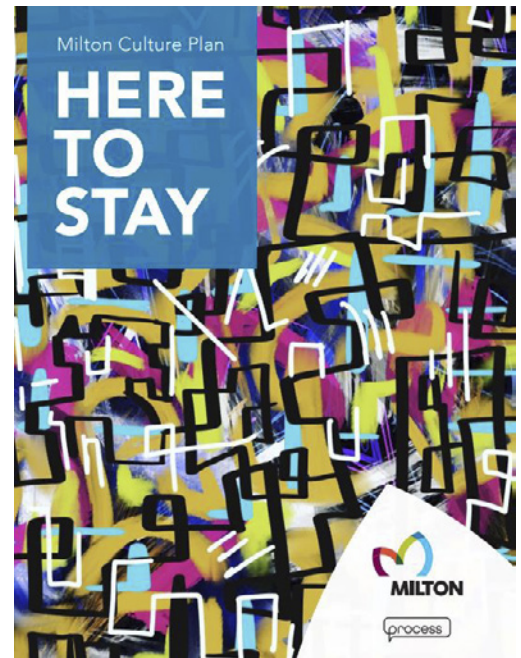
Milton's first-ever local Culture Plan was passed unanimously by Council at its meeting on July 19, 2021. The ten-year plan, called "Here to Stay", is a roadmap for the future of the Town's cultural policies and investments. As a rapidly growing town, residents and community organizations are constantly creating citizen-led cultural expression everywhere. The Culture Plan allows Milton to better understand its role in relation to all this activity and to strategically encourage Milton's diverse and ever-evolving culture. Milton's Culture Plan sets out to:

1. Support the Town's commitment to local culture;
2. Recognize culture's importance to Milton's vibrant, inclusive and engaged community;
3. Provide direction for investment in culture across Milton;
4. Provide a framework for policy direction to promote and integrate cultural experiences; and
5. Create the plan in partnership with the community.

The Culture Plan features five strategic avenues of action that enhance Milton as a Place of Possibility:

1. Foster a resilient and collaborative cultural sector
2. Celebrate and share Milton's diversity
3. Support Indigenous cultural resurgence
4. Strengthen culture-led economic and social development
5. Expand investment in cultural infrastructure, including places and spaces

For each avenue there are a set of goals and actions to be implemented and we will be working closely with Milton's Cultural Services Manager during our new Official Plan project. The following table provides a summary of the avenues and actions that have relevance to We Make Milton and can potentially be implemented by new Official Plan policies, as they relate to history and culture in Milton. Readers should also note that other Culture Plan actions are discussed in this report in response to Big Question #7 (Urban Design and Creating Places), as well as in the other We Make Milton Discussion Papers.



**According to the Culture Plan:**

"This is now an important time to explore how to build on these assets, and invest in diverse and strategic approaches to culture. There is an opportunity to align Milton's culture planning with other major land use and infrastructure planning happening in the Town. These include the current update to the Official Plan (known as We Make Milton) and other capital projects. There is growing social isolation and mental health concerns in Milton, which are exacerbated by COVID-19. There are increasing calls to build more equitable, accessible and inclusive spaces and programs." The full plan [can be viewed here](#).

**Table 14: Summary of Related Actions from Milton’s Culture Plan**

Avenue of Action	Recommended Actions
<b>Foster a resilient and collaborative cultural sector</b>	<p>1.3.2 Ensure cultural planning directions are reflected in municipal policies and plans.</p> <p>1.3.3 Foster a cultural development lens across municipal departments, specifically integrating with the Planning Policy and Urban Design, Economic Development and Operations and Environment divisions.</p>
<b>Celebrate and share Milton’s diversity</b>	<p>2.4.2 Adopt arts-based practices in all municipal initiatives to engage residents creatively about matters of civic importance, such as policy and planning.</p>
<b>Support Indigenous cultural resurgence</b>	<p>Working in partnership with local urban Indigenous organizations, local First Nations communities and Métis Nation of Ontario develop an Indigenous Engagement Strategy for the Town of Milton</p>

### *Heritage Awards*

Together with Heritage Milton, the Town frequently presents awards to property owners who have undertaken significant building projects that have contributed to the conservation and preservation of the built heritage within Milton. The program started in 2002, and recipients receive a certificate and a commemorative plaque for their conservation efforts. Awards are given in the categories for designated and non-designated historic properties. The Award program seeks to encourage heritage conservation and showcase the property owner’s effort in this endeavour.

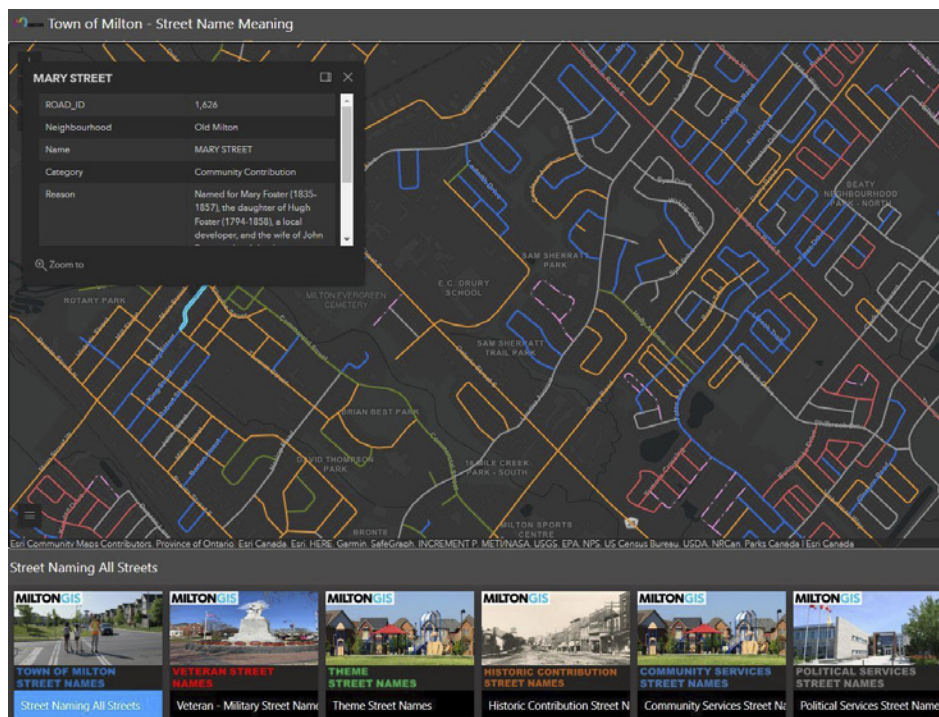
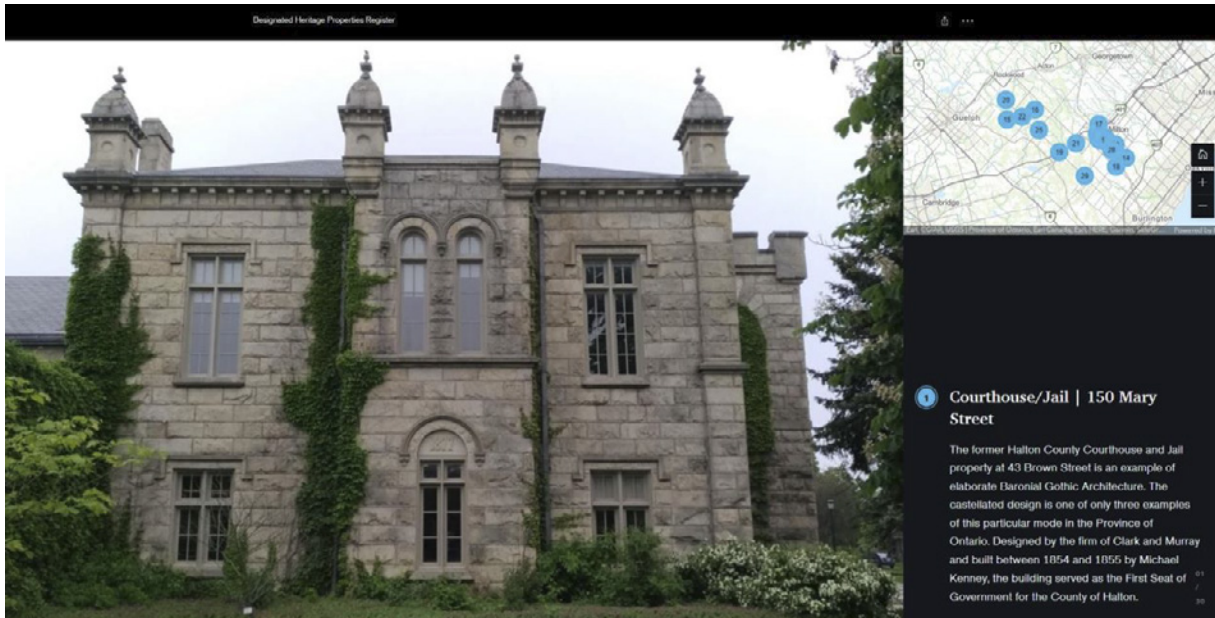
**Figure 11: Milton’s Commemorative Heritage Plaque**



## Information Sharing

On November 11, 2021, Milton launched its first Street Names App, which provides information on the history behind the street names and honours many of our veterans, pioneers and Miltonians who contributed to the growth of Milton. Street signs that include a poppy are an easy way to identify a street named after a war Veteran in Milton. Each name was selected with purpose to honour those individuals. [The App can be viewed at this link.](#)

Figure 12: Snapshots of Milton's Street Names App



## *Reconciliation and Indigenous Engagement*

Milton's Culture Plan (discussed above) outlines a total of 13 action items to support an Indigenous cultural resurgence in Milton. In addition to the Culture Plan, Milton is continuing to demonstrate a commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through the following initiatives.

### **Traditional Land Acknowledgments**

On July 19, 2021 Council adopted the use of [Traditional Land Acknowledgments](#) to recognize the traditional lands now known as Milton. The acknowledgment offers an opportunity to pay respect to ancestral and traditional territories; be mindful of our collective role as stewards of the land; build awareness of present-day First Nations, Inuit and Métis culture in our community; and demonstrate the Town's commitment to reconciliation. Please refer to [Council Report ES-005-21](#) to learn more.

### **First Nations Relations and Education Session**

In August 2021, the Town arranged for Darin Wybenga, the Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Coordinator from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to provide an educational session for Milton staff and elected officials about Indigenous culture and history Milton.

### **Draft Indigenous Engagement Guide and Framework**

A draft engagement guide has also been developed based on the consultation policies of our Indigenous Nations in Halton. The guide is meant to assist Milton's planning and development team by providing a consistent approach to land use policy and construction infrastructure-related projects. The guide is in the final review stage with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and then will be brought forward to Milton's senior management team for final approval and implementation.

## **Current Planning Practices**

The following is a review of current land use planning practices in other places, which Milton can consider for the new Official Plan as it relates to history, cultural heritage, and archaeology. Examples are organized into the following categories:

1. Implementing Provincial Legislation/Policy;
2. Taking Advantage of Heritage Planning Tools; and
3. Indigenous Perspectives and Engagement.

**As outlined earlier, many changes to the OHA as a result of Bill 108 are now in effect and municipalities are currently identifying where and how to implement these changes through Official Plan policy. Table 15 below provides a summary of existing policies, many of which have not been updated to reflect changes to the OHA, which came into effect in 2021.**



## Implementing Provincial Legislation/Policy

Most Official Plans for local municipalities in Ontario provide policies for cultural heritage deal three major policy areas in order to address provincial policy requirements:

1. Identification of resources;
2. Protection of resources; and
3. Management of resources.

In terms of identifying, documenting, and designating resources and properties, official plan policies provide direction for their designation under the OHA. Policies are also included in regard to sharing this information with the public through different mediums. Municipalities are increasingly use social media and web-based applications to display and share their historical information and stories.

Protection policies can include the requirement of Heritage Permits for alteration and addition to heritage resources. In addition, policies are provided to require heritage clearances when processing demolition permits for buildings in the Heritage Register. Property standard policies also address the maintenance of vacant properties and the upkeep of heritage resources. The property standard by-law includes specific measures for the maintenance and protection of designated and non designated heritage resources.

From a management perspective, most local municipalities have a Heritage Committee who advises Council or staff in evaluating cultural heritage development applications. In addition, municipalities often collaborate and partner with local historical societies to promote heritage events and produce brochures and guidelines for conservation.

**The Province of Ontario is starting to share our Indigenous community stories [on their website](#). Other municipalities are also using tools (such as social media, dedicated webpages, and Geographic Information Systems) to showcase the past and share histories.**

**Table 15: A Comparison of Local Approaches to Cultural Heritage Planning Policy**

Current Practices Policies	Brampton (in Peel Region)	Oakville (in Halton Region)	Markham (in York Region)
<b>Identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Property Register</li> <li>• Heritage Property Designation and Listing</li> <li>• One Heritage Designated Heritage Conservation District</li> <li>• Online Heritage Mapping</li> <li>• Designated Heritage Cemeteries</li> <li>• Heritage Plaque Program</li> <li>• Downtown Heritage Walking Tour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Property Register</li> <li>• Heritage Property Designation and Listing</li> <li>• Four existing Heritage Conservation Districts</li> <li>• Heritage Plaque Program</li> <li>• Online Heritage Mapping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Property Register</li> <li>• Heritage Property Designation and Listing</li> <li>• Four existing Heritage Conservation Districts</li> <li>• Markham Heritage Estates</li> <li>• Heritage Books and Plaque Program</li> <li>• Markham Historical Cemeteries</li> <li>• Online Heritage Mapping</li> </ul>
<b>Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Permits</li> <li>• Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Demolition Control</li> <li>• Heritage Property Owner’s Guide</li> <li>• Minimum Maintenance (Property Standards) By-law</li> <li>• Vacant Building By-law</li> <li>• Heritage Building Protection Plan (HBPP)</li> <li>• Heritage Easement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Permits</li> <li>• Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Demolition Control</li> <li>• Property Standards By-law</li> <li>• Heritage and Environmental Sustainability</li> <li>• Heritage Planning Studies</li> <li>• Heritage Easement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Permits</li> <li>• Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Demolition Control</li> <li>• Property Standards By-law</li> <li>• Heritage Demolition Control</li> <li>• Heritage Easement</li> </ul>
<b>Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brampton Heritage Board</li> <li>• Heritage Resources Sub-Committee</li> <li>• Outreach and Marketing Sub-Committee</li> <li>• Outreach and Education</li> <li>• Heritage Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Oakville Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Heritage Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markham Heritage Committee</li> <li>• Educational Brochures</li> <li>• Heritage Reserve Fund</li> <li>• Heritage Design Guidelines</li> <li>• Heritage Signage Guidelines</li> </ul>

## Taking Advantage of Heritage Planning Tools

Several planning tools are also permitted under provincial legislation, and are used to encourage the heritage conservation efforts summarized in Table 16, below. While they are permitted, it is not a requirement for municipalities to use these tools.

**Table 16: Additional Heritage Planning Tools Available to Municipalities**

Current Practices Policies	Brampton (in Peel Region)	Oakville (in Halton Region)	Markham (in York Region)
<b>Incentives Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Incentives Program</li> <li>Designated Heritage Façade Improvement Grant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Grant Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program</li> <li>Heritage Loan Fund</li> <li>Commercial Facade Improvement Grant</li> <li>Commercial Signage Replacement Grant</li> <li>Designated Heritage Property Grant Program</li> </ul>
<b>Studies and Special Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main Street South Heritage Conservation District Study</li> <li>Restoration Works on City Owned heritage resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural Heritage Landscapes Strategy</li> <li>Two Heritage Conservation District Plans</li> <li>Area Specific Heritage Resources Review and Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A History of the Town of Markham</li> <li>Markham Heritage Hardware</li> </ul>

### Examples of how heritage financial incentives can be offered:

- \$ The Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program under the Municipal Act provides an annual property tax refund to help offset the additional maintenance costs associated with conserving the heritage features on designated property.
- \$ A Heritage Loan Fund under the OHA can be offered to provide a short term loan to restore heritage features or replicate lost features on a designated property.
- \$ Facade Improvement Grant Programs can be provided under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* to assist in the restoration or improvement to exteriors of non-designated commercial properties that are located within heritage districts, or have other significance. A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is required.
- \$ Commercial Signage Replacement Grants can be offered under Section 28 of the *Planning Act* to improve commercial signage for buildings in a heritage district. A CIP is required.
- \$ CIPs can also provide designated Heritage Property Grants to restore heritage features or replicate lost features of a designated property using this new grant program, which can provide up to \$5,000 in funding.

## Indigenous Perspectives and Engagement

In June 2019, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute's (OPPI) Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force released a report called 'Indigenous Perspectives in Planning', [which can be obtained here](#). The report identifies important steps in terms of including Indigenous perspectives in the planning profession. According to the report, the following is a summary existing municipal Official Plans across southern Ontario that acknowledge indigenous perspectives and engagement using the following keywords:

- Indigenous people
- First Nation
- Aboriginal
- Metis
- Treaty
- Treaties
- Indian

Indigenous Perspectives and Engagement are Addressed	Number of Municipal Official Plans
Municipalities in Southern Ontario with No Official Plan	37
Municipalities in Southern Ontario where at least one Key Word is Used in the Official Plan	156
Municipalities in Southern Ontario where no Key Words are Used in the Official Plan	129
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>

According to the research, key words were used in five contexts: archaeology, culture/cultural heritage, settlement history, consultation, and environmental management.

The Task Force also reported of the 322 municipalities defined in Southern Ontario, about 40 Official Plans contained one reference, but rarely mentioned the First Nations specific to their area. Only 18 plans made any reference to Métis people or organizations. Many of these documents have a statement acknowledging the existence of Aboriginal and Treaty rights but do not explain how these will be considered in planning policy and processes. About 10 plans had a land/territorial acknowledgement or similar statement, and only 7 mentioned an applicable treaty.

Roughly one third of Official Plans have archaeology policies that specifically mention Indigenous communities, often in relation to burial sites (most likely due to provisions under *Ontario's Planning Act*, *Environmental Assessment (EA) Act*, and *Heritage Act*). Many of these plans contain commitments to involve Indigenous communities in archaeology, heritage and cultural planning.

**According to the report: "the concept of 'Two-Eyed Seeing' is a good way of explaining what is now needed. Two-Eyed Seeing, as taught by Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall, refers to learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing ... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all."**

As noted earlier, provincial requirements specific to Indigenous engagement only came into effect in 2020. Municipalities are therefore at different stages of implementation. New policies directions are being identified to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives and provide a framework for engagement. For example:

- The City of Guelph identified the following recommendations as part of the 'Shaping Guelph' Official Plan Review Policy Paper (May 2021):
  - *It is proposed that section 2.1 Strategic Directions, particularly 'Connecting with our Past', be updated to recognize and acknowledge that Guelph is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation of the Anishinabek Peoples and that rights holders continue to maintain vital interests in development. This would provide appropriate recognition that the history of Guelph does not start at the point of European contact. It begins long before and includes the Anishinaabe, Attawandaron, Haudenosaunee and Métis peoples, and continues to the present day. Additional history to provide context should be included in this section as well.*
  - *Section 4.8 Cultural Heritage Resources of the OP should be amended to include a policy requiring the City to engage with Indigenous communities and consider their interests when identifying, protecting and managing cultural heritage and archaeological resources.*
  - *Section 10 Implementation of the OP should be modified to add a section and policies to acknowledge:*
    - o *the traditional territory of the Indigenous peoples on which Guelph is located*
    - o *the Aboriginal and treaty rights of Indigenous communities and individual rights holders*
    - o *the importance of building sustainable, constructive and cooperative relationships with Indigenous communities on a foundation of mutual respect, and*
    - o *the requirement to engage with Indigenous communities on planning matters when section 35 Aboriginal or treaty rights are potentially affected.*
- The City of Brampton is also undertaking an Official Plan review and has identified the following initial recommendations pertaining to Indigenous Communities:
  - *Consider using public parks and public spaces as places of representation of the various local Indigenous groups, their values, and their stories;*
  - *Map all Indigenous cultural heritage resources and protect them through land use policy and development processes;*
  - *Require development proposals to address potential impacts on any close-proximity Indigenous cultural heritage resources beyond just archeological investigations; and*
  - *Work with other levels of government to explore ways to provide Indigenous communities with resources and meaningful ways to provide input into the development review process.*

- *Strengthen current policy language. While the Official Plan states that the City will “consider” the interests of Aboriginal communities in conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources (or uses other words like “encourage” and “promote”) it is noted that there is an opportunity to implement more “shall” and “will” statements.*

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

The following considerations have been identified for further discussion through We Make Milton:

### ***1. Milton must continue to address the identification, protection and management of our cultural heritage resources through enhanced goals, objectives, and policies in the new Official Plan.***

Our current cultural heritage policies and programs encompass the identification, protection, management of Milton’s historic assets. A set of Provincial and Regional heritage regulations, policies, standards and guidelines continue to require and facilitate the conservation of cultural heritage resources, and there is an opportunity to improve, clarify, and strengthen our overall approach in the new Official Plan by:

- Articulating our goals and objectives regarding cultural heritage more clearly
- Identifying/stressing the important role of cultural heritage conservation as part of Milton’s future growth management
- Promoting Identification of valuable heritage resources
- Encouraging Individual designation
- Reviewing and confirming the character areas currently identified, based on studies completed to-date
- Providing for the designation of Heritage Conservation Districts and Cultural Heritage Landscapes
- Listing of significant historical properties on Milton’s Heritage Register
- Providing clear direction on protection during the development process including policies for adaptive re-use and integration with new development
- Preventing demolition of properties with significant heritage attributes
- Improving tools and policies for the maintenance, protection and enforcement of our valuable heritage resources
- Identifying archaeological potential and its protection
- Implementing the most current definitions
- Considering of Indigenous interests in the identification, protection and management of cultural heritage and archaeological resources
- Identifying the role of Town and property owners, and opportunities for partnership and collaboration with public and private organizations
- Providing clear policies, programs and strategies and offering direction on how to manage change, protect and conserve, while meeting current lifestyle needs/trends of Miltonians

The new Official Plan must include clear planning direction with regards to cultural heritage resources that support the amendments of the Ontario Heritage Act, including those associated with the Bill 108, More Home, More Choices Act, 2019 and the supporting regulation.

***2. The new Official Plan must include policies regarding Indigenous engagement in accordance with Milton's framework.***

All parts of Milton's new Official Plan must be implemented in a manner that is consistent with recognition and affirmation of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights. Policies must be included that acknowledge the need to engage the Indigenous community by implementing the national reconciliation framework, informed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations. An important factor to note throughout the new official plan are the unique roles Indigenous communities have in land use planning and development, and the contribution of Indigenous communities' perspectives and traditional knowledge to land use planning decisions.

As noted earlier, Milton currently has a Draft Engagement Guide which was developed based on the consultation policies of our Indigenous Nations in Halton. The guide will assist Milton's planning and development team by providing a consistent approach to land use policy and construction infrastructure-related projects. The guide is in the final review stage with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and once approved, can help form the basis of new engagement policies.

***3. The new Official Plan should ensure that there are enabling policies and clear direction for the use of financial incentives to support conservation efforts by private landowners.***

Milton's new Official Plan should enable the widest range of tools to encourage conservation of cultural heritage resources, including current funding initiatives, contingent upon the availability of resources. There is a wide range of financial incentive tools available to municipalities under the OHA, Municipal Act, *Planning Act*, and Development Charges Act. General policies should be prepared to encourage the protection of local assets, sustained, support and promote adaptive reuse.

***4. The new Official Plan could incorporate and highlight the stories and history of our Indigenous and pioneering communities.***

There is an opportunity in the new Official Plan to include contextual information on the settlement history of Milton. Text and images could be used in one or more introductory sections of the new Official Plan, or integrated throughout the document. While this information is not required, it provides an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate our past and make important linkages to how it has informed our present, and the future.

***5. The new Official Plan could provide direction for continued education, promotion, and information sharing about our cultural heritage resources.***

Making information more accessible to the public can foster community confidence, participation and ownership/stewardship of our local cultural heritage resources. The new Official Plan could include policies that encourage the on-going education and promotion of our past. For example, policies could encourage the following:

- A Town webpage to honour Indigenous people;
- Showcasing Milton's cultural heritage through interactive web base applications, geographical information systems and other tools;
- The conversion of paper documents into digital files for easy storage, retrieval and administration; and
- Providing heritage consultation as part of planning development Pre-consultation service to the public.



# Parks, Recreation and Active, Healthy Lifestyles

## Big Question #4:

How can the new Official Plan further support the availability of parks and recreational facilities across Milton's communities? Are there any other ways to encourage healthy and active lifestyles choices in Milton?



## Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

### *Planning Act*

Parkland dedication policies are a method for municipalities to secure public parkland as a condition of development approval. Section 42 of the *Planning Act* establishes the parameters for parkland dedication policies that are enacted through municipal official plans and by-laws, as captured in the following excerpt:

#### *Conveyance*

*(1) As a condition of development or redevelopment of land, the council of a local municipality may, by by-law applicable to the whole municipality or to any defined area or areas thereof, require that land in an amount not exceeding, in the case of land proposed for development or redevelopment for commercial or industrial purposes, 2 per cent and in all other cases 5 per cent of the land be conveyed to the municipality for park or other public recreational purposes.*

#### *Alternative requirement*

*(3) Subject to subsection (4), as an alternative to requiring the conveyance provided for in subsection (1), in the case of land proposed for development or redevelopment for residential purposes, the by-law may require that land be conveyed to the municipality for park or other public recreational purposes at a rate of one*

**Section 2 of the *Planning Act* states that the following are matters of provincial interest:** (i) The adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities.  
(r) The promotion of built form that,  
(i) Is well-designed.  
(ii) Encourages a sense of place.  
(iii) Provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.

hectare for each 300 dwelling units proposed or at such lesser rate as may be specified in the by-law.

#### *Consultation*

(3.1) Before passing a by-law under this section that provides for the alternative requirement authorized by subsection (3), the municipality shall consult with such persons and public bodies as the municipality considers appropriate.

#### *Official Plan requirement*

(4) The alternative requirement authorized by subsection (3) may not be provided for in a by-law passed under this section unless there is an official plan in effect in the local municipality that contains specific policies dealing with the provision of lands for park or other public recreational purposes and the use of the alternative requirement.

#### *Parks plan*

(4.1) Before adopting the official plan policies described in subsection (4), the local municipality shall prepare and make available to the public a parks plan that examines the need for parkland in the municipality.

Payment-in-lieu (often referred to as cash-in-lieu) is another method that can be used by municipalities under Section 42 of the *Planning Act*:

#### *Payment in lieu*

(6) If a rate authorized by subsection (1) applies, the council may require a payment in lieu, to the value of the land otherwise required to be conveyed.

#### *Same*

(6.0.1) If a rate authorized by subsection (3) applies, the council may require a payment in lieu, calculated by using a rate of one hectare for each 500 dwelling units proposed or such lesser rate as may be specified in the by-law.

However, despite the *Planning Act* tools above, the legislation does not provide enough land to achieve Milton's parks and recreation provision target. As a result, the Town has proactively negotiated additional parkland contributions with the development community to provide the parkland to meet the Town's outdoor recreation and open space needs. The Town's current target is 1.75 hectares per 1000 as approved by Council in March 2021 through [Report COMS-002-21](#). Recent changes in legislation may impact the Town's ability to successfully negotiate additional parkland contributions and, as a result, the Town will continue to explore various alternatives for parkland acquisition, in addition to the *Planning Act* dedication provisions.

**Milton's parks and outdoor recreation target is identified in the current Official Plan as a rate of 4 ha per 1000 population.**

Additional land, above the parkland provision target, is required for the provision of indoor recreation and library facilities such as arenas, pools, gymnasiums and libraries. Through the use of development charges, under the Ontario Development Charges Act, the Town is able to collect monies from development applicants to recover the growth-related costs of expanding municipal services to new residential and non-residential developments. These costs include the cost for land used for recreation and library facilities. Development charges also provide funding for the development of the parkland and the construction of park amenities and both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.

Development charges (DCs) are applicable to all lands within the Town of Milton and may be required for: Construction of a new building or structure; addition or alteration to an existing building that increases the number of residential units or increases the non-residential total floor area; and redevelopment of a property or making interior alterations that result in a change of use of all or part of a building or structure, including tenant fit-outs.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

The PPS defines recreation as:

*Leisure time activity undertaken in built or natural settings for purposes of physical activity, health benefits, sport participation and skill development, personal enjoyment, positive social interaction and the achievement of human potential.*

Policy 1.5 of the PPS addresses public spaces, recreation, parks, trails and open space, and states that “healthy, active communities should be promoted by:

- a) Planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;*
- b) Planning and providing for a full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources; and*
- d) Recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.”*

### **What is a healthy community?**

According to the Canadian Institute of Planners’ (CIP), “...a healthy community is defined as “a place where healthy built, social, economic, and natural environments give citizens the opportunity to live to their full potential, regardless of their socially, culturally, or economically defined circumstances. A healthy community allows people to come together to make their community better for themselves, their family, their friends, their neighbours, and others. A healthy community creates ongoing dialogue, generates leadership opportunities for all, embraces diversity, connects people and resources, fosters a sense of community, and shapes its own future” ([CIP, Policy on Healthy Communities Planning, 2018](#)).

## The Growth Plan

Under Section 1.2.1, one of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan is to:

*Support the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.*

Policy 2.2.1 regarding managing growth within the GGH states that applying the policies of the plan will support the achievement of complete communities that:

Expand convenient access to:

- i. Public service facilities, co-located and integrated in community hubs.*
- ii. An appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks, trails, and other recreational facilities.*

In regard to the provision of public open spaces within municipalities in the GTA, Policy 4.2.5 states that:

- 1. Municipalities, conservation authorities, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties are encouraged to develop a system of publicly-accessible parkland, open space, and trails, including in shoreline areas, within the GGH that:*
  - Clearly demarcates where public access is and is not permitted.
  - Is based on a co-ordinated approach to trail planning and development.
  - Is based on good land stewardship practices for public and private lands.
- 2. Municipalities are encouraged to establish an open space system within settlement areas, which may include opportunities for urban agriculture, rooftop gardens, communal courtyards, and public parks.*

**Planners have a role. The CIP states that planners can contribute to creating healthy communities. They can promote the conditions under which community and individual health and well-being can be improved, while increasing prosperity, and social and health equity. This includes decisions regarding land use, urban design, housing supply, transportation infrastructure, and the location of services and green spaces. All of these elements are explored from a local planning context throughout the Living, Growing, Moving, and Working in Milton Reports.**

**COVID-19 has made parks essential to healthy cities. As more than 80 percent of Canada's population live in Cities, and with more Canadians than ever before living in locations without backyards or private greenspace, the local park is the closest and most readily accessible natural setting they have. With what has been observed in 2020 and 2021, it is clearer than ever that access to parkland serves an important role in healthy and livable cities. Many cities have been incredibly creative in finding ways to build new parkland and open spaces ([CIP, Policy on Healthy Communities Planning, 2018](#)).**

# Regional Policies and Guidelines

## Existing Regional Official Plan

The Regional Official Plan (ROP) supports the provision of a diverse range of accessible cultural and recreational facilities and services. Section 162 states that it is the policy of the Region to:

1. *Recognize the role of the Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities in the provision of recreational facilities and services within Halton.*
2. *Encourage the coordination of recreational services in Halton between the Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities to avoid duplication and to increase diversity in programming.*
3. *Encourage the Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities to consult the public regularly, through surveys or research, regarding the range of and demand for recreational services in Halton.*
4. *Include in the Healthy Communities Guidelines provisions for cultural and recreational services.*
5. *Encourage the Local Municipalities to ensure that opportunities exist for all people to participate in and have access to a variety of leisure, spiritual and cultural enrichment activities.*
6. *Seek full community access to, and encourage the use of, all public facilities and schools by non-profit groups and individuals in the community to provide a service which adds to the cultural, recreational and social quality of life.*

**Conservation Halton currently operates the following Conservation Areas within Milton, which offer significant recreational opportunities:**

- Crawford Lake (353.4 ha),
- Kelso (459.5 Ha);
- Rattlesnake (313.5 ha),
- Hilton Falls (655.5 ha), and
- Mountsberg (556.7 ha)

**For more information visit:** [www.conservationhalton.ca/](http://www.conservationhalton.ca/)

**Parks, other open spaces, green infrastructure, and the urban forest play a role in providing linkages and ecosystem benefits that support public health and a liveable community. They also provide co-benefits of mitigating and adapting to climate change.**

**Overall, the ROP provides a permissive environment for creating new parks and recreational facilities within Milton.**

Under section 77.2.4 of the ROP, the Region requires that new community development occurring in Designated Greenfield Areas includes high quality parks and open spaces with site design standards and urban design guidelines that support opportunities for transit and active transportation.

Part 4 of the ROP establishes a set of goals and policies for Healthy Communities, in order to achieve “a high-quality environment ... that will sustain life, maintain health and improve the quality of living”, and foster “physical, social and economic conditions that will enhance the state of well-being and the quality of life for the residents of Halton”. Policies address topics like air quality, water resources, unique landforms and landscapes, tree planting, and solid waste management.

### **Healthy Communities Guidelines**

To further explain the concept of a healthy community, Section 152(1) of the ROP calls for the preparation of Guidelines which include, among other things, a description of the general characteristics of a healthy community. In 2014, Halton Region prepared its first version of Healthy Communities Guidelines, which describes attributes and their elements that can be used to achieve healthy communities. For example:

- Natural Environment and Open Space is considered an attribute of a healthy community and may include the following elements:
  - Natural Heritage System
  - Parks & Public Spaces
  - Pathways & Trails
- Human Services are also considered an attribute of a healthy community and may include the following elements:
  - Co-location & Integration of Services
  - Social, Community, Cultural, and Recreational Services
  - Health & Public Safety
  - Education

Other attributes include built environment, mobility, sustainable design, economy, and community food supply - topics that are addressed in other We Make Milton Reports and Big Questions.

Section 152(2) of the Regional Official Plan directs the Local Municipalities to have regard for the Healthy Communities Guidelines when they are preparing an Area-Specific Plan or Official Plan policies related to intensification. Section 152(2) also directs the proponents of major development to have regard for the Guidelines when submitting their development applications.

## **Local Policies, Plans, and Directions**

### **Current Official Plan**

Section 2.5 of the Official Plan addresses Community and Cultural services, including community facilities, which include schools, individual parks, a system of parks, open space and leisure facilities such as community centres, leisure centres and other education, recreation and park facilities.

According to Section 2.5.1, it is the goal of Milton:

*To ensure that a full range of community and cultural services is available to urban and rural residents within available financial resources.*

To achieve this goal, a number of objectives are also identified in Section 2.5.2, including the following:

- To provide and maintain a system of parks, open space and leisure facilities for both active and passive pursuits, with a diversity of recreational experience for special use groups.
- To develop an open space system which incorporates a full range of environmental, open space and recreation facilities, recognizing that extensive recreation facilities are also provided by the Conservation Authorities which serve the residents of the Town, as well as the Greater Toronto Area.
- To prepare and periodically update a Leisure and Library Action Plan for the entire Town.
- To develop a system of pedestrian trails and a separate system of bikeways for the Urban Area that will link all residential areas, employment areas, the Central Business District and the Town’s major open space system.
- To ensure that the planning, location and design and programming of recreation and park facilities is co-ordinated with the location of public and separate schools and other community facilities such as museums and day-care centres and that new community facilities are planned, located and designed such that they can be adapted readily to alternative and expanding public uses as the community’s needs change.
- To ensure that the design and construction of the open space system and associated recreational facilities address all safety considerations.

Table 17 below provides a summary of these existing policies:

**Table 17: Existing Official Plan Policies**

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and Implementation To-Date
<b>Parkland Hierarchy</b>	2.5.3.1 and 2.5.3.2 and 2.8.3.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy states: <i>The existing and potential recreation resources include the extensive, publicly-owned, natural open space areas which will form part of the Natural Heritage System. However, the focus of the areas which form part of the Natural Heritage System shall be on the protection of the natural environment.</i></li> <li>• It also establishes a parkland hierarchy that is to be used as a guide in the development of an open space system for Secondary Plan areas and for the acquisition of parkland. This hierarchy includes parks developed primarily by the Town.</li> <li>• Pocket parks, plazas or other open spaces which provide a supportive function to the street activity are also recognized in policy as an opportunity on strategic locations in the Central Business District.</li> </ul>
<b>Leisure and Library Services Action Plan</b>	2.5.3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy states: <i>The policies of the Town of Milton Official Plan, Secondary Plans, the Leisure and Library Services Action Plan and other relevant studies such as storm water management plans will be used as a basis for the location of recreation and library facilities and the dedication of lands for parks and recreation purposes in the Urban Area, as well as the rest of the Town.</i></li> </ul>

Policy Area	Section Reference	Current Policies/Direction and Implementation To-Date
<b>Open Space Linkages</b>	2.5.3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policy states: <i>A fundamental concept underlying the Town’s park system is the creation of an open space corridor system which will link land in both the Urban and Rural Areas and in the Natural Heritage System with other Open Space Linkages and to connect to open space systems in adjacent municipalities.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Parkland Standards</b>	2.5.3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies establish standards for the provision of parkland (in addition to the Open Space Linkages), exclusive of lands in the Natural Heritage System designations, school lands (although it is encouraged that schools will offer access to community park areas), private recreation facilities, walkways, storm drainage systems, buffer areas.</li> <li>The parkland standard is 4.0 hectares per 1,000 population.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreation and Leisure Facilities</b>	2.5.3.7 to 2.5.3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The policies state: <i>The Town will actively attempt to expand the supply and maintenance of recreation and leisure facilities through partnerships with other groups and agencies and direct provision. Emphasis will be placed on maximizing the use of existing facilities and services, as well as joint ventures and facility sharing with other agencies and groups.</i></li> </ul>

**On March 22, 2021, through Report to Council COMS-002-21, Council approved an update to the Parks and Recreation Hierarchy in order to strike a balance between providing adequate park distribution for new intensification areas while providing facilities and amenities to meet the Town’s overall needs. This is discussed further below.**

In addition to the above policies, there is additional direction in the existing Milton Official Plan related to parks, recreation, and healthy, active lifestyles, as summarized below:

- *Unique attractions (designated as Community Parks) are identified as follows:*
  - The Mill Pond represents a key focal point in the Established Urban Area and Milton has significantly improved this facility and will continue to maintain and enhance it; and
  - The Milton Fairgrounds which is currently described as a site to be used for auction sales and the storage, exhibiting, and sales of trailers and that that such uses will continue for

**The privately-owned Fairgrounds are an important part of Milton and are currently used to host community events, such as the Farmer’s Market, Kids Summer Camps, the Milton Fall Fair, and other celebrations. There is an opportunity to review and update permitted uses through We Make Milton to ensure the needs of the community are being met.**



the foreseeable future. However, prior to any significant change in use, the proponent shall submit a development plan and a detailed analysis will be required in order to determine the most appropriate form of alternative development for this key site.

- Section 5.9.3.7 guides land acquisition and states that land shall be acquired for park purposes through the use of a variety of mechanisms including:
  - Parkland dedications as a condition of development approval
  - Funds allocated in the Town’s operating or capital budget from general revenue or development charge capital contributions.
  - Funds received for park purposes in lieu of required land dedications.
  - Lands bequeathed or donated to the Town for park purposes.
  - Leases and agreements to use certain lands for park purposes.
  - Environmental linkage areas.
- The standards for park conveyance are dictated in section 5.9.3.8 in accordance with the the *Planning Act*.
- In place of conveyance of land for park purposes, Section 5.9.3.9 also allows the Town to accept the payment of cash in lieu of parkland
- Policies 2.5.3.13 to 2.5.3.15 in the existing Milton Official Plan pertain to community facilities. There is limited direction for indoor recreation facilities, or active recreation from the perspective of organized sport, fitness etc.

**The use and availability of community infrastructure owned by school boards, the municipality and other community services may provide greater options for the community to access recreational opportunities that encourage healthy and active lifestyle choices for youth and residents in Milton.**

**The Town and some school boards have agreements in place for the shared use of facilities, joint-use agreements (e.g. domed sport fields) and the use of school facilities after school hours. Policies that continue to support collaboration and shared uses with school boards and community partners to create community hubs that provide benefits to students, families, and the wider community are encouraged.**

**Parks and Recreation planning are also coordinated with NEPOSS (the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System), especially where there is cultural heritage overlap such as Campbellville.**

## Community Services Master Plan and Parkland Provision Strategy

In 2008, Council approved a Community Services Master Plan (CSMP) which aimed to improve local parks, recreation and cultural services following significant rapid growth in Milton. For many years, this document was used to set priorities for programs and services and the development/redevelopment of parks and facilities.

As growth continued, an update was completed in 2015 (called the CSMPU) to examine the scope of programs, services, facilities and parks being provided at the time. The Update focused on specific direction and actions needed to the year 2018 to best serve the short-term needs of the community. The CSMPU was prepared concurrently with an update to the Milton Public Library Master Plan.

The CSMPU stressed the need to refocus the parkland target on developable lands that can offer a diverse range of recreation and cultural needs, with a complementary system of adjunct lands (open space, linear systems). Therefore, as follow-up, the Town carried out a Parkland Provision Strategy (2019) to review the parkland provision recommendations in the CSMPU in relation to industry standards, best practices, and external regulatory and policy frameworks impacting land use, land acquisition, funding strategies, and the needs of the public.

The strategy also reviewed the Town's existing parkland standards and policies regarding land requirements, park hierarchies and the associated typologies, provision methodology and facility fit strategies. As a result of this review, in 2021, a Parks and Recreation Provision Target of 1.75 hectares per 1000 population was updated based on a review of the facility needs related to the projected population and existing service levels designed to meet the needs of the community. The new standard is shown in Table 18 below. This updated Parkland Standard will be carried forward through We Make Milton and policies of the new Official Plan.

**In the evolution of Milton's park and recreation planning documents, the use of terminology and certain definitions have also changed. Active park, core park, linear park, and passive open space are examples from the CSMPU which should be consistent with terminology and definitions in the new OP.**

**Table 18: Parkland and Outdoor Recreation Provision Target\***

Park and Outdoor Recreation Provision Target (Hectares per 1000 people)	
<b>1.14</b>	Outdoor Recreational Facilities
<b>0.34</b>	Park facilities
<b>0.15</b>	Misc. Additional Space Requirements (10% all facilities within all Park Types)
<b>0.09</b>	Additional Space Requirements Village Square Passive Open Space
<b>1.72</b>	Total**

\*Report to Council COMS-002-21, March 2021. / \*\* Rounded to 1.7 for purpose of establishing target.

An updated Parks and Recreation Hierarchy was also adopted by Council as a result of the review. The hierarchy identifies four “core” park types, as listed below, which will allow the Town to focus on acquiring high quality land parcels.

- Community Parks
- District Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Village Squares

## Current Planning Practices

The following is a review of current land use planning practices in other places, which Milton can consider for the new Official Plan as it relates to parks, recreation and healthy, active lifestyles. Examples are organized into the following categories:

1. Rethinking the Parks Hierarchy;
2. Privately Owned Public Spaces;
3. Creativity and Innovation;
4. Other Strategies and Tools; and
5. Terminology.

### *Rethinking the Parks Hierarchy*

Municipalities across Ontario are rethinking their traditional parks spaces and hierarchies. For example, the City of Brampton is preparing a new Official Plan to guide growth and development over the next 30 years and one of the options identified in a recent [Discussion Paper on Urban Design, Open Spaces, and Recreation](#) is a ‘rethink’ of traditional parks spaces and hierarchies. According to Brampton’s Discussion Paper, in order to ensure access to good quality parks and open spaces for a range of activities and social interaction, the following could be rethought:

- Cash-in-lieu - Planning for the future of parkland in Brampton will require a “rethink” of the traditional parks hierarchy and parkland dedication policies in the Brampton Plan. The City should consider moving away from cash-in-lieu of parkland and should begin to consider linear corridors, smaller hardscaped gathering spaces in urban areas as constituting parkland dedication; and
- Urban Plazas - Urban plazas are typically publicly-owned areas, the edges of which are physically defined by public streets and buildings which activate these spaces. They are typically hardscaped, and are highly visible and accessible to the public in urban areas. They are intended to be designed to facilitate gathering spaces for residents and visitors, and provide opportunities for social interaction, cultural events, and a variety of permanent and temporary programming. Publicly accessible Urban Plazas should be considered as constituting a contribution to a developer’s parkland dedication.

The review also concluded that the City of Brampton should consider linear corridors and smaller hardscaped gathering spaces in urban areas, and as it grows, it should consider promoting

Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS) to contribute to the public realm, as discussed further below.

**Parkettes (also known as pocket parks) are parks frequently created on small, irregular pieces of land, in vacant building lots, along the centers of broad avenues, or even in parking spots. They also may be created as a component of the public space requirement of large building projects. Although they are too small for physical activities, pocket parks provide greenery, a place to sit outdoors, and sometimes a children's playground. They may be created around a monument, historic marker or art project.**

### *Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS)*

In some cities, Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces "POPS" have become a key part of the public realm network, providing open space in much-needed locations and complementing existing and planned parks, open spaces and natural areas. POPS are a specific type of open space which the public is welcome to enjoy, but remain privately owned and maintained. POPS can take many forms, including forecourts and front yards, courtyards, enhanced walkways, plazas and gardens.

The City of Toronto has successfully secured POPS across the city using various planning tools. The City often negotiates with private developers to include POPS, as part of the development application and review process. As of 2014, over a hundred of these publicly-accessible open spaces have been secured and built through the development application process, and these spaces take a variety of forms and serve a variety of functions. They have a positive contribution to the character of the city and improve the pedestrian experience for city residents.

A set of draft urban design guidelines for POPS were also prepared by the City to achieve optimal locations, high quality design and appropriate amenities for the communities that they serve, all in order to ensure that these spaces are open and welcoming to the public. The [draft urban design guidelines for POPS](#) build upon the Official Plan's direction that new development provide amenity in the form of open space with the intent to achieve safe, accessible and beautiful spaces. In addition, the guidelines provide direction for the design and location of signage so residents and visitors can easily identify POPS throughout the city.



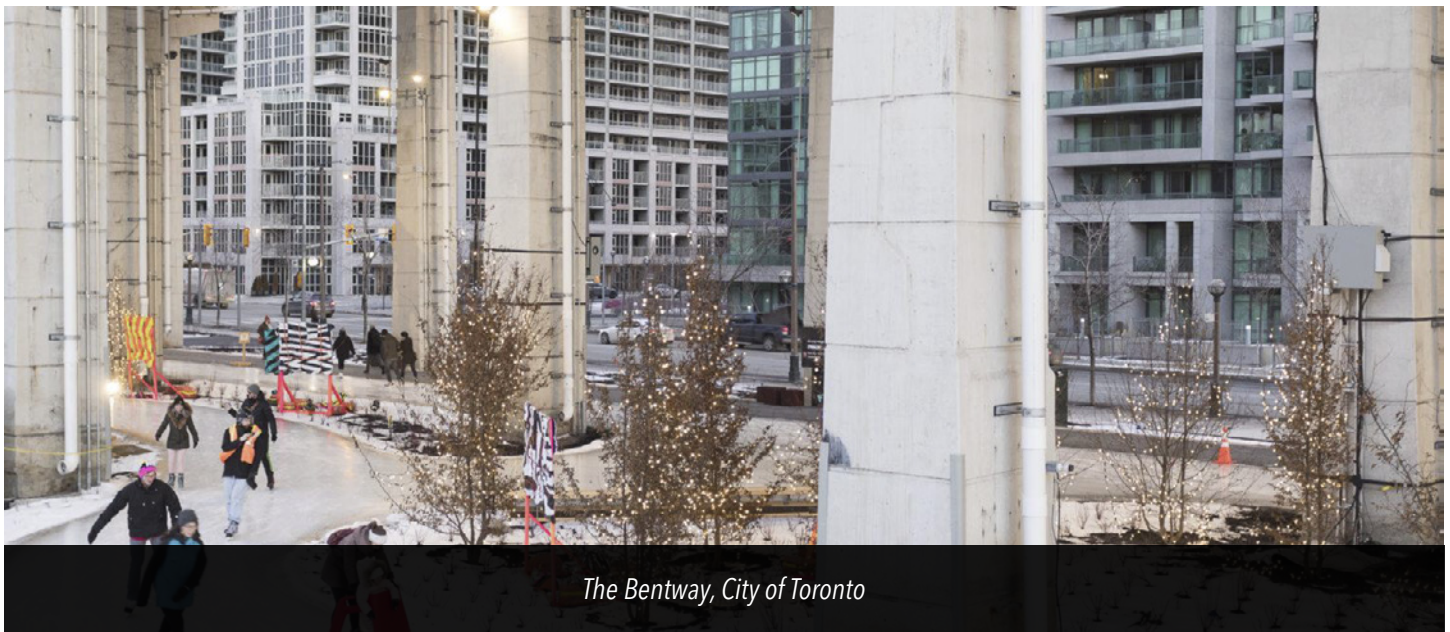
*Examples of POPS, City of Toronto*

## Creativity and Innovation

Despite the challenges faced by municipalities to balance and manage all of their responsibilities and resources, many places across Canada, and elsewhere, have been creative in finding new ways to successfully build parkland and open space. Innovation is allowing municipalities to create new public spaces in large or small places not considered before, or in underused and vacant places.

In the context of brownfield and redevelopment in areas that are currently underserved with parkland or where intensified new population is happening; creative thinking will also be needed to fund the design, construction and maintenance of lands of these areas.

There are interesting ideas and examples, which are not quite on the same scale for a municipality the size of Milton, but allow us to “think outside the box” in terms of open space interventions. For example, the Bentway in Toronto is a creative project that turned a large unused and forgotten space under the Gardiner Expressway into an award winning recreational space with 1.75 kilometres of long multi-use trails and outdoor separate civic areas referred to as “rooms”, which hosts activities such as farmer’s markets, gardens, performance theatres and exhibition halls. The Bentway spans six Toronto neighbourhoods with a total of 77,000 residents. Other examples of municipalities that have created innovative public spaces in large underused places include: New York City’s [High Line](#), Calgary’s [Flyover Park](#), and Edmonton’s [High Level Line](#).



*The Bentway, City of Toronto*

Small public space interventions are more right-sized for Milton and, in the same way as large interventions, these can also have a positive impact on health, and generate additional recreational space to exercise, play, meet, and socialize with others in unused or neglected public areas. There are many examples of temporary interventions of small places from which we can learn. In Toronto, the Stackt Market is a series of shops held in storage containers occupying a space that is planned to be redeveloped into a public park in the future. This temporary community centred project is meant to be dismantled and moved to another location. The temporary installation is home to a variety of stores and is multifaceted such that a wide range of events can and have been held there.

The “Please Be Seated” installation (2019) in Finsbury Square Avenue London, UK, is a temporary landmark project for the London Design Festival that features curves made with repurposed materials for people to sit on and walk under and is intended to respond to the changing rhythm of the community, so enhancing the pedestrianised neighbourhood and bringing life to an open public space.

### Other Strategies and Tools

New and innovative approaches to providing parkland and recreational opportunities can be considered as potential policy directions. As part of the City of Brampton’s on-going Official Plan Review, new approaches to providing parkland and recreational opportunities have been identified in a recent Discussion Paper focused on Urban Design, Open Spaces, and Recreation, including the following:

- The new Official Plan could support alternative approaches to connecting and managing assets through partnerships such as along utility corridors and through privately owned publicly accessible open space;
- The City could consider design policies for the public realm which respond to lessons learned from COVID-19, including increased use of open spaces and outdoor recreation amenities, as well as the need for flexible public spaces and programming (e.g., to promote physical distancing).
- Opportunities with local school boards for programming and use of publicly owned greenspace and shared facilities could be explored.



*Stackt Market, City of Toronto*



*'Please Be Seated' public installation  
Finsbury Square Avenue London, UK*

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

Public parks are valuable community assets that provide opportunities for social interaction, recreation, programmed activities, as well as areas for quiet contemplation and relaxation. Ensuring access to good quality parks and open spaces for these activities, and planning for their design, such that they are diverse, well-distributed, accessible to all and contribute to healthy living, are important considerations for We Make Milton. Milton is committed to providing a robust system of parks and open spaces to encourage physical and social activity, wellness, and informal use opportunities. The following policy options have been identified for Milton’s new Official Plan and are presented for consideration and further discussion:

**Milton currently has reciprocal agreements with both public school boards.**

### **1. The Official Plan must acknowledge the role of parks and recreation facilities in achieving complete and healthy neighbourhoods and communities.**

As recommended in the most recent CSMPU, updates to the Official Plan should recognize the importance of different types of indoor/outdoor and active/passive parks and recreation facilities

as part of a complete, healthy community and support the Town's ability to acquire suitable, developable lands to meet the park, recreation and culture needs of the Milton community.

## ***2. The Official Plan must implement the updated Parks and Recreation target.***

At present, the Town focuses on total parkland with a standard of 4.0 hectares of total parkland per 1,000 population, which recognizes the Town's efforts in securing naturalized park spaces that benefit 'greening' efforts.

In response to recommendations arising from the Parks and Recreation Strategy review, the OP must update the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Provision Target to 1.75 hectares per 1000 population allocated through the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Hierarchy, creating a focus on 'active' parkland.

## ***3. Updates to the Parkland Classification and Parkland Hierarchy policies must be implemented to reflect the recommendations in the CSMPU and Parks and Recreation Study.***

As recommended in the CSMPU, policy describing developable land able to accommodate a diverse range of park and outdoor recreation facilities that is also distinct from other open space will ensure that the Town aims for a Parks and Outdoor Recreation Hierarchy. Parkland in this Hierarchy will be the core park types with site configurations, site acreages and a distribution that enables the Town to meet community needs. The new OP project is an opportunity to provide enhanced direction on implementing the hierarchy. Furthermore, terminology and definitions from the CSMPU should be included in the OP for consistency.

## ***4. The new Official Plan should address how other lands, beyond those in the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Hierarchy, can contribute to the overall open space system by providing opportunities for other passive outdoor uses for the public.***

These lands could include the passive open space and linear park areas described in Milton's existing CSMPU as complementary to the core park types outlined in the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Provision Target, that contribute to a well-rounded park and open space system. Some lands may serve a primary function for utilities, servicing, transportation or other reasons which limit the development of the core park types; however, some limited passive use may be possible. Further, some opportunities may exist on lands not owned by the Town. The OP policy should enable these opportunities to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Privately owned public spaces, or "POPS", can also be considered as components of the greater open space system and public realm. These outdoor spaces are privately owned and maintained, but are open for everyone to enjoy. New OP policies should recognize the beneficial open space uses of these lands and encourage their development; however, they must not replace the parkland dedication/cash-in-lieu obligations and the need to have the core park types available to the Milton community.

**NOTE: As of the date of releasing this report, Milton staff have undertaken additional work to implement policy considerations #2 and #3 in advance of the new Official Plan. Through this separate process, the OP is proposed to be amended to allow for specific policies, provisions and standards to be established through the Park and Recreation Strategy. This would give the Town more flexibility in adjusting provision goals and requirements in tandem with intensification and other land use trends.**

*5. The Official Plan should build in flexibility in adjusting provision goals and requirements in tandem with intensification, land use trends, and community needs.*

The Official Plan policies should be more general and enable provisions and standards for indoor and outdoor recreation to be established through future strategies/studies/service plans, or through updates to existing plans and standards. OP policies should be updated to include a clear policy framework that distinguishes the land requirements for outdoor recreation facilities and functions as identified in the Parks and Recreation Strategy as being distinct from other outdoor public uses and passive activities, such as active transportation networks, natural heritage systems, urban design features and/or public infrastructure/servicing. Further, the Official Plan policies should include more information regarding the provision of indoor recreation/community facilities.



# Places of Worship

## Big Question #5:

How can the new Official Plan help address the land needs of Milton's diverse faith groups? How can we help provide more choice by facilitating and supporting the establishment of new places of worship?



### Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

#### *Provincial Policy Statement*

According to the PPS, Ontario's long-term prosperity and social well-being depend on promoting strong, liveable, healthy and resilient communities. Policy 1.1.1, states:

*Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:*

- b) Accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs.*

While the PPS does not provide specific direction with respect to places of worship, the above policy indicates that places of worship are considered institutional land uses and that they are an important part of healthy, livable, and safe communities.

Employment policies in the PPS also have an impact on the establishment of places of worship in Milton. Section 1.3.1 of the PPS states that:

*Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:*

**Section 2 of the *Planning Act* identifies the following matter of provincial interest relating to this Big Question:**

**(i) The adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities.**

**The PPS defines an Employment Area as:**

**those areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.**

a) *providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs.*

While the above policy does not explicitly permit institutional uses (such as places of worship) in employment areas, they do not preclude them either.

**Employment Area Policies in Section 1.3.2 of the PPS also consider the impact of certain 'sensitive land uses' on the economic function of employment areas:**

- *S1.3.2.2 states: Employment areas planned for industrial and manufacturing uses shall provide for separation or mitigation from sensitive land uses to maintain the long-term operational and economic viability of the planned uses and function of these areas; and*
- *S1.3.2.3 states: Within employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses, planning authorities shall prohibit residential uses and prohibit or limit other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to the primary employment uses in order to maintain land use compatibility. Employment areas planned for industrial or manufacturing uses should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment areas.*

**SENSITIVE LAND USES ARE DEFINED BY THE PPS AS:**

**Buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby major facility. Sensitive land uses may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples include: residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities.**

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?**

**Within Milton, major industrial facilities are located along the Hwy 401 corridor or the Derry Green Corporate Business Park. The location of places of worship, which can include sensitive uses, in industrial areas has the potential to cause conflict with industrial operations. Therefore, we need to be cautious about sensitive land uses in our current and future industrial areas to maintain their intended function, protect the health and safety of the public, and reduce conflicts with industrial operations.**

**Growth Plan**

The Growth Plan also does not contain specific policies related to places of worship. However, Section 1.1.2 identifies the following elements as part of the Vision for Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe - all of which are related to the creation of complete communities and call for the need to support the faith needs of our population:

*"The GGH will continue to be a great place to live, work and play. Its communities will be supported by a strong economy and an approach that puts people first."*

*“A Place to Grow will support the achievement of complete communities<sup>1</sup>.”*

*“Thriving, livable, vibrant, and productive urban and rural areas will foster community health and individual well-being.”*

As well, under Section 1.2.2, one of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan is to:

*Support the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.*

Under policy 2.2.1.4 (Managing Growth) the Growth Plan also states that:

*Applying the policies of this Plan will support the achievement of complete communities that:*

- a. feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and public service facilities;*
- b. improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes will support the achievement of complete communities that improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.*

In addition, the Growth Plan recognizes that institutional uses can be permitted within employment areas (and provides the same definition for employment areas as the PPS). Section 2.2.5.2. states that within employment lands:

*Major office and appropriate major institutional development will be directed to urban growth centres, major transit station areas or other strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit service.*

The Growth Plan also considers community infrastructure in Section 3.2.6, and ‘community infrastructure’ is defined as:

*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 affordable housing.*

While the definition does not specifically identify services for religious needs, places of worship do offer many of the services found within this definition (i.e., health, education, recreation, culture, etc.); however, they are not funded by the government as many public services are. The Growth Plan further sets out policies which direct municipalities to provide these services efficiently and effectively “to meet the needs resulting from population changes and to foster complete communities” (Section 3.2.6.3).

<sup>1</sup> Complete Communities are defined by the Growth Plan as: Places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores, and services, a full range of housing, transportation options and public service facilities.

# Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

## Existing Regional Official Plan

As part of its planning vision in Section 31 of the ROP, Halton Region believes in building healthy communities that:

- 1) *foster a state of physical, mental, social and economic well-being, and where a full range of housing, employment, social, health, educational, recreational and cultural opportunities are accessible for all segments of the community.*
- 4) *where a full range of housing, employment, social, health, educational, recreational and cultural opportunities are accessible for all segments of the community;*

Places of worship are essential for contributing to the well-being of many Milton residents and (as mentioned) they also provide related accessory and auxiliary uses. Including: health-focused services and programs; private use rentals; heritage resources, assets for aging in place, community focal points, education, recreation, heritage resources, traffic generators, landscaping and aesthetics, and cultural expression.

Milton has been growing rapidly for many years and, as we grow, there is an expanding need for access to a range of faith group resources and places of worship. In terms of Regional

**"I see Milton as a place with happy people who are active, friendly and have a sense of belonging, which is supported by spirituality. This means accessible places of worship, where spirituality is obtained as well as other services (counselling, mentoring, etc.)." (Quote from We Make Milton Visioning Night participant).**

policy direction, under section 77.5 of the Regional Official Plan, Milton is required to develop area-specific plans or policies for major growth areas, including secondary plans that outline development or redevelopment of specific communities and shall include:

- e) *Land use patterns that promote mixed-use, compact, transit-supportive, walkable communities, including the locations of local facilities for social, cultural, recreational, educational and religious purposes; and*
- p) *A community infrastructure plan, based on Regional guidelines, describing where, how and when public services for health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, safety and security and Affordable Housing will be provided to serve the community.*

**While places of worship are not addressed explicitly in the ROP; however, when planning for future growth areas, Milton is required to develop area-specific plans/policies that provide for social, cultural, recreational, educational and religious uses.**

## Region of Halton Healthy Communities Guidelines

To further explain the concept of a healthy community, Section 152(1) of the Regional Official Plan calls for the preparation of Guidelines which include, among other things, a description of the general characteristics of a healthy community. The Healthy Communities Guidelines describe attributes and their elements that can be used to achieve healthy communities.

Section 152(2) of the Regional Official Plan directs the Local Municipalities to have regard for the Healthy Communities Guidelines when they are preparing an Area-Specific Plan or Official Plan policies related to intensification. Section 152(2) also directs the proponents of major development to have regard for the Guidelines when submitting their development applications.

According to Section 2.4 of the Region's Healthy Communities Guidelines:

*Human Services can contribute to a healthy community through: providing social, cultural and recreational services such as Places of Worship, Community Centers, Libraries, social housing, youth centres, long term care homes and seniors centres.*

## Region of Halton Community Infrastructure Guidelines

The Region's [Community Infrastructure Guidelines](#) provide a framework for developing a community infrastructure strategy as input to the creation of new secondary plans for Milton. A strategy identifies the land, building and structural needs of public sector services in: health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, security and safety, and affordable housing. Section 77(5) of the Regional Official Plan states that the Region will:

*Require the Local Municipalities to prepare Area-Specific Plans or policies for major growth areas, including the development or redevelopment of communities. The area may contain solely employment lands without residential uses or solely an Intensification Area. Such plans or policies shall be incorporated by amendment into the Local Official Plan and shall demonstrate how the goals and objectives of this Plan are being attained and shall include, among other things:*

*p) a community infrastructure plan, based on Regional guidelines, describing where, how and when public services for health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, safety and security and Affordable Housing will be provided to serve the community.*

## Local Policies and Directions

### Current Official Plan

Milton's current Official Plan recognizes that the provision of community facilities is essential for the achievement of a strong and healthy community which provides for all aspects of human life, and encourages the establishment of places of worship. Under section 2.5.3.13, the Official Plan states that community facilities include places of worship, daycare centres, museums, cultural centres

**Milton anticipates and provides the opportunity for new places of worship through the creation of Secondary Plans, specifically by permitting such uses within certain designations established by each individual Plan.**

or other similar uses. Whenever Milton is not directly involved in creating community facilities, Section 2.5.3.13 also states that it can assist in their provision and enhancement through engagement with the appropriate agencies, groups and individuals.

As well, according to Section 2.5.3.14, when determining locations for community facilities Milton is required to consider the type of service provided by the facility, recognizing that some uses will serve a localized population, while others will serve the whole or large portions of the Town, as well as tourists and other visitors.

Section 2.5.3.15 further states that Milton shall provide for the location of community facilities in the Secondary Plan process, in accordance with a community infrastructure plan based on the Region's [Community Infrastructure Guidelines](#) and, in particular, may provide for Worship Reserve sites.

This policy also states that the Town shall encourage the shared use of buildings such as schools, places of worship and other similar facilities for more than one community use and encourage their design such that they can be adapted to alternative community uses as may be needed in the future.

Outside of Milton's Secondary Plan Areas, places of worship could potentially be permitted in several land use designations including the following, subject to meeting other policy requirements and any applicable criteria:

- Residential Area
- Residential/Office Area
- Commercial Areas (Central Business District and Downtown Supportive Area)
- Secondary Mixed-use Node
- Employment Area
- Business Park Area Institutional Area
- Hamlet Areas

**According to the Halton Catholic District School Board "agreements are in place for the shared use of facilities, joint-use agreements (e.g. domed sport fields) and the use of school facilities after school hours. The Board encourages policies that continue to support collaboration and shared uses with school boards and community partners to create community hubs that provide benefits to students, families, and the wider community. The use and availability of community infrastructure owned by school boards, the municipality and other community services may provide greater options for the community to access recreational opportunities that encourage healthy and active lifestyle choices for youth and residents in Milton."**

Places of worship are typically considered to be 'local institutional uses' in Milton's existing Official Plan. For example, within the Residential land use designation, policy 3.2.2 permits the establishment of: *Local Institutional Uses which by their activity, scale and design are compatible with residential uses and which serve adjacent residential areas, including elementary schools, libraries, place of worship, day care facilities, and community centre.* Criteria for the establishment of local institutional uses are further set out by Section 3.2.3.6. The term 'local institutional use' is not clearly defined in terms of how to differentiate from 'major institutional uses'.

The existing Official Plan for Milton also provides for 'major institutional uses' in certain land use designations. Notably, there is no criteria for the establishment of 'major institutional uses' and a clear definition is not provided to differentiate between 'local' and 'major'.

The existing Milton Official Plan uses the term 'community infrastructure', yet it is not currently defined.

### Existing Places of Worship

Figure 13 shows where existing places of worship within Milton are located. The majority of these places of worship are located within the Urban Area. In total, Milton has

### Place of Worship Study

In March 2021, through Report [PD-015-21 which can be viewed here](#), the results of a local survey conducted by Milton staff were shared with Council. The survey was initiated in late 2020 in order to gather a high-level scan of the profile, land use needs, and concerns of Milton's diverse faith communities. The survey directed questions to individual faith leaders and a total of 77 responses were received from 32 different faith groups. Some of the key findings from faith leaders include:

- 51% of faith leaders stated that they currently do not have a location for their place of worship;
- 71% of respondents were primarily looking for a site. Newer faith groups were in greater need of finding a location than established groups;
- 52% of respondents require an ideal physical size of worship facility of less than 2,000 square meters with 24% needing a facility that is between 3,000 to 5,000 square meters; and
- 51% are looking for an ideal site between 0.8 hectares and 1.2 hectares (1 to 3 acres) and 18% require sites that are between 1.6 hectares and 2.02 hectares (4 to 5 acres).

In total, there are currently 21 places of worship in Milton, which works out to a ratio of 1 for every 6,300 people (based on 2021 Statistics Canada data).

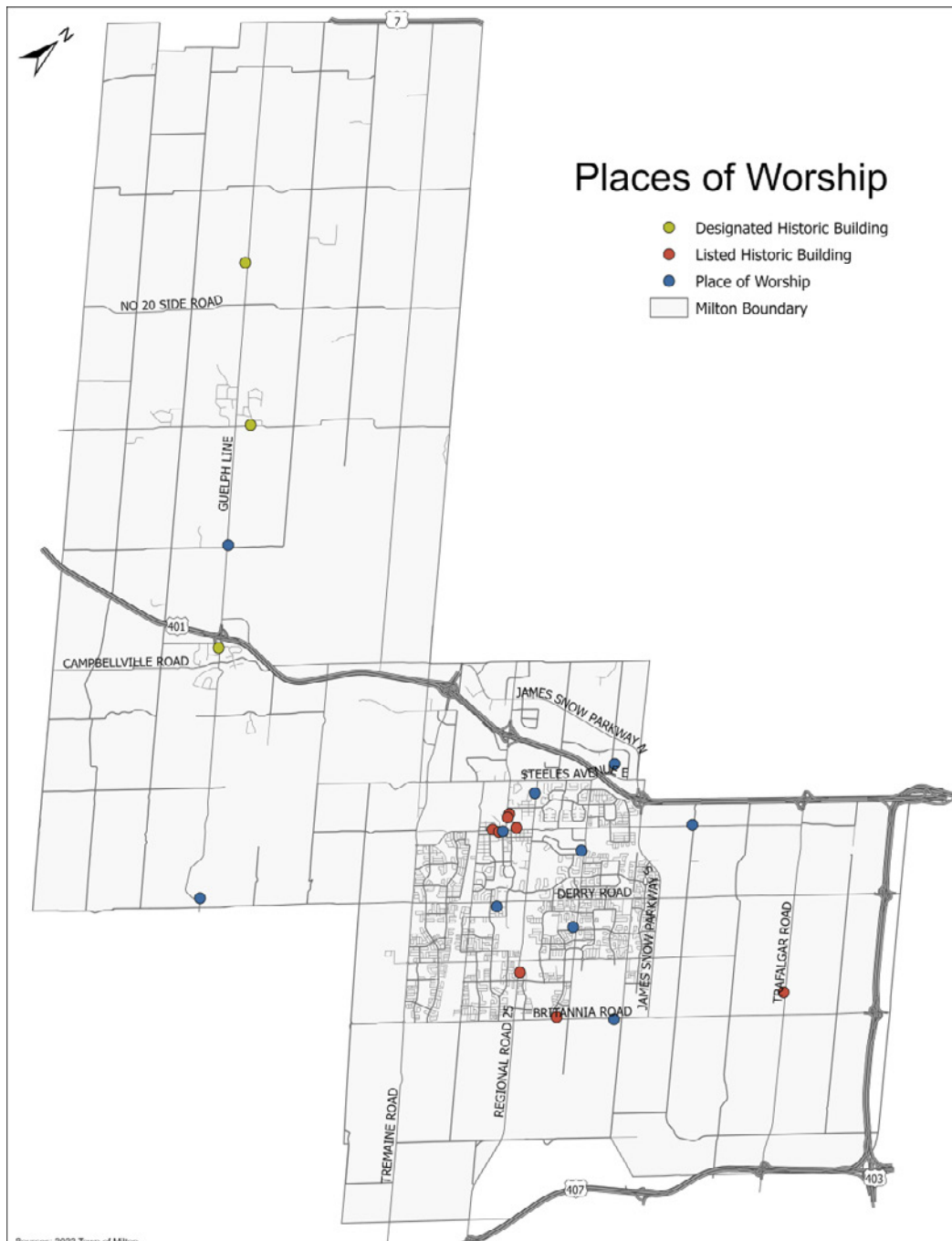
The average lot size of existing places of worship in Milton is 0.88 hectares (or 2.2 acres).

**Parking Considerations:** the majority of users of our existing places of worship prefer to drive there:

- 60% drive 85% to 100% of the time
- 75% only walk 10% of the time 65% do not take public transportation

Generally, 57% of the congregations prefer driving to their place of worship. 22% would walk, 12% take public transportation, 9% use other modes such as carpooling.

Figure 13: Existing Places of Worship in Milton





According to the results of the survey, the top barriers to attain suitable sites include:

- Land is too expensive;
- Land is not available; and
- Land use permission not allowed or quoted rental charges challenges.

While the Town’s current policy and regulatory framework encourages the development of new places of worship, the survey results clearly articulate the challenges faith groups face in their search for an appropriate site. This includes competing with developers to acquire available land, lack of appropriately sized sites, and high parking requirements.

**28% of survey respondents indicated that the biggest barrier to establishing a new place of worship is the cost of land. However, it should be noted that land use controls (like policy, zoning, etc.) cannot address or directly influence the cost or value of land.**

### Development Charges Exemption

As highlighted above, our place of worship survey respondents indicated that the biggest barrier to establishing a new place of worship is the cost of land. Notably, Milton currently offers a Development Charge exemption for places of worship, via the [current Development Charges By-law](#). This is consistent with Section 5(1)10 of the Development Charges Act, which states that, in developing a development charge by-law, the rules may provide for full or partial exemptions for types of development and for the phasing in of development charges. Section 21 of the Current Milton Development Charges by-law states:

*Notwithstanding the provision of this By-law, development charges shall not be imposed with respect to:*

- a) lands or buildings used or to be used for a place of worship or for the purposes of a cemetery or burial ground exempt from taxation under Assessment Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chap. A.31.*

### New Place of Worship Development Applications

It is worth noting that after the completion of our place of worship Study in early 2021, there have been two development applications submitted for new places of worship. These applications are summarized in Table 19 below and application numbers are referenced for more information.

**Table 19: Recent Development Applications for Places of Worship**

Name of Application	Address	Application Number	Type of Application	Date of Submission
St. George & St. Abanoub Coptic Orthodox Church	555 Steeles Avenue E.	SP-33-21	Site Plan	12/7/2021

Name of Application	Address	Application Number	Type of Application	Date of Submission
Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada Inc	1456 Bronte Street South	Z-12-21	Zoning By-law Amendments	6/23/2021

## Current Planning Practices

### *Land Use Permissions in other Jurisdictions*

The following table provides a brief summary of existing policies addressing places of worship in local official plans for comparable municipalities. Some of these policies are based on more detailed place of worship studies that were undertaken several years ago, and are also discussed later in this section.

**Table 20: Summary of Current Official Plan Policy Direction from Comparable Jurisdictions**

Municipality	Urban Area Permissions	Rural Area Permissions
<b>Brampton</b>	<p>Permitted in a full range of land use designations to meet the diverse needs of the various faith groups.</p> <p>In Secondary Plan Areas, Reserve sites are to be designated within Secondary Plans, with a ratio of 1 reserved site per 10,000 persons, and a minimum site size of 0.8 hectares is required for each site.</p> <p>Reserve sites are to be held for 5 years from the date of assumption of a Plan of Subdivision.</p> <p>Policies commit to on-going dialogue with faith communities to include them in the land use planning process and identify future sites to meet needs.</p>	<p>Permitted on lands designated Residential with the exception of areas designated as "Estate Residential".</p> <p>Not permitted in Agriculture Area.</p>
<b>Burlington</b>	<p>Permitted in all urban area land use designations as an Institutional use, but discouraged from locating within the employment area.</p> <p>Defines Major Place of Worship (a building with a worship area of 500 square metres or greater) and Minor Place of Worship (a building with a worship area of 500 square metres or less).</p> <p>Co-location with other institutional uses is encouraged.</p>	<p>Permitted in Rural Settlement Areas</p>

Municipality	Urban Area Permissions	Rural Area Permissions
<b>Markham</b>	<p>Historically a site reservation policy was used which enabled place of worship sites to be identified in Secondary Plans and reserved through the subdivision agreement.</p> <p>Previous policies also identified a planning ratio of 1 place of worship for every 6,000 persons, and a minimum lot size of 1 hectare.</p> <p>In the current OP, places of worship are generally permitted in residential and mixed use land use designations. Size and locational criteria also apply.</p>	Permitted in Hamlets, subject to the site size and locational criteria.
<b>Oakville</b>	<p>On sites less than 2.5 hectares - permitted as Community Uses.</p> <p>On sites greater than 2.5 hectares - permitted as Institutional Uses.</p> <p>For either a new Community Use or an Institutional use, a set of locational criteria is provided.</p> <p>May be permitted in the some employment designations provided they are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated to prevent adverse impact. Not permitted in the Industrial land use designation.</p>	Not applicable. Existing places of Worship to remain.

### Place of Worship Studies

Other municipalities across the GTA have studied similar big questions related to the establishment of places of worship in order to understand evolving trends, as well as the needs and challenges experienced by faith leaders and religious groups. The following is a review of other land use planning studies that Milton can consider.

#### **2011 Town of Oakville Places of Worship Land Use Study**

In 2011, Oakville completed a [Places of Worship Land Use Study](#) to address the Town’s evolving trends and needs for places of worship. At the time of preparing the report, the Town was experiencing the following general trends:

- *The population is becoming increasingly diverse which translates to the development of places of worship which must meet a wider range of faith group needs and facility requirements.*
- *There is a distinction between locally and regionally drawing places of worship.*
- *Places of worship are moving toward a more ‘regional’ based development approach and require larger sites for development.*
- *Places of worship are locating in employment areas more frequently to meet economic constraints faced by faith groups, locate in areas with vacant sites, be centrally located, and as a result minimize impacts on residential areas due to parking and traffic impacts.*
- *Uses associated with places of worship are evolving, which can create land use compatibility*

issues with adjacent sites.

- Place of worship programs complement public services and fill in gaps where public services may not be offered.
- Place of worship development often faces traffic and parking constraints.

Based on the research and study findings, modifications to the Oakville official plan (the Livable Oakville Plan) and zoning by-law were implemented, including the following (as summarized in Table 20 above):

- Include a definition of place of worship.
- Permit places of worship in employment areas.
- Increase the permitted site size criteria for community-scaled places of worship from 2 hectares to 2.5 hectares.
- Introduce a policy to allow places of worship within multi-use buildings in plaza type configurations on sites greater than 2.5 hectares in accordance with the zoning by-law.

## **2008 City of Brampton Places of Worship Policy Review**

In 2008, the City of Brampton conducted a [Place of Worship Policy Review](#) to ensure that they would be located in areas that serve residents, while minimizing issues such as traffic and parking. The study revealed four key questions related to places of worship:

### **1. What role should Brampton continue to play in site reservation?**

*The Brampton official plan policies require the establishment of Worship Reserve sites in plans of subdivision, and their retention for acquisition by faith groups for a time period after subdivision plan registration.*

### **2. Where should places of worship be located?**

*Places of worship are no longer uses which serve a particular residential neighbourhood. Given the size and level of activity generated by most places of worship, and the needs of faith groups at the various stages of their development, where are places of worship best located? This issue must also take into consideration the fact that faith groups have difficulties finding sites for places of worship.*

### **3. How should parking for places of worship be regulated?**

*The need to provide sufficient parking for places of worship was recognized as a major transportation issue. Issues around the calculating parking, as well as the parking rate, were identified. Faith groups also identified the provision of parking as a major concern because of the costs involved.*

#### **WHAT IS SITE RESERVATION?**

**As detailed further in the Brampton case below, such a policy can be included in new Secondary Plans to require that certain sites be reserved/retained and eventually acquired for the purpose of establishing sites for new places of worship in plans of subdivision. A time period for which the site reservation applies is usually identified (for example: of 3-5 years after adoption of the secondary plan or subdivision plan registration).**

**Place of Worship is defined as: A place or building or part thereof, including accessory buildings or structures that are used for the regular assembly of persons for the practice of religious worship, services or rites. It may include accessory uses such as classrooms for religious instruction, including programs of community social benefit, assembly areas, kitchens, offices for the administration of the place of worship, a single residence for the faith group leader, and a small-scale day nursery, but shall not include a cemetery or more than one dwelling unit. City of Brampton**

#### **4. How should accessory and auxiliary uses be treated?**

*Text Box* Auxiliary uses such as private schools and residential developments on place of worship sites have the potential to cause conflicts with adjacent development. Issues include compatibility, traffic and parking. Regulation of such uses was recognized as important, and the need to distinguish these types of uses from accessory uses which are significant elements of places of worship (e.g. classrooms for religious instruction, offices, community services) was identified.

The [Brampton Place of Worship \(click here to view\)](#) study also states:

*Site Reservation policies do not restrict the number of Places of Worship sites that may ultimately locate in a community through various means, such as in commercial zones or through site-specific rezoning. Rather the intent is to ensure that the opportunity for the location of at least some Places of Worship is provided for in newly developing residential areas.*

To further support their site reservation policy, Section 5.9 of the Brampton Official Plan also states that the City may enact zoning by-laws incorporating holding provisions for a reserved place of worship site.

**Formal religious sites—such as churches, temples, cathedrals, and mosques—are places of great spiritual significance. They are often also centerpieces of community cohesion around which many urban residents’ lives revolve. Further, such sites often contain vestiges of green space and natural features in otherwise grey urban landscapes. For this reason, religious sites can and should be incorporated more seriously by urban planners and designers into the urban fabric. (Taken from “[Religion and Urban Planning: Possibilities and Challenges](#)”, November 2019).**

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

To further encourage the establishment of new places of worship, the following policy considerations have been identified for further discussion through We Make Milton:

### *1. Milton must continue to encourage and support the establishment of new places of worship as part of our planning for complete communities.*

In order to be consistent with the PPS and to conform/not conflict with provincial plans, Milton is required to support and sustain healthy, livable, and complete communities. According to the PPS and Growth Plan, we are required to accommodate institutional uses, including places of worship, to meet long-term needs and promote economic development and competitiveness. Since our population continues to grow and is becoming increasingly diverse we must also support a wide range of faith groups with different needs and facility requirements.

Milton's current Official Plan policies permit places of worship in several land use designations (including designations of the overarching/parent Official Plan as well as Secondary Plan designations), subject to meeting other policy requirements and any applicable criteria.

Since Places of worship are locating in employment areas more frequently to meet economic constraints, Milton should continue to permit these uses in appropriate employment areas where we can minimize impact on surrounding uses.

**As mentioned, Milton currently provides a development charge exemption for places of worship, which can be significant financial tool for new development.**

### *2. Milton should ensure that faith groups are engaged early in the planning process (i.e., for Area/Secondary Plans and Strategic Growth Areas).*

As Milton continues to grow, the needs of our faith groups should be considered in more detail through the secondary planning process, and other area-specific growth studies. Many faith group leaders in Milton reported challenges with finding locations for their places of worship, and there is clearly an opportunity to work with our faith groups early in the planning process to better understand their land/site needs and development goals.

Goals and policies related to when and how to engage/consult with our faith communities should be outlined in the new Official Plan. They could also indicate that place of worship policies shall be reviewed and monitored by Milton in consultation with our faith communities on a regular basis and shall be amended or modified whenever it is deemed necessary to accommodate the diverse needs of existing and future faith groups.

### *3. Milton could provide more direction for the use of site reservation policies for places of worship in new secondary plans/area studies.*

Milton's current Official Plan has an existing policy (Section 2.5.3.13) that states that Milton **may** provide for places of Worship reserve sites when identifying the location of community facilities in the Secondary Plan process; however, this policy language is encouraging/supportive rather than providing a clear directive.

Milton could strengthen its existing site reservation policy by clearly providing criteria for its use. For example, 'Worship Reserve sites' can be required for acquisition by faith groups for a period of three to five years after subdivision plan registration. Criteria for when a reserve site must be identified could be based on a population threshold and locational criteria.

**This policy approach can help clarify what Milton expects in terms of major institutional versus minor institutional uses and where they should be located.**

Milton could also indicate in its Official Plan policies that Holding by-laws and pre-zoning may be used for reserved place of worship sites.

#### **4. The new Official Plan should clearly define size and locational criteria to distinguish between major versus local (or minor) places of worship.**

In the existing Official Plan, there is a distinction between 'local' and 'major' (Regional) places of worship; however, the definitions and criteria for both types are not clearly defined. Since there are different land use requirements for each scale (i.e., Major/Regional institutional require larger sites and servicing for development), these should be established through policy. Broadened permissions for community-scaled places of worship uses should also be considered. Consideration should also be given to how the different scales of institutional are permitted in Employment Areas through the use of locational criteria that will help maintain the intended employment function, protect public health and safety, and reduce conflicts with industrial operations.

#### **5. The new Official Plan should provide a clearer set of definitions for: place of worship, accessory uses, auxiliary uses, community infrastructure, and other related terms.**

For example, the Brampton Official Plan states that a 'place of worship' means:

*A building or place (or portion of a building or place), primarily used for faith-based spiritual purposes wherein people assemble for religious worship and may also be involved in teaching, fellowship, recreation and charitable community outreach.*

The Brampton Official Plan also clearly states that:

*Accessory uses which are integral to the primary religious use include but are not limited to: classrooms for religious instructions, small-scale nursery or daycare facilities, assembly areas related to faith-based activities, kitchens and eating areas, fellowship halls, recreation facilities and administrative offices related to the place of worship, and one habitable living unit with up to 5 guest rooms. Accessory uses shall be permitted, unless specifically prohibited ... or result in land use compatibility concerns.*

And that:

*Auxiliary uses are defined as uses that do not represent an integral part of the Place of Worship and the primary use of religious practices, but may be planned to function together on sites that are of a sufficient size to accommodate the use. Auxiliary uses shall include but not be limited to: cemeteries, schools which offer an academic program in addition to religious instruction, supportive housing, and assembly areas which have a commercial function operated on a profit-making basis such as banquet halls. Except for those uses permitted in the Zoning By-law, auxiliary uses will require a zoning amendment.*

Similar to the City of Brampton, accessory uses that are considered to be part of the place of worship might require no additional approval; however, auxiliary uses developed in association with a place of worship could be subject to zoning approval, in order to prevent conflicts with adjacent development.

### *6. Milton should continue to encourage and support places of worship as shared/co-located uses.*

For greater land efficiency, the co-location of places of worship with schools and other institutions, housing components, parks, or stormwater management facilities, and other complementary uses that produce positive synergies, should continue to be encouraged, and existing Official Plan policies could be strengthened. Places of worship can complement public services and fill in gaps where public services may not be offered. Likewise, other uses have the potential to complement place of worship programs. Co-location can contribute to vibrant and liveable mixed-use neighbourhoods, villages and hubs.

Given the strategic location of public schools within communities, Milton should also continue to work with our School Boards to further expand the role of public schools as community hubs and explore opportunities for shared/collocated uses.

### *7. The new Official Plan could provide enhanced direction for parking and other site requirements for places of worship, to be implemented through zoning.*

Land use compatibility, traffic impacts, community integration and performance standards should be reviewed and policies could be established in the new Official Plan to ensure that sites are able to accommodate the functional demands of a place of worship.

For example, places of worship often face traffic and parking constraints. Milton's faith groups identified the provision of parking as a major concern because of the costs involved. Yet, the majority also reported travelling to their place of worship by car. Therefore, we can look at site and development requirement options, such as how to determine parking requirements for places of worship (i.e., calculating parking requirements based on worship area instead of gross floor area, and options for shared parking).



## Rural Living

### Big Question #6:

How can the new Official Plan recognize and support Milton's unique Rural Area? How can we improve livability, achieve healthy rural communities, and provide greater choice to rural residents?



### Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

#### *Planning Act*

While there are no requirements in the *Planning Act* regarding the specific needs of rural areas, there are many matters of provincial interest identified in Section 2 that affect quality of life for those living in Rural Milton. Under Section 2 of the *Planning Act*, the following matters of provincial interest are related to the above Big Question:

- a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions;*
- b) the protection of the agricultural resources of the Province;*
- c) the conservation and management of natural resources and the mineral resource base;*
- d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest; and*
- h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities.*

**Many of these matters of provincial interest focus on the conservation and protection of resources, which is explored in more detail in the Growing in Milton and Working in Milton Reports. This Big Question focuses on Milton's rural residents and the creation of healthy rural communities.**

## WHAT IS A 'HEALTHY RURAL COMMUNITY'?

As discussed in other Big Questions, a healthy community is one in which all residents have access to safe and healthy homes, adequate employment, transportation, physical activity, nutrition, health care, etc. In 2015, a team from the University of Guelph and Public Health Ontario developed a Healthy Rural Communities Tool Kit for planners and decision-makers, which recognizes that certain features of rural areas (i.e., low population density, an expansive landscape, and dispersed populations) all challenge the notion of compact, mixed-use, complete communities. Since rural areas are inherently different from urban ones, a unique approach is necessary when it comes to community design for healthy built environments in rural places. Some of the specific tools and actions identified in the tool kit are reviewed later in this report.

### Provincial Policy Statement

Section 1.1.4 of the PPS provides specific land use planning direction for rural areas in municipalities. The following is a summary of policy direction most relevant to the topic of living in rural Milton:

- Policy 1.1.4.1 states that healthy, integrated and viable rural areas should be supported by:
  - a) *building upon rural character, and leveraging rural amenities and assets;*
  - b) *promoting regeneration, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites;*
  - c) *accommodating an appropriate range and mix of housing in rural settlement areas;*
  - d) *encouraging the conservation and redevelopment of existing rural housing stock on rural lands; and*
  - e) *using rural infrastructure and public service facilities efficiently.*
- Section 1.1.4.2 clearly states that rural settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development within the Rural Area, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted.
- However, according to Policy 1.1.4.3, when directing development in rural settlement areas, planning authorities shall give consideration to rural characteristics, the scale of development and the provision of appropriate service levels.

**The PPS defines Rural Areas as: a system of lands within municipalities that may include rural settlement areas (including hamlets), rural lands, prime agricultural areas, natural heritage features and areas, and resource areas. Notably, Milton's Rural Area currently makes up 77% of the total municipal land area.**

**WHAT IS 'RURAL CHARACTER'? When we talk about 'rural character', we are often referring to the sense of place that one feels within a rural setting. This sense of place may be created by certain rural characteristics, such as agricultural activity, low population density and sociocultural history, as well as landscape and natural heritage features, or even things like sounds and smells that are observed in rural environments.**

While rural growth is specifically directed to rural settlement areas, there are also policies related to rural lands (areas that are outside of rural settlements and prime agricultural lands). The following policies apply:

- Policy 1.1.5.2 identifies the following permitted uses for rural lands:
  - a) *the management or use of resources;*
  - b) *resource-based recreational uses (including recreational dwellings);*
  - c) *residential development, including lot creation, that is locally appropriate;*
  - d) *agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses and normal farm practices, in accordance with provincial standards;*
  - e) *home occupations and home industries;*
  - f) *cemeteries; and*
  - g) *other rural land uses.*
- Policy 1.1.5.4 further states that development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels should be promoted.

**We will look more closely at opportunities to revitalize our Hamlets and promote economic development across the Rural Area in the Working in Milton Reports.**

## **Growth Plan**

Although the Growth Plan focuses mainly on places to grow within urban settlement areas, it also recognizes the importance of healthy rural communities to the vitality and well-being of the larger GGH. In Section 2.1, it states that:

*This Plan recognizes and promotes the important role of rural towns and villages as a focus of economic, cultural and social activities that support surrounding rural and agricultural areas across the GGH.*

**Thriving, livable, vibrant, and productive urban and rural areas will foster community health and individual well-being. (Ontario's Vision for the GGH, A Place to Grow, 2020).**

Section 2.2 of the Growth Plan provides direction for managing growth throughout the GGH. In Appendix 3, the Province provides population and employment growth forecasts, which are to be allocated by Regional/upper-tier municipalities (like Halton Region) to local/lower-tier municipalities (including Milton). In terms of growth within the rural area, policy 2.2.1.2 specifies that forecasted growth “will be limited in settlement areas that are rural settlements”. Section 2.2.9 provides additional direction for future growth in Milton’s rural settlements (also called hamlets). It states:

*Municipalities are encouraged to plan for a variety of cultural and economic opportunities within rural settlements to serve the needs of rural residents and area businesses.*

Other growth policies for rural areas in Section 2.2.9 focus on colocation of public facilities, resource-based uses, compatibility, and employment uses. These policies will be explored more fully in the Growing in Milton Reports.

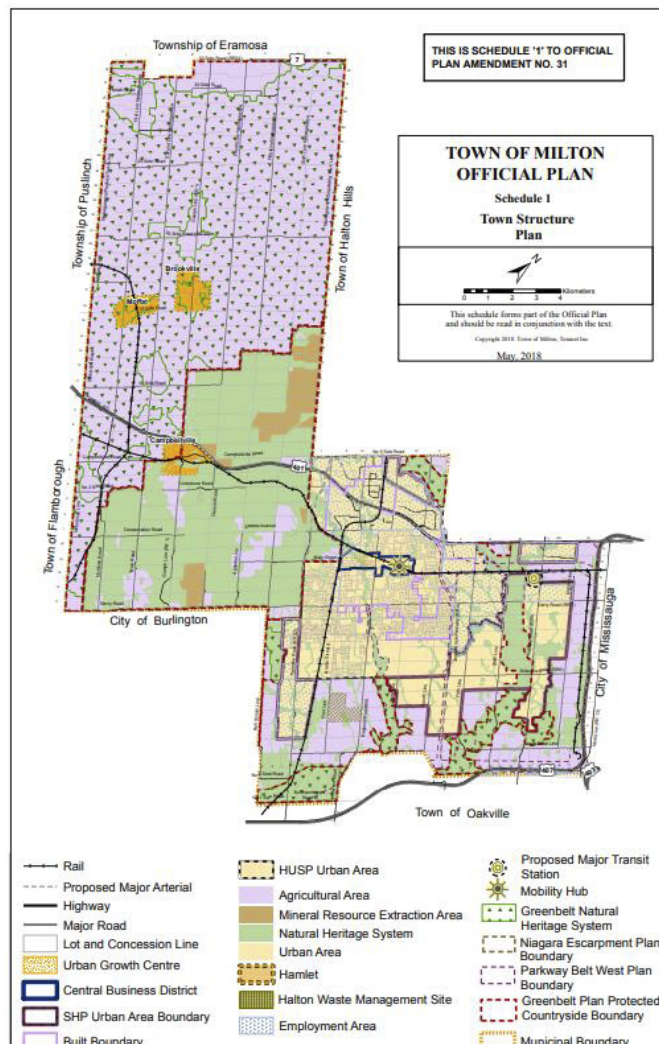
## Greenbelt Area

A significant portion (71%) of Milton's overall land base is defined and protected by the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Both Provincial plans help protect and enhance the unique rural characteristics, natural heritage features, and an agricultural system by requiring appropriate low impact and compatible development.

The Greenbelt Area is an important component of the agricultural and rural economy. In the Working in Milton report we will explore the use of rural lands for agriculture activities and review provincial policy direction that protects agricultural lands from loss and fragmentation.

**What is the Greenbelt Area? According to O.Reg 59/05, Ontario's Greenbelt Area, as governed by the Greenbelt Plan, includes lands within the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) Area, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area (not applicable to Milton), the Parkway Belt West Plan Area, and lands designated as Protected Countryside and as Urban River Valley by the Greenbelt Plan.**

**Figure 14: Components of the Greenbelt Plan Area Shown in the Current OP**



## Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion

Broadband internet refers to internet access that is always connected and faster than traditional dial-up. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted gaps in broadband access across the Province, including Halton Region. In the rural area of Milton, there has been a long-standing need for reliable broadband connectivity, which has certainly been amplified since early 2020. Today, all residents and businesses need reliable broadband access in order to work, learn, access health care services, conduct business, and communicate with friends and family. It will also be critical to economic recovery and growth post-pandemic.

**The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is responsible for coordinating the provision of high-speed broadband internet in Canada and has a target to bring download speeds of at least 50 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of at least 10 Mbps to 90 percent of homes and businesses by the end of 2021.**

**Even though broadband is not a municipal responsibility, many regional and local governments are becoming more engaged in telecommunications given the growing need and existing gaps.**

In 2019, the Province released a [Broadband and Cellular Action Plan](#) that identified important steps towards improved connectivity across Ontario. In 2021 the Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, 2021 was introduced to ensure timely deployment of broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas. If passed, this legislation will ensure municipalities and utility companies provide timely access to their infrastructure, including municipal rights of way and hydro utility poles, when appropriate. Even more recently, rural broadband funding was announced, which will include Halton Region. Nearly \$4 billion is dedicated by the provincial government to help connect all Ontarians to high-speed internet by the end of 2025.<sup>1</sup>

## Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

### Existing Regional Official Plan

The Vision for the Region's current Official Plan describes a future landscape (in Section 27) that will always consist of three principal land use categories, all of which apply to parts of Milton's Rural Area:

1. *settlement areas with identifiable communities,*
2. *a rural countryside where agriculture is the preferred and predominant activity, and*
3. *a natural heritage system that is integrated within settlement areas and the rural countryside, to preserve and enhance the biological diversity and ecological functions of Halton.*

<sup>1</sup> Currently there are no Federal or Provincial broadband funding programs for urban gaps in deployments.

The ROP also introduces a Regional Structure that implements Halton’s vision and includes the following mutually exclusive land use designations, which also apply to different parts of Rural Milton:

- The Agricultural Area, within which the primary activity is agricultural operation;
- Hamlets, which are compact rural communities;
- Mineral Resource Extraction Areas, where a valid licence has been issued under the Aggregate Resources Act; and
- The Regional Natural Heritage System, which is a system of connected natural areas and open space, intended to preserve and enhance the biological diversity and ecological functions within Halton.

When it comes to residential uses in Rural Milton, the Hamlet designation and associated policies are important. According to Section 102, the objective of the Hamlet designation is:

1. *To provide limited opportunities for rural, non-farm residences in identifiable communities; and*
2. *To accommodate rural, non-farm uses.*

Section 103 defines Hamlets as:

*Compact rural communities designated to accommodate future residential growth in the rural area and small scale industrial, commercial and institutional uses serving the farming and rural communities.*

The ROP goes on to state that uses are also permitted in accordance with Area-Specific Plans prepared by the local municipalities and approved by the Region.

In terms of future growth within the Hamlets, Sections 105 and 106 of the ROP provides direction on the following:

- New lot creation;
- Maintaining the Hamlet character;
- Supporting study requirements; and
- Residential and non-residential uses.

**Many of these land use designations are focused on resource-based activities/economic activities or environmental protection and are therefore explored in more detailed through the Growing in Milton and Working in Milton Reports and Big Questions.**

**Milton’s existing Official Plan establishes Area-Specific (or Secondary) Plans for the Hamlets of Brookville, Campbellville, and Moffat in Sections C3, C4, and C5.**

The current ROP does not permit additional residential units in the Rural Area, as required by the *Planning Act*. Refer to Big Question #1 (Affordability and Housing Choice) to learn more about this.

Additional residential units are being reviewed as part of the ROPR along with other rural topics, including:

- Designation and mapping of prime agricultural areas.
- Agriculture-related uses.
- On-farm diversified uses and agri-tourism.
- Cemeteries.
- Agricultural Impact Assessments.
- Special needs housing in the agricultural system.

The Growing in Milton and Working in Milton Reports will provide more information on new Regional policy directions related to all of these topics.

### *Rural Agricultural Strategy*

The Region recognizes that healthy rural areas are essential to Halton and that agriculture uses contribute significantly to the Regional economy. In 2016, the Halton Rural Agricultural Strategy was released ([which can be viewed here](#)) with a mission to sustain and grow a prosperous rural community and permanent agricultural system within Halton Region. Milton's agricultural economy and related topics are explored in the Working in Milton Reports.

Outside of the agricultural area, the balance of the Halton rural community is comprised of eight rural hamlets – three of which are located in Milton. According to the Rural Agricultural Strategy, some of the identified trends of concern about the rural hamlets include:

- Limited services.
- Aging demographics.
- Lack of diversity.
- Disconnect between residents of hamlets, settlements and agricultural communities.
- Lack of connection between rural and urban residents.<sup>2</sup>

**Building on the work completed through the Rural Agricultural Strategy, the Region has made 'The Rural and Agricultural System' one of five key policy areas under review as part of their ROPR. A discussion paper was completed in 2020 ([which can be viewed here](#)) to identify key agricultural and rural policy topics for discussion with the broader community.**

### *Halton Region Digital Access Strategy (HDAS)*

In December 2021, through [Report No. ST-05-21](#), a Haltonwide Digital Access Strategy was received by Regional Council which identified actions to promote enhanced broadband services in both the rural and urban areas. Through the Strategy, Halton continues to call for provincial and

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/0767fc9b-eeca-4400-adeb-606acb47f280/LPS-Rural\\_Agricultural\\_Strategy.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf](https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/0767fc9b-eeca-4400-adeb-606acb47f280/LPS-Rural_Agricultural_Strategy.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf)

federal governments to deliver affordable broadband service speeds of one gigabyte per second (GBPS) across the region by 2026. The Strategy also identifies a digital access implementation action plan, which recommends the following:

- A coordinated approach to support the deployment of 5G wireless technology using utility and streetlight poles;
- expansion of local fibre networks; and
- a unified broadband service by local internet service providers using fibre technology.

### **Existing Official Plan**

Milton's current Official Plan identifies a Rural System that is made up of other agricultural and natural heritage systems, and mineral resource extraction areas. Official plan policies for these systems/areas focus primarily on agriculture, natural resource management, and environmental protection, and are discussed in the Growing and Working in Milton reports.

**According to the current Official Plan, the purpose of Milton's Agricultural System is to recognize and support agriculture as the primary activity and predominant land use and as an important natural resource to the economic viability of agriculture. As such, non-farm uses are directed to the Urban Area and Milton's Hamlets.**

**There are many upper-tier plans and policies that apply to and are part of the Rural System in Milton, including: the Greenbelt Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Provincial Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems, the Parkway Belt West Plan and the Regional NHS. Each plan provides its own permissions for residential and other permitted uses within the designations of each plan. The policies of these plans will be implemented through the new Milton Official Plan.**

The Rural System also includes the three Hamlet Areas of Campbellville, Brookville and Moffat, which are the focus of settlement in Milton's Rural area and provide limited opportunities for non-farm development. According to Section 4.5.1.2 of the current Official Plan, as updated by OPA 31, hamlets are:

*Compact rural communities designated to accommodate future residential growth in the rural area and small scale industrial, commercial and institutional uses serving both the Hamlets and the surrounding farming and rural communities.*

In general, the Official Plan prohibits the creation of new lots in the Rural System, except in the Hamlet Area designation, and directs non-farm uses to the Urban Area and Hamlets. The land use policies and permissions summarized in Table 21 below apply to the Hamlets through Section 4.5 of the Official Plan, in addition to the approved Hamlet Secondary Plans in Part C, which are also summarized in Table 21 below.



**Table 21: Hamlet Land Use Designations in the Current Milton Official Plan**

Hamlet Area Designation	Summary of Permitted Uses
<b>Hamlet Residential</b>	Single detached dwellings and existing semi-detached and duplex dwellings subject to Milton’s zoning by-law.
<b>Hamlet Commercial</b>	Residential uses in accordance with subsection 4.5.3.3 of this Plan; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. blacksmith/horse carriage repair shop;</li> <li>b. pottery fabrication and sales shop;</li> <li>c. jams and preserves production and sales shop;</li> <li>d. antique display and sales shop;</li> <li>e. art gallery/framing/gift shop;</li> <li>f. furniture shop;</li> <li>g. photography/studio;</li> <li>h. saddlery;</li> <li>i. flower shop;</li> <li>j. bed and breakfast establishment;</li> <li>k. home businesses.</li> </ul> Uses shall not exceed a gross floor area of 500 square metres.
<b>Hamlet Institutional</b>	Institutional uses which serve the Hamlet and surrounding rural area shall be permitted in any Hamlet designation
<b>Hamlet Industrial</b>	Recognizes existing industries. New industrial uses in the Hamlets shall be prohibited unless they directly serve the surrounding agricultural operations. Permitted non-residential use shall not exceed a gross floor area of 500 square metres.

**Many of the permitted uses in the Hamlet Commercial designation are out of date (such as the horse carriage repair shop and saddlery). Many of the uses are also very specific and more appropriate for zoning regulations.**

**In conformity with the ROP, Milton does not currently permit additional residential units in the Rural Area, as required by the *Planning Act*, unless it is accessory to an agricultural operation.**

**In 2019, Milton Council adopted an OP amendments that removed barriers related to the location of supportive/ shared housing in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code. This form of housing is licensed, approved, supervised or funded under a provincial or federal statute where up to ten individuals, exclusive of staff, share accommodation as a single housekeeping unit and are supported and/or supervised within that unit. It is now permitted in both urban and rural residential areas and this will be carried forward through the new OP.**

All new development in the Hamlet Area designation must be on private, individual water supplies and private, individual wastewater facilities, and must conform to the relevant approved Hamlet Secondary Plans in Part C of the Official Plan. Milton has three secondary plans for the Hamlets of Campbellville, Brookville, and Moffat that outline the respective hamlet boundaries and the policies to ensure their unique character is maintained during future development, as summarized in Table 22 below.

**Table 22: Summary of Secondary Plan policies for Milton’s Hamlets**

Hamlet	OP Section	Summary of Secondary Plan Policies
<b>Brookville</b>	<b>C3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The boundaries are illustrated on Schedule C.3.A, and can accommodate 1080 persons<sup>3</sup>. No expansions to the Hamlet area are permitted.</li> <li>• A review of Secondary Plan policies for the Hamlet of Campbellville Secondary Plan Area is encouraged.</li> <li>• Limited infilling or strip development that is a logical, continuous extension of existing development is permitted in order to complete the growth potential.</li> <li>• An extensive public open space network is encouraged, including public access to the Escarpment.</li> <li>• The minimum net lot size for new development shall be in accordance with approved hydrogeological studies.</li> <li>• Prior to approval of development in the south-east quadrant of Campbellville, detailed studies will be required to evaluate suitability.</li> <li>• In order to preserve the cultural theme of the existing commercial establishments, new facilities of local importance shall be directed to the northern end of the Hamlet Commercial designation and off Main Street.</li> <li>• Development in Campbellville, where applicable, shall meet the objectives and development and growth objectives of the NEP.</li> </ul>
<b>Campbellville</b>	<b>C4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The boundaries are illustrated on Schedule C.4.A, and can accommodate 650 persons<sup>4</sup>. No expansions to the Hamlet area are permitted.</li> <li>• Limited infilling or strip development is permitted in order to complete the growth potential.</li> <li>• An extensive public open space network will be encouraged, linking all parts of the community to important locations in the Hamlet.</li> <li>• The minimum net lot size for new development shall be in accordance with the Summary and Conclusions of the Hydrogeological Investigation for the Hamlet of Brookville (1982), specifically 0.5 ha., and may be increased.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Hydrogeological studies were adopted by the Region of Halton for the Hamlets of Campbellville, Brookville and Moffat in 1982. These studies set out the extent of development in light of the specific hydrogeological conditions, the long term cumulative effect of the development on groundwater aquifers, surface waters, environmentally sensitive areas within or adjacent to the Hamlet and other matters considered appropriate. However, given that the results of these studies may be outdated, the existing Milton OP states that site-specific hydrogeological studies relating to the preparation and evaluation of new development proposals shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Town of Milton, the Region of Halton (and the Niagara Escarpment Commission when relating to Campbellville), and shall take into account the results of the Halton Region Aquifer Management Program.

<sup>4</sup> See previous footnote.

Hamlet	OP Section	Summary of Secondary Plan Policies
Moffat	C5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The boundaries are illustrated on Schedule C.5.A, and can accommodate 460 persons<sup>5</sup>. No expansions to the Hamlet area are permitted.</li> <li>Development will be permitted by infilling or strip development in order to establish a more visible Hamlet identity and to provide essential community services.</li> <li>The minimum net lot size for new development shall be in accordance with the Summary and Conclusions of the Hydrogeological Investigation for the Hamlet of Moffat (1982), specifically 0.5 ha, and may be increased should the site conditions and proposed uses so warrant.</li> </ul>

### *Current Planning Practices*

The following is a review of current land use planning practices in other places, which Milton can consider for the new Official Plan as it relates to rural living in Milton. Examples are organized into the following categories:

1. Promoting Healthy Rural Communities;
2. Rural Character;
3. Housing Choice;
4. Broadband; and
5. Official Plan Structure.

### *Promoting Healthy Rural Communities*

In 2015, a team from the University of Guelph, in partnership with Public Health Ontario, developed a Healthy Rural Communities Tool Kit to act as a guide for rural municipalities, planners, and decision-makers.<sup>6</sup> The tool kit brings a rural lens to issues that are often viewed from an urban perspective. The objectives of the tool kit are:

- To identify existing effective land use planning policies and models of practice for healthy rural built environments.
- To recognize the benefits of a coordinated approach to rural planning and development that uses a range of regulatory and non-regulatory tools.
- To identify innovative land use planning policies and initiatives that can contribute to healthy communities and healthy populations.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote #3.

<sup>6</sup> [https://63e00ca0-b640-4a6f-b9ba-a93ade8e4d97.filesusr.com/ugd/b3a4cb\\_995d2d16f45a42b78de716a2f0d73b44.pdf](https://63e00ca0-b640-4a6f-b9ba-a93ade8e4d97.filesusr.com/ugd/b3a4cb_995d2d16f45a42b78de716a2f0d73b44.pdf)

Through project research, including surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with municipal planners and public health professionals, thirteen key actions for rural municipalities were recommended, as summarized in Table 23 below:

1. Community Design and Land Use Planning
2. Active Transportation
3. Community Engagement and Capacity Building
4. Water Quality
5. Air Quality
6. Tourism
7. Planning for Special Age Groups
8. Agriculture
9. Cultural Strategies and Revitalization
10. Access to Local Food
11. Nature
12. Safe and Affordable Housing
13. Climate Change

**All of these actions are recommended to build healthy rural communities. Some topics are explored in more detail in other We Make Milton Reports. The recommendations are identified specifically for 'rural municipalities' and this includes places like Milton that have a significant rural area.**

**Table 23: Summary of Planning Recommendations for Healthy Rural Communities**

Action Area	Recommendations for Rural Municipalities
<b>1. Community Design and Land Use Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that your official plan includes policies related to healthy communities.</li> <li>• Develop appropriate community design guidelines that can assist in implementing the Official Plan and reflect unique community conditions and characteristics.</li> <li>• Consider using resources such as the Region of Peel Health Assessment Tool, which identifies the public health impact of built environments.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Active Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to ensure that you have an active transportation plan that considers broad county- and region-wide initiatives and connections between municipalities and communities as well as infrastructure improvements such as wider road shoulders or bike lanes.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Community Engagement and Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use creative ways to engage the public in the planning process in addition to the <i>Planning Act</i> requirements.</li> <li>• Leverage non-traditional organizations as partners involved with public health, recreation, engineering, business and youth.</li> <li>• Seek additional funding and foster public and private partnerships.</li> </ul>

Action Area	Recommendations for Rural Municipalities
<b>4. Water Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the conservation authority to ensure that your source water protection plan is being properly incorporated.</li> <li>• Work with the conservation authority to ensure that planning efforts can incorporate a focus on watersheds/sub-watersheds.</li> <li>• For existing brownfields (such as abandoned heavy industrial sites), ensure that your community has considered various mechanisms to have these sites cleaned up.</li> <li>• Work with your health unit and building permit staff to ensure that you are following best practices related to public and private sewage treatment.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Air Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop official plan policies that encourage the reduction of air pollution through changes in the built environment.</li> <li>• Ensure the creation of an anti-idling by-law.</li> <li>• Ensure the development of an open air burning by-law.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider developing a tourism strategy or bring the focus to tourism through community economic development.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Planning for Special Age Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that your planning initiatives bring a focus to the needs of an aging population.</li> <li>• Ensure that your planning documents have consideration for youth.</li> <li>• Develop a youth retention strategy. Provide opportunities for education and employment.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Agriculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect agricultural land, as it has significant environmental, economic and social benefits.</li> <li>• Encourage stewardship and healthy environmental practices on agricultural lands.</li> <li>• Support the local farm community through groups such as Agricultural Advisory Committees. Please see: <a href="#">Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>9. Cultural Strategies and Revitalization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the importance of built heritage resources such as downtowns and villages. Many municipalities have been successful with this through community improvement plans, business improvement associations and local fundraising.</li> <li>• Promote local events and festivals. The arts contribute to community well-being, volunteering and economic opportunities and have been shown to improve the health of residents.</li> </ul>
<b>10. Access to Local Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the consumption and production of local food.</li> <li>• Official plan policies and zoning by-laws should also support farm retail markets.</li> <li>• Recognize that local food is an economic opportunity and also provides health benefits. Local food production should be supported as well as opportunities for farmers to connect with customers.</li> <li>• Implement by-laws that protect spaces for community supported agriculture, community gardens and agricultural land for food growing and production and provide better opportunities for local food processing and sale.</li> <li>• Consider promoting new methods of acquiring local food such as 'gleaning' (i.e. foraging for food in the wild such as hunting, fishing and collecting edible wild items).</li> </ul>

Action Area	Recommendations for Rural Municipalities
<b>11.Nature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge, use and manage natural heritage resources for their important environmental, economic and social benefits to the rural community.</li> <li>• Promote stewardship and voluntary approaches to natural areas and preservation.</li> <li>• Become familiar with approaches to environmental innovation and planning.</li> </ul>
<b>12.Safe and Affordable Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the importance of the topic. Work with people who are knowledgeable and lobby for new affordable housing.</li> <li>• Attempt to maintain existing built facilities that can be readily adapted to housing.</li> <li>• Providing modest forms of housing in rural contexts through conversion, retrofit and intensification mechanisms.</li> <li>• Refer to the housing study completed for your Region.</li> </ul>
<b>13.Climate Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge the concern for climate change through commentary and local action. Ensure that your official plan has policies related to climate change mitigation and adaptation.</li> <li>• Consider the development of a special purpose plan that considers climate change, sustainability and energy plans.</li> <li>• Consider undertaking community initiatives that involve greenhouse gas emissions reduction, sustainable neighbourhood plans and brownfield remediation and redevelopment.</li> <li>• Embrace the voluntary actions of community members to address climate change.</li> </ul>

Collectively, the 13 actions above are said to help enhance the rural built environment and contribute to positive quality of life and health outcomes. Many are focused on future growth, economic development and mobility, and are explored in more detail from a rural perspective in the Growing, Working, and Moving Reports.

### Rural Character

In 2019, the Town of Caledon completed a “Preservation of Rural Community Character and Infill Policy Review” study<sup>7</sup> that focused on the Town’s rural villages and hamlets and was intended to identify, protect and enhance the valued aspects of these areas in a manner that allows for sensitive growth and infill development. The study aimed to establish a policy framework that ensures that any new development positively contributes to the established character, sense of place, and cultural heritage assets of the rural villages and hamlets. As part of the study, an explanation of what defines “rural community character” was provided. According to the Town of Caledon:

*Rural community character comprises both tangible and intangible elements. The natural environment, rural streetscapes, agricultural landscapes and significant cultural and historical assets are all physical elements that significantly contribute to the character of Caledon’s*

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.caledon.ca/en/town-services/resources/Business-Planning--Development/Policy/Preservation-of-Rural-Community-Character-and-Infill-Policy-Review/Villages-and-Hamlets-Directions-Report.pdf>

rural communities. Similarly, a “small town feel”, friendliness, country charm and peacefulness were all identified qualities that residents felt were integral to maintaining their rural lifestyle. New development that do not compromise these physical attributes and intangible qualities threaten the rural community character and way of life.

In regard to the protection of rural identity, the study states that it is imperative that the Caledon’s identity and role within the GTA be clearly expressed in the initial contextual sections of the Town’s Official Plan. The current preambles to the Official Plan state threats to the rural lifestyle, but do not effectively present preservation and protection of the Town’s rural identity as a key goal and objective of the Official Plan. Furthermore, the study identifies a set of policy additions and modifications that could be added throughout various sections of the Official Plan, to ensure that all aspects of protection of rural character are considered, including:

- Achieving a dark sky with visibility of the stars at night;
- Sensitive integration of development adjacent to natural heritage and agricultural lands;
- Sympathetic development in the Town’s settlements and rural areas;
- Maintaining a streetscape character that exhibits characteristics representative of the rural areas.

In order to ensure that new or infill development is compatible and sensitive to the existing context, Caledon’s ‘Preservation of Rural Community Character’ study also states that it is essential to identify significant rural character features within each settlement area. According to the study:

*Rural character features differ from “Character Area” features as they relate to the greater settlement area and comprise physical characteristics and intangible elements that are within the natural landscape or built up area.*

**Caledon’s rural character reflects a predominately natural and agricultural setting with clusters of low-density development. The most common rural character traits that were identified during a community engagement process include:**

- Cultural heritage landscapes and resources;
- Preservation of and access to natural heritage features;
- Dark sky and low-impact lighting; and
- Established low density settlements.

**Intangible elements that define Caledon’s rural character and identity include the country charm and “small-town” feel as well as a relaxed ambiance that is gained from the surrounding natural and agricultural backdrop.**

## **Housing Choice**

The Town of Halton Hills Official Plan previously permitted additional residential units in single detached, semi-detached and townhouse dwellings in the urban areas (Acton and Georgetown) only. However, as mentioned earlier and in Big Question #1 (Affordability and Housing) recent amendments to the *Planning Act* now require municipalities to permit up to two additional residential units in local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws wherever single, semi-detached and

townhouses are permitted (one in the primary residential dwelling and one in an auxiliary building).

To respond to new *Planning Act* requirements, the Town of Halton Hills undertook an [Accessory Unit in Rural Area study](#) in 2019. On September 9th, 2019, Town Council approved OPA No. 38 and By-law 2019-0049, in order to implement the final recommendations of the study. As a result of the amendment, an accessory apartment is now permitted on existing lots in following rural designations:

- Agricultural Area;
- Protected Countryside Area;
- Hamlet Residential Area;
- Hamlet Community Core Area;
- Rural Cluster Area; and
- Country Residential.

However, the following Official Plan criteria must be met, in addition to the updated regulations of the zoning by-law:

- a. The accessory apartment must comply with the Ontario Building and Fire Codes;
- b. Adequate parking is available on the lot for both dwelling units and minimizes the loss of outdoor amenity areas or landscaping;
- c. The accessory apartment is designed and located in such a manner to not have a negative impact on the character of the surrounding residential uses and to that end any building addition shall be compatible with the massing, height, and setbacks of adjacent dwelling units; and
- d. Municipal water and wastewater or septic and well facilities are adequate and available to accommodate an additional dwelling unit.

Notwithstanding existing *Planning Act* requirements, the Town's new OP policies do not include provisions for accessory dwelling units in ancillary buildings, since this is currently being reviewed by the Region as part of its on-going ROPR.

### **WHAT IS AN ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNIT?**

**It means a dwelling unit that is self-contained, subordinate to and located within the same building or on the same lot of a primary dwelling unit. They are often referred to as "granny flats", "accessory apartments", "second units", "basement apartments", or "in-law suites".**



## Broadband

### York Region Broadband Policy Language

On May 15, 2014 York Regional Council adopted the York Region Broadband Strategy report, which provided recommendations for improving access to highspeed internet connectivity for residents, businesses and institutions throughout York Region. The objectives of the Broadband Strategy are as follows:

- Encourage investments that will provide higher connectivity speeds within York Region;
- Create an environment that facilitates open, competitive and innovative services and applications; and
- Maximize efficient investment of public and private sector funding to improve connectivity throughout York Region.

One of the action items of York Region's Broadband Strategy is to identify ways to leverage land-use planning policy and the development process to promote connectivity for York Region residents and businesses. To implement this action item, recommendations were made for local municipalities to use specific policy language in their Official Plan to encourage broadband infrastructure investment by telecommunication companies. Doing so would harmonize the policies that guide the deployment of broadband infrastructure across York Region and support the efforts of telecommunication companies. The following is a summary of recommendations:

- Recommendation #1: Add language to mandate (to the extent possible) broadband infrastructure in new development areas. The following policy language direction should be considered through Official Plan Updates:
  - o work with leading-edge communication technologies as a means of enhancing the Region's capacity to attract and maintain a vibrant economy;
  - o require/encourage development to accommodate the capability to implement leading edge communication technologies, including those required to deliver broadband services; and
  - o encourage the construction of hydro, telephone, and other communication services to be located in the road right-of-way, where possible.

- Recommendation #2: In order to ensure that all registered telecommunications service providers are given an opportunity to locate their infrastructure within a proposed municipal right-of-way, it is recommended that the following wording be inserted into local municipal plan of subdivision agreements:

*The Developer shall covenant and agree in the Subdivision Agreement to grant access, on reasonable terms and conditions as agreed by the City/Town of XXX, to any Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) registered telecommunications service providers indicating an interest to locate infrastructure within a municipal right-of-way. The Developer shall further agree to advise any telecommunications service provider intending to locate within a municipal right-of-way, of the requirement to enter into a Municipal Access Agreement with the City/Town of XXX, and to satisfy all conditions, financial and otherwise of the Municipality.*

## **Durham Region Broadband Policy Language**

In recognition of the growing shift of economic, social, educational and entertainment activities to online formats dependent on high-speed broadband infrastructure, Durham Region also prepared a Broadband Strategy in 2019. The Strategy identified that part of the Region, especially the north, do not have adequate broadband service, and recognizes the importance of broadband infrastructure. The Strategy outlines a series of actions to promote the expansion of broadband networks, particularly to underserved areas. Action 2C in particular directs the consideration of ROP policies that support broadband infrastructure.

In 2019, the Region launched its ROPR, and in June of that year a discussion paper was released with the following discussion question #17:

*What type of Regional Official Plan policies should be provided to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure?*

Responses expressed wide support for broadband policies that acknowledge the importance of broadband as essential infrastructure for economic development, and for policies that support its deployment within both urban and rural communities. The following directions with respect to broadband infrastructure were identified:

- 1. Recognize the importance and encourage the expansion of leading-edge technologies, including high-speed broadband infrastructure;*
- 2. Require new development to be designed to enable the implementation of highspeed broadband, where feasible;*
- 3. Support the establishment of a Regional Broadband Network and continue to engage our area municipal partners and service providers;*
- 4. Enable the Region to participate, financially or otherwise, in projects that may include those from Internet Services Providers or as may be identified through a potential Community Improvement Plan that would expand broadband infrastructure to underserved areas; and*
- 5. Encourage the provincial and federal governments to continue to provide funding programs that support the expansion of high-speed broadband services to underserved areas and to provide access to their infrastructure to promote co-location opportunities.*

## ***Rural Context and Plan Structure***

In September 2019, the '[Our King Official Plan](#)' was adopted by Township Council on September 23, 2019, and subsequently approved by York Region on September 24, 2020. The Official Plan establishes a comprehensive, long-term vision for the future of the Township as a whole and a detailed policy framework to guide growth and development in the Township's hamlets and rural area.

Prior to the Township's new Official Plan, the policies and direction for King's Villages and Hamlets were addressed by Secondary Plans, similar to Milton. This was updated in the new OP, which now provides hamlet and rural policies in it's own dedicated section. In addition, the new King Township Official Plan identifies a dedicated vision for the Countryside in Section 6.1:

*We are, foremost, a rural and agricultural municipality, and we value our agricultural roots. Agriculture is a keystone of our economy: through the production of a wide range of crops, livestock, horse farms, agri-tourism uses and opportunities, and by our specialized, unique and productive soils. Our Township includes much of the Holland Marsh, which accounts for a significant market of produce that is both sold and consumed locally and is exported to other markets. Our Countryside is a mosaic of many different farms, rural uses, Hamlets and natural features whose value is much greater than the sum of its parts. Supporting the Countryside means providing for a flexible policy framework that is adaptable to the farming community and the changing nature of the agricultural economy. It also means conserving heritage, as our Countryside includes many different types of important cultural heritage resources.*

Furthermore, a separate, dedicated land use vision for King Township's hamlets is provided in Section 6.2.1:

*The Hamlets of King Township are characterized by their unique identities and rural way of life, which contribute to a strong sense of community and place. During the planning horizon, the Hamlets will accommodate limited growth in the form of infilling in a manner that protects and enhances their unique identities and ensures that they remain distinct from the Township's Villages. In particular, the Hamlets are celebrated for their rich history and connection to the past. Aspects of the local history have endured over time through the built environment and cultural heritage resources. These resources contribute significantly to the unique character and sense of place, and will be protected and enhanced during the planning horizon. The Hamlets are also celebrated for their relationship to the surrounding rural and agricultural landscape. Their mix of uses and community focal points provide important economic and social opportunities to support residents and the broader rural and agricultural community. The prosperity and vitality of the Hamlets will be sustained over the long-term by promoting opportunities for economic development. Generally, the Hamlets are planned as principally residential communities, with appropriate and compatible supporting small-scale commercial and employment uses, as well as community facilities.*

## **Policy Considerations for We Make Milton**

The following set of policy considerations have been identified as result of the above exploration of Big Question #6:

**1. The Official Plan must direct future growth in the rural area to our hamlets; however, growth will be limited.**

Provincial policy indicates that rural settlement areas (hamlets) are to be the focus of growth and development within the Rural Area, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted. However, growth will be limited. Opportunities and constraints related to growth in Rural Milton will be explored through Growing in Milton.

**2. The Official Plan must provide a wider range of housing opportunities across the Rural Area by permitting 'Additional Residential Units'.**

The *Planning Act* requires that an official plan contain policies that permit additional residential units by authorizing the use of two residential units in a detached house, semi-detached house or rowhouse, and the use of a residential unit in a building or structure ancillary to a detached house,

semi-detached house or rowhouse. This requirement is supported by Ontario Regulation 299/19, which provides more detailed direction in terms of definitions and parking requirements, and Milton's new Official Plan can also establish additional criteria for the creation of additional units, related to servicing and urban design, for example. The Region of Halton is also currently updating its policies related to additional residential units in the Rural Areas and Milton's Official Plan will be required to conform to these. Big Question #1 in this Report explores the topic of housing choice and affordability in more detail.

### ***3. The Official Plan should recognize the uniqueness and the past, present, and future of Milton's Rural Area, including hamlets, through a vision, goals, and general development policies to the year 2051.***

A land use planning vision, goals, and objectives that area specific to the Rural Area, (and components of the Rural Area, such as Hamlets), and consistent with upper-tier policy direction should be set-out by the new Official Plan. The new Official Plan can articulate defining characteristics of the Rural Area and Hamlets, as well as goals and objectives for future growth and the protection of rural identity. Milton's identity and role within the GTA is unique and the history and future of our vast Rural Area should be clearly expressed in the initial contextual sections of the new Official Plan. The preservation and protection of the Town's rural identity should be identified as key goal and objective.

Goals, objectives, and general development policies related to the following policy areas can also be set out to address Living in Rural Milton:

- Built Environment and Urban Design
- Sustainability and Climate Change Mitigation/Adaptation
- Community Food Supply
- Heritage Conservation
- Protecting/Enhancing Rural Character
- Placemaking
- Regeneration and Revitalization
- New Development
- Servicing
- Compatibility

### ***4. Hamlet designations and permitted uses should be updated to help achieve Milton's vision, goals, and objectives for the Rural Area.***

Four land use designations currently apply to Milton's Hamlets and some of the uses permitted within them are outdated. For example, in the Hamlet Commercial designation, a horse carriage repair shop and saddlery are permitted. As part of the new Official Plan, existing designations should be reviewed and updated to help achieve goals and objectives for Brookeville, Campbellville, and Moffat. New designations might be identified for certain parts of the Hamlets, and permitted uses updated, to ensure that they support Milton's long term vision for these areas.

### ***5. The Official Plan should include policies to support broadband infrastructure.***

All Miltonians, no matter where they live, need high-speed Internet to connect with family, keep up at school, run a business and access essential medical services. While the provision of broadband infrastructure involves a number of different partners, funding, and programs, new policies should be introduced to support deployment in underservices areas, like Rural Milton. For example, new policies could:

- Encourage co-location of broadband infrastructure with existing telecommunication facilities wherever possible
- Support broadband infrastructure (conduit at a minimum) as part of new development applications
- Encourage Partnerships and Funding Opportunities

### ***6. New Official Plan policies could outline a description of the importance, need and measures/procedures to specifically engage with the rural population.***

It is important to develop consultation and engagement mechanisms that equally allow everyone to be part of Milton's planning initiatives. Regarding the contents of an Official Plan, Section 16(2) of the *Planning Act* indicates that it is optional for an official plan to contain a description of the measures and procedures proposed to attain the overall objectives of the plan and for any other planning matters. Milton could set out measures and procedures for engaging the rural community specifically.

# Urban Design and Creating Places

## Big Question #7:

How can the new Official Plan achieve urban design excellence? How can we create a cohesive and memorable built environment and strong sense of place? How can we provide more accessible and equitable spaces for all?



### Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

#### *Planning Act*

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* outlines several matters of provincial interest that municipalities are required to implement involving urban design, including:

- (h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;*
- (h.1) the accessibility for persons with disabilities to all facilities, services and matters to which this Act applies;*
- (q) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable;*
- (r) the promotion of built form that,*
  - (i) is well-designed,*
  - (ii) encourages a sense of place, and*
  - (iii) provides for public spaces that are of high quality, safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.*

**What do we mean by 'Urban Design'? We are talking about the thoughtful creation of our built environment. It involves the arrangement, appearance, and function of buildings, streets, landscaping, streetscaping, and publicly accessible spaces - both individually and in how they relate to each other collectively. Good urban design enriches our quality of life and every day experiences.**

**What are 'Urban Design Guidelines (UDGs)? UDGs assist with the interpretation of Official Plan policies and zoning by-laws, and provide design direction for development proposals. They are an important tool that can be used to provide clear direction good design objectives and elements. However, it should be noted that urban design guidelines are not policy.**

16(1)(a) of the *Planning Act* also states that an Official Plan shall contain goals, objectives, and policies established primarily to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social and built environment of the municipality.

### **Provincial Policy Statement**

Part IV of the PPS establishes the Vision for Ontario's Land Use Planning System, and the following excerpts taken from that Vision and are related to living in Milton and Big Question #7:

*The long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontario depends upon planning for strong, sustainable and resilient communities for people of all ages.*

*Strong, liveable and healthy communities promote and enhance human health and social wellbeing, are economically and environmentally sound.*

Policy 1.1.1 of the PPS also states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society.

In policy 1.7.1, the PPS states that long-term economic prosperity should be supported by encouraging a sense of place, by promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning, and by conserving features that help define character.

Policy 1.8 requires that Milton promote design and orientation which maximizes energy efficiency and conservation, and considers the mitigating effects of vegetation and green infrastructure.

### **Growth Plan**

The Growth Plan for the GGH is based on a set of guiding principles, including the following which is directly related to Big Question #7:

*Support the achievement of complete communities that are designed to support healthy and active living and meet people's needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime.*

As stated in Section 2.2.1.4, applying the policies of the Growth Plan for the GGH will support the achievement of complete communities that:

- *Improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.*

**Many sections of the PPS provide direction for urban design related matters, which are addressed in more detail as part of our exploration of other Big Questions in this report, including: energy conservation, air quality and climate change; public spaces, recreation, parks, trails, and open space; and cultural heritage.**

**To support the achievement of complete communities, the Growth Plan for the GGH also establishes minimum growth targets that focus on intensification and density. This is discussed and explored in the context of Milton through the Growing in Milton Reports.**

- Provide for a more compact built form and a vibrant public realm, including public open spaces.
- Integrate green infrastructure and appropriate low impact development.



In terms of specific policy direction related to urban design, section 5.2.5 requires that in order to plan for minimum intensification and density targets established by the Growth Plan, municipalities will develop and implement urban design and site design

Official Plan policies and other supporting documents that direct the development of a high quality public realm and compact built form.

**Defining Public Realm: According to the OPPI’s Call for Action entitled ‘Healthy Communities and Planning for the Public Realm’ [which can be viewed by clicking here](#), the public realm is defined as the publicly owned places and spaces that belong to and are accessible by everyone. These can include municipal streets, lanes, squares, plazas, sidewalks, trails, parks, open spaces, waterfronts, public transit systems, conservation areas, and civic buildings and institutions. It can be a passive environment, such as sitting at a cafe, or an active environment, such as cycling in a bike lane, or a combination of both. It can also be an interior space such as a library or a recreation centre, or an exterior space such as a multipurpose trail or a public square.**

Finally, Section 5 states that implementation of the Growth Plan “should include using relevant legislative and regulatory tools and other strategies to plan for a variety of heights, densities and other elements of site design within settlement areas to achieve the desired urban form and the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan.”

### **Ontario Building Code**

While Milton’s new Official Plan must conform to the PPS and the Growth Plan for the GGH, it must also conform to the Ontario Building Code (OBC). The OBC is a regulation under the Building Code Act that establishes detailed technical and administrative requirements, and minimum standards for building construction.

The OBC promotes public health and safety, fire protection, resource conservation, environmental integrity, and accessibility. Its purpose is the promotion of public safety through the application of uniform building standards that include:

- Health and safety;
- Fire protection;
- Structural sufficiency;

**A review of Green Development Standards as a current land use planning practice is provided as part of the exploration of Big Question #2 (Climate Change).**



- Construction materials; and
- Plumbing and mechanical systems.

Although any municipal urban design guidelines must conform to the OBC, there are no restrictions on introducing more stringent design requirements, such as green development standards, or through local zoning by-laws.

## Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

### *Existing Regional Official Plan*

Part II of the ROP establishes Halton’s planning vision for the future, which indicates that the Region believes in building healthy communities that:

- *foster among the residents a state of physical, mental, social and economic well-being;*
- *are physically so designed to minimize the stress of daily living and meet the life-long needs of its residents; and*
- *embraces principles of sustainability are embraced and practised by residents, businesses and governments.*

**Upper-tier/regional governments in Ontario (like Halton Region) co-ordinate planning issues that address all of its local municipalities: Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville. Locally important planning matters, like urban design which addresses the functional and aesthetic qualities of the environment at a smaller scale are best addressed by Milton’s local Official Plan.**

It is also noted that under Section 85, one of the objectives of the Region is to encourage municipalities and the building and development industry to develop housing that stresses certain design priorities, including: good environmental practices, universal physical access, public safety and security needs, and energy and natural resource conservation principles.

**According to the ROP, Universal physical access means housing designs that incorporate the following principles and features:**

- **Universality: same means for all users.**
- **Flexibility: providing choice in methods of use and adaptable to the need of the user.**
- **Low physical effort: usable with a minimum of effort and fatigue.**
- **Accessibility: providing for adequate sight lines, reach, hand grip and use of helpful devices.**
- **Safety: minimal consequences of errors with fail-safe features.**
- **Simplicity: minimal complexity and accommodating a wide range of skills and abilities.**
- **Perceptible information: communicating necessary information effectively and in various ways.**

When it comes to future growth and Regional planning requirements for Milton, the ROP states in policy 48 that area-specific plans (such as secondary plans) are to be prepared by Milton for certain parts of our settlement areas such as new communities, Intensification Areas and Hamlets. Policy 77 (5)(f)(i) goes on to state that:

*Such plans or policies shall demonstrate how the goals and objectives of this Plan are being attained and shall include, among other things: location, types and density of residential and employment lands that contribute to creating healthy communities through urban design.*

Finally, in the Human Services section of the ROP, policy 155 states that the objective of the Region is to plan for an environment with the highest level of personal safety and security for its inhabitants. Section 156 states that is the policy of the Region to:

- 1. Require all proponents of development to have regard for the Healthy Communities Guidelines in considering and providing physical design features that promote safety and security; and*
- 2. Encourage the Local Municipalities to develop Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines for use in their site plan approval process.*

**What is CPTED? According to the International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association, CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach of crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments. CPTED strategies aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime. CPTED is pronounced 'sep-ted'. [Readers can learn more by clicking here.](#)**

### **Healthy Community Guidelines**

As noted, Halton Region has also prepared a set of guideline documents that are intended to clarify, inform, and aid in the implementation of ROP<sup>1</sup> policies. The Guidelines have been prepared in accordance with Section 192 of the ROP and [can be reviewed by clicking here](#). The guidelines provide direction and outline approaches that can be used to satisfy the relevant policies of the ROP. In terms of direction on policies related to urban design and Big Question #7, the following is a brief summary:

**Section 152(2) of the Regional Official Plan directs the Local Municipalities to have regard for the Healthy Communities Guidelines when they are preparing an Area-Specific Plan or Official Plan policies related to intensification. Section 152(2) also directs the proponents of major development to have regard for the Guidelines when submitting their development applications.**

<sup>1</sup> ROP Guidelines do not introduce additional policy requirements, and, in the event of a conflict between the Guidelines and the ROP, the ROP shall prevail.

- Section 2.0 identifies attributes of a healthy community, which include: the built environment and sustainable design;
- Section 2.1 states that the built environment can contribute to a healthy community through:
  - compact mixed use development, walkable and connected communities;
  - a range of densities and housing opportunities, choices and accessibility for all income levels and needs;
  - redevelopment/regeneration areas;
  - welcoming pedestrian-scaled environments;
  - a range of densities that will support public transit and amenities; and,
  - community infrastructure.
- Section 2.5 states sustainable design can contribute to healthy communities by:
  - designing new buildings, communities, and neighbourhoods to reduce water, waste, and energy use;
  - promoting energy conservation and alternative energy sources;
  - implementing Low Impact Design Standards in both new developments and established areas;
  - improving air quality through addressing the impact of climate change; and,
  - encouraging the design and construction of energy efficient green buildings.

## Local Policies, Plans, and Directions

### *Current Official Plan*

Section 2.8 of the current Official Plan provides policies for urban design and Milton's intent to achieve high standards in the physical design of the built and natural environment. These high standards relate to: overall quality; environmental sensitivity; sustainability; meeting needs; efficiency; affordability; achieving a strong and positive sense of place and identity; and providing for public safety and security. In Section 2.8.1, Milton identifies the following overall goal for urban design:

*To ensure that any development proposal from the individual site level, to the community level, is designed to achieve a high standard and to contribute positively in both form and function to the built and managed environment.*

Milton's objectives for urban design are outlined in section 2.8.2 and the following objectives relate most to Big Question #7:

- *To practice sustainable urban development by adhering to sustainable design principles and standards.*

- To achieve a consistently high standard of design that is complementary to and compatible with existing development and natural and cultural heritage in all areas.
- To encourage innovation in urban design which contributes to affordability and energy and natural resource conservation.
- To enhance the unique character of a district, neighbourhood, grouping of buildings or prominent building, based on identifiable characteristics.

**There are a total of 23 broad objectives for urban design in Milton's current Official Plan, many of which relate to other We Make Milton themes - like moving, working, and growing.**

Section 2.8.3 of the Official Plan allows Milton to prepare urban design and site planning guidelines and transit-supportive design criteria that meet previous urban design objectives. Specifically, policy 2.8.3.1 states:

*The Town shall encourage the preparation of urban design and site planning guidelines and transit-supportive design criteria which shall be applied to all development proposals within the Established Urban and HUSP Urban Areas, and Hamlet Areas; and all development proposals shall have regard to the Urban Design Objectives of this Plan as outlined in Section 2.8.2. In Secondary Plan Areas, design guidelines will be an integral component of the Secondary Plan.*

### **Strategic Policies that are Topic-Specific**

Many sections of Milton's existing Official Plan address topic specific urban design matters that are locally-important, as summarized in Table 24 below.

**Table 24: Locally-Important Urban Design Matters**

<b>Topic-Specific Urban Design Matter</b>	<b>Existing Official Plan Policy Reference</b>
<b>General Urban Design Matters, including built-form and pedestrian experience</b>	Section 2.8.3.4 to 2.8.3.18
<b>Gateways</b>	Section 2.8.3.19 to 2.8.3.22
<b>Road Design</b>	Section 2.8.3.23 to 2.8.3.26
<b>Parking</b>	Section 2.8.3.27 to 2.8.3.30
<b>Microclimate</b>	Section 2.8.3.31 to 2.8.3.38
<b>Views</b>	Section 2.8.3.39 to 2.8.3.40
<b>Barrier-free Access</b>	Section 2.8.3.41 to 2.8.3.44
<b>Public Art</b>	Section 2.8.3.45 to 2.8.3.49
<b>Landscape Design</b>	Section 2.8.3.50 to 2.8.3.51
<b>Safe Community Design</b>	Section 2.9.1 (goals) Section 2.9.2 (objectives) Section 2.9.3.1 to 2.9.3.22 (strategies)

A review of current public art policies was undertaken as part of the creation of Milton's recently adopted, first-ever Culture Plan (discussed in more detail below). While specific attention is paid to the role of placemaking, public space activation and public art in many of Milton's growth studies, public art policies in Section 2.8.2.45 are broad and rarely implemented. For example, policy 2.8.3.49 states that a provision for art of 1% of the cost of proposed major development shall be encouraged; however it hasn't been used to-date.

## Urban Design Briefs

A method that Milton uses to help implement and enforce urban design policy direction and guidelines is the requirement for an Urban Design Brief for a proposed development completed by the proponent. According to Section 2.8.3.2 of the current Official Plan:

*An Urban Design Brief of a proposed development shall be undertaken by the proponent of a development project when that development is proposed within the Central Business District or is defined as medium or high density development such as those envisioned for the Secondary Mixed Use Node Areas. The Urban Design Brief shall establish the contextual relationship of the proposed development to adjacent buildings, streets and areas.*

When Urban Design Briefs are submitted in support of a development proposal, they are reviewed, modified and approved by staff and form part of the approvals package for the development. Requiring an Urban Design Brief allows Town staff to ensure that any proposed development is designed to a high standard and contributes positively to both form and function to the built and managed environment of Milton.

**An Urban Design Brief is an illustrated explanation of how the overall design concept for an area responds to the physical context of the site and its surroundings, considering the intent of the policy context and any supporting urban design guidelines and studies. It is generally presented in three parts:**

- **Design Vision, Guiding Principles, and Objectives;**
- **Site & Context Analysis**
- **Design Response and Concept Plan**

## Existing Urban Design Standards

A number of the Town's divisions contribute to the development and maintenance of urban design standards through their work and visible presence on the street. Multiple initiatives provide directions to address urban design policies as a tool to achieve attractive, inclusive, accessible and respectful development.

For example, area specific policy recommendations related to urban design have been adopted through various Secondary Plans, Plans of subdivisions, or area-specific projects and studies such as the Mature Neighbourhoods Character Study or the Major Transit Station Area



Mobility Hub Study. Urban design guidelines for Milton Heights, Boyne Survey, or the Derry Green Corporate Business Park, among a large group of documents that have been adopted, assist with the interpretation of Official Plan policies and provide a clear design direction for different types of development on these areas. In addition, Milton has developed Tall and Mid-rise building guidelines, Shadow Analysis Guidelines and Urban Design Brief Terms of Reference that are considered by developers preparing proposals. *Town of Milton Design of Public Spaces Standards*

For a full inventory of Milton’s area-specific urban design guidelines, readers should refer to the [Town of Milton Urban Design web page](#).

### Other Initiatives

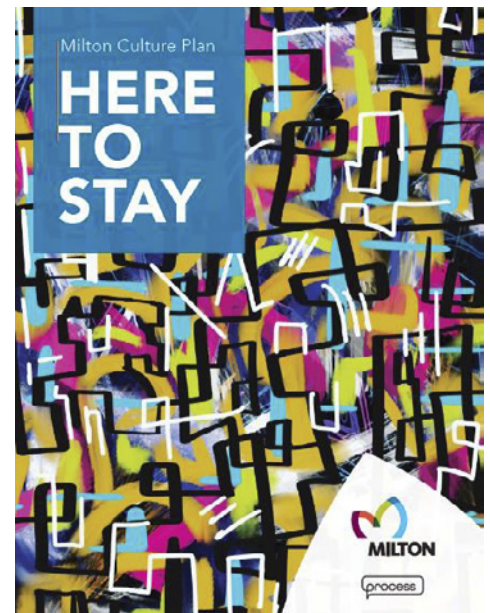
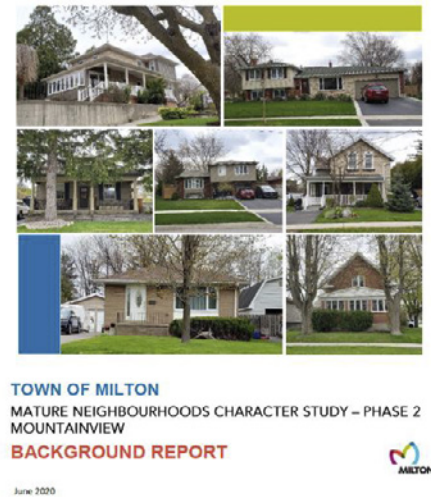
Milton’s first-ever Culture Plan was passed unanimously by Council at its meeting on July 19, 2021. The ten-year plan ([which can be viewed by clicking here](#)) is called “Here to Stay”, and it provides a future roadmap for the future of the Town’s cultural policies and investments.

“Here to Stay”, reflects Milton’s diversity and provides a framework that will continue to guide equitable, creative and collaborative cultural planning in Milton over the next decade and beyond. The plan allows the Town to better understand its role in growing and supporting culture within the community.

The culture plan features five strategic avenues of action that enhance Milton as a Place of Possibility:

1. Foster a resilient and collaborative cultural sector
2. Celebrate and share Milton’s diversity
3. Support Indigenous cultural resurgence
4. Strengthen culture-led economic and social development
5. Expand investment in cultural infrastructure, including places and spaces

Chapter 4 details the five Avenues of Action, which are accompanied by 15 goals and 69 actions, with roles and responsibility. The following is summary of specific actions identified in the Culture Plan, which can help respond to Big Question #7 and could be supported and/or implemented by policies in Milton’s new Official Plan:



1.3.2 Ensure cultural planning directions are reflected in municipal policies and plans. - Example: Find alignment with ongoing Economic Development Planning and Official Plan process.

1.3.3 Foster a cultural development lens across municipal departments, specifically integrating with the Planning Policy & Urban Design, Economic Development and Operations & Environment divisions.

1.3.4 Conduct an audit of Town by-laws, zoning regulations, licensing and permits that may be a barrier to creative enterprise and cultural activity (such as events) and mitigate where possible.

5.1.1 Prioritize and invest in equitable opportunities for placemaking throughout Milton. This includes: The creation of more informal gathering spaces and public spaces, within new developments as well as partnerships with neighbourhood and community groups (such as block party microgrant programs).

5.1.4 Explore opportunities to align cultural spaces and connections with a Public Realm Strategy. This could include promotion of active transportation and transit accessible walkable cultural spaces, artist-led design of street furniture and proactive approaches to integrating cultural spaces within Milton's public realm and streetscapes by working with developers, property owners and artists.

5.1.5 Recognition program for inclusion of public art and/or cultural experiences.

5.2.1 Develop a public art strategy, policy and funding model. This could include exploring how the Town's development charges can be used for cultural development and public art.

5.2.2 Collaborate with developers and property owners to encourage and program new developments to include privately owned public spaces (POPS) and expand the role of public art and tactical urbanism as part of new development (and as part of updated Official Plan).

5.2.4 Support public art that represents a diversity of disciplines (permanent and temporary, murals, sculptures, digital media, etc.) and a diversity of artists that reflect the various cultures in Milton.

5.2.5 Promote and support funding opportunities for outdoor space programming and citizen-led tactical urbanism, placemaking and placekeeping (in parks, public squares, and streets).

## Current Planning Practices

The following is a review of current planning practices in other jurisdictions, which we can consider for the new Official Plan as it relates to living in Milton, urban design, and creating places that support a high quality of life. Examples are organized into the following categories:

**The Vision set out in Milton's Culture Plan describes where the Town will be as a result of the work and actions identified. The Vision is:**

*Here to Stay: Culture is rooted and reflected in Milton's people and places. Milton will support a thriving and diverse cultural community, offering inclusive and equitable opportunities to create, imagine and invest in the future.*

**The Vision provides direction to the culture plan. It describes where the Town of Milton will be as a result of this work. It aims to galvanize energy and inspire.**

1. Vision, Goals, and Objectives for Design Excellence
2. Supporting the Urban Structure and Growth Framework
3. Implementing Community Specific Design Guidance
4. Addressing Contemporary Design Topics
5. Implementation Tools

### *Vision, Goals, and Objectives for Design Excellence*

Achieving urban design excellence requires a coordinated and collaborative effort from the public and private sectors to maximize the benefits of development and add value to a building project and the community as a whole. An Official Plan should therefore establish the primary design goals, objectives, and priorities of the municipality, to ensure that all sectors are working towards the same local vision for design excellence and outcomes.

An Official Plan can articulate why a high standard for urban design is important to the municipality, what design excellence could look like in the context of the local municipality, how it will be achieved, and the various roles for doing so.

In 2017, Guelph prepared an Urban Design Action Plan, which identified the following City responsibilities when it comes to achieving design excellence:

1. *Adopting and updating general urban design policies, standards and guidelines to guide the implementation of the Official Plan Amendment and the review of subdivision, rezoning, site plans and public infrastructure projects.*
2. *Preparing and updating land use and urban design concept plans and studies for significant areas of change within the city.*
3. *Identifying and implementing strategic public realm and infrastructure projects, including park and open space improvements, cultural and recreation facilities, public art, streetscapes and trails.*
4. *Conducting transparent and effective review and approval processes for development applications and capital projects, integrating various disciplines, engaging affected communities and focusing on urban design objectives.*
5. *Promoting urban design excellence through public projects, ongoing communications, and educational initiatives.*

Recognizing the importance of strong urban design policies to achieve its City-wide vision, the City of Toronto, in with assistance from the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI), conducted a review of its Official Plan urban design policy framework in 2016, and published a document to share research findings. The concluding report, which can be viewed [here](#), provided a set of recommendations and areas of attention for urban design policy development, including the following:

1. *Identifying a set of core principles that should guide urban design in Toronto.*
2. *Clearly articulating Official Plan policy outcomes for urban design.*



3. *Improving clarity and consistency of language by refraining from use of generic and overly subtle language such as appropriate, adequately limit, have regard for, relate to, minimize, at good proportion, green, and context.*
4. *Balancing the need to have “a number in a guideline” to ensure quality urban design in all circumstances with “a principle” that allows creative solutions to urban design outcomes.*
5. *Removing or strengthening the weakest policies from the OP that are weak due to lack of clarity and ability to enforce.*

### **Supporting the Urban Structure and Local Growth Framework**

Through an Official Plan, municipalities can articulate and reflect community values on how certain areas of the urban area should look and feel – such as public spaces, Main Street, growth centres, and existing and planned neighbourhoods. All these areas are components of a Town’s urban structure, and the vision, function, attributes, and design goals for these component are often set out through Official Plan policies in order to realize the full development potential of each area as they relate to broader municipal goals and design strategies.

For example, the City of Burlington’s current Official Plan identifies an Urban Structure in Schedule B, as shown in Figure 15 below.

Burlington’s Urban Structure consists of key growth areas and establishes a vision for the urban area. It identifies the following components:

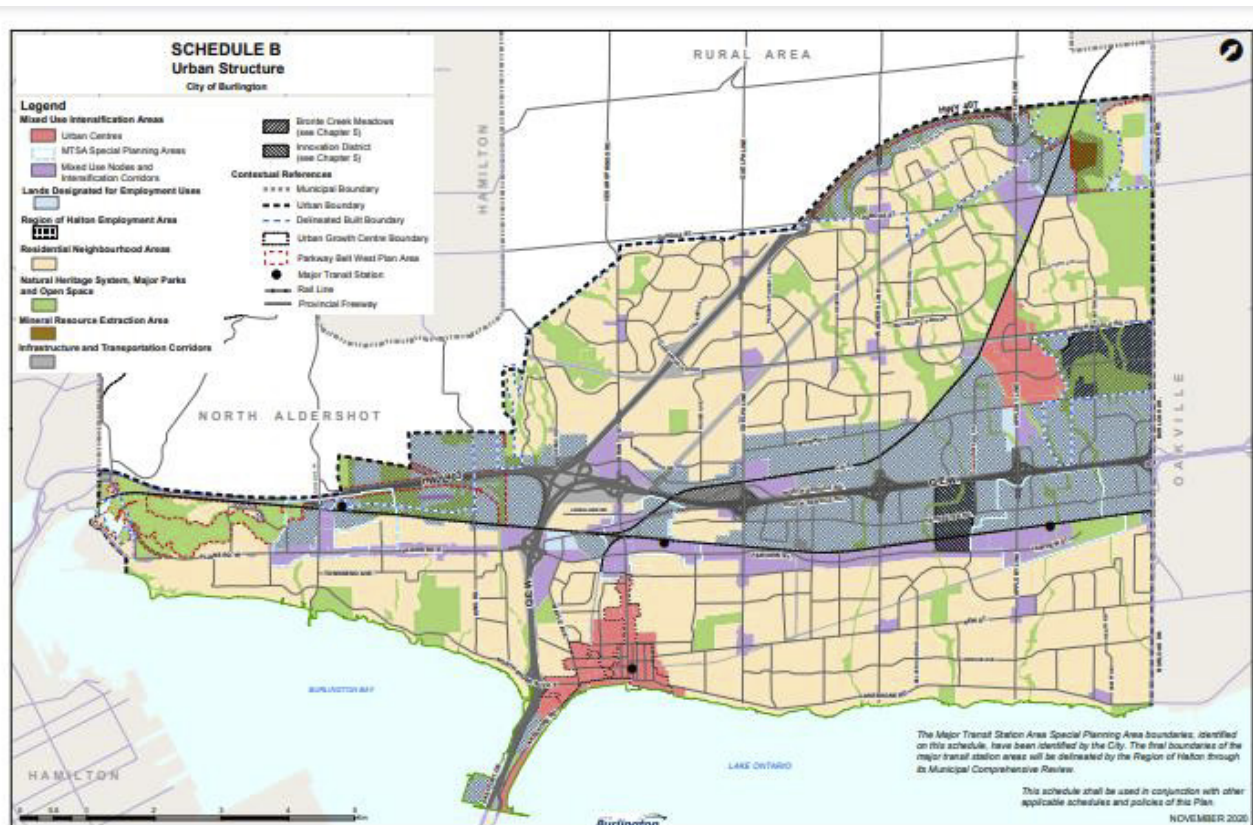
- Mixed Use Intensification Areas;
- Region of Halton Employment Areas;
- Employment Lands;
- Residential Neighbourhood Areas;
- Natural Heritage System;
- Major Parks and Open Space;
- Mineral Resource Extraction Area; and
- Infrastructure and Transportation Corridors.

The City of Burlington Urban Structure is further divided into a set of land use designations and there are a number of urban design policies for the various land use designations that are intended provide the desired design direction for new development in order to ensure it is consistent with the City’s vision for the urban area, as established in Schedule B (Urban Structure).

#### **What do we mean by ‘urban structure’?**

Planners use this term to describe the arrangement and organization of land uses with a high-level focus on key areas and how they are intended to function and relate to each other over the planning horizon. It is the broad planning framework of a municipality. For example, the Halton Regional Urban Structure, which Milton is required to implement through our local Official Plan, was recently amended to include strategic growth areas, as required by the Province, such as: Urban Growth Centres, Major Transit Station Areas, and Regional Nodes. The Growing in Milton paper will provide more information about the Regional Urban Structure, Milton’s Future Urban Structure, and will help define related growth terms and planning requirements.

Figure 15: City of Burlington Official Plan Urban Structure

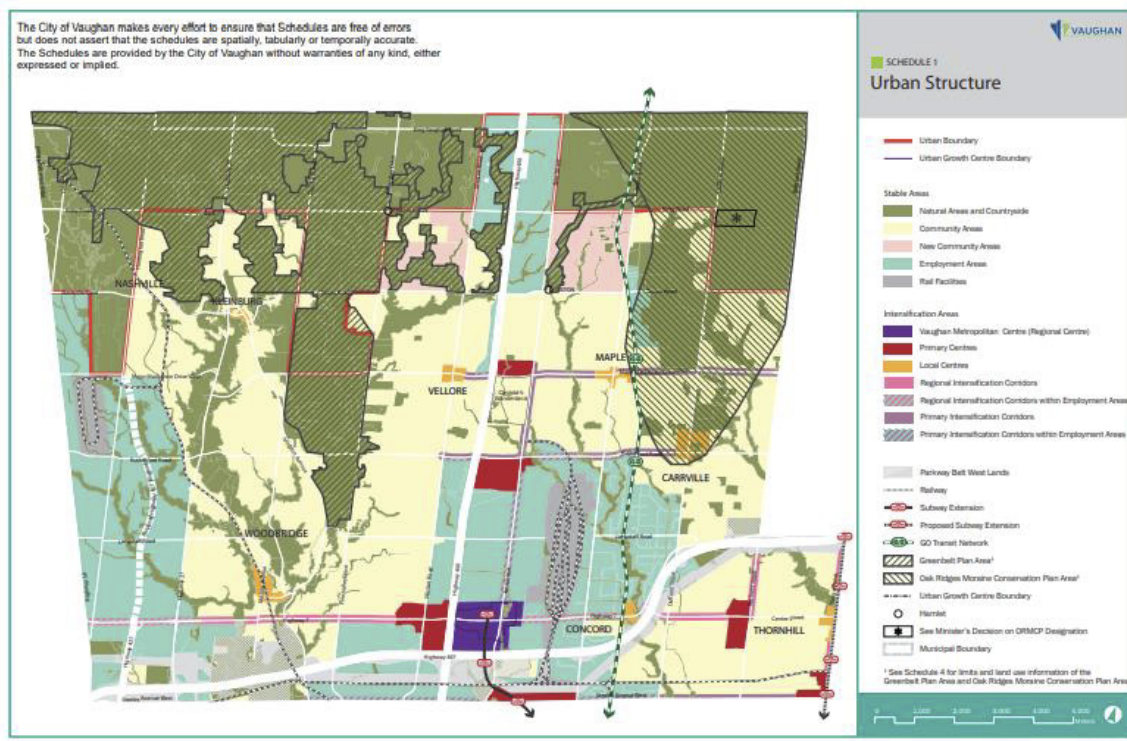


The City of Vaughan Official Plan establishes a clear set of directions for design of buildings within the different elements of its urban structure. According to Section 9.1.2 of the Official Plan:

*A great city is a beautiful city: one that consists of remarkable buildings and high-quality architecture and urban design. This is true for both a city's major buildings and its core fabric of houses and small to mid-sized buildings. These buildings work together with associated public spaces to create rewarding and interesting experiences. A City needs a clear set of directions on how buildings should be designed and organized, how they relate to the public realm and its intentions for urban design and architectural quality.*

**A clear set of intentions and expectations are provided in the City of Vaughan Official Plan for how buildings should be developed in different parts of the City, in accordance with the Urban Structure (shown in Figure 16).**

Figure 16: City of Vaughan Official Plan Urban Structure

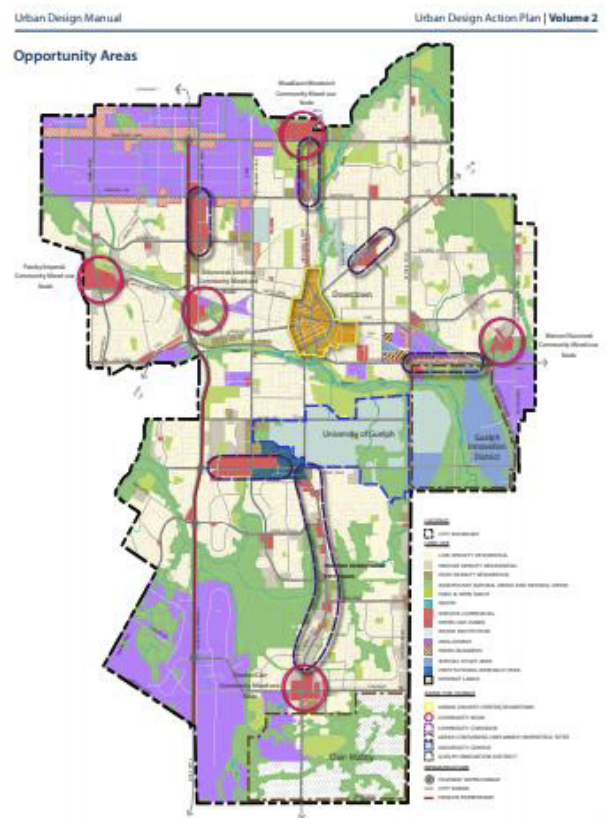


Finally, referring back to the City of Guelph Urban Design Action Plan, Guelph has used its existing Urban Structure to identify what are referred to as 'opportunity areas', which represent places that are expected to see further development and redevelopment in line with urban design objectives as the city continues to grow. The City's Urban Structure and 'opportunity areas' are shown in Figure 17. For each of the 'opportunity areas' a vision, objectives, and specific actions are identified related to developing policy and other directions for urban design.

Figure 17: City of Guelph Official Plan Urban Structure and Urban Design Opportunity Areas

**Implementing Community Specific Design Guidance**

In its review of the Official Plan urban design policy framework in 2016, the City of Toronto and CUI also identified that, in order to strengthen and clarify local urban design direction, municipalities could transition/move important urban design direction from guidelines that have significant impact on



quality of life to Official Plan policy in order to limit uncertainty and ensure consistent application. Suggested guidelines were identified by the City Toronto, and included:

- Tall Buildings definition
- Base Building Height
- Base Building - Side Setbacks
- Tower Separation Distances
- Transitions in scale
- Mid-rise Building Height & Front Facade Angular Planes

However, it should be noted that community design policies in the Official Plan are broadly defined to establish the general vision, yet permit sufficient variation and innovation within the broader context, without the need for site specific amendments.

### *Addressing Contemporary and Important Design Topics*

The following is a brief synthesis of some contemporary urban design and planning topics that we heard were important to Miltonians, with some examples of how they are being addressed in other municipal Official Plans.

#### **A. Accessibility - breaking physical barriers.**

Public spaces play an important role in providing good quality of life and social interaction and we can ensure that people all ages and abilities can enjoy urban public spaces through a “Universal Design approach”<sup>2</sup>. When something is universally designed, it can be used easily by everyone. Features such as a ramp entrance, automatic doors, or a curb cut represent the physical intervention of the public space.

In 2009, the Town of Caledon, created a Universal Design Policy within its Official Plan to ensure that new homes being built in the municipality are designed with the needs of all ages and abilities in mind. Under the Universal Design Policy, developers who are applying to build any new subdivisions must include at least one floor plan model that incorporates universal design features in order to receive draft plan approval from the municipality. Such universal design features can include:

- exterior features such as a flush threshold (no-step) main entrance and lift options in the garage, for accessible access to the dwelling;
- main-floor living, with a main-floor master bedroom and bathroom for people who may have trouble navigating stairs;
- wider hallways and doors to accommodate someone using a walker or wheelchair;
- counters of varying heights in the kitchen, to allow older residents to cook comfortably from a seated position;
- toggle switches and higher plug placements to make the lighting and ventilation systems more accessible; and
- roughed-in areas to install a residential lift or elevator right away or in the future.

<sup>2</sup> Other municipalities use terms like “barrier free” and “universally accessibly”.

Universal design was chosen as the foundation for Caledon’s policy because of its flexibility in meeting the needs of both homeowners and developers. A house that is designed in accordance with universal design principles can adapt easily and cost-effectively to changes in the needs of homeowners as they age, without requiring them to carry out any additional upgrades or costly future renovations. More information about Caledon’s Universal Design Policy can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The City of Toronto has created a standalone set of Accessibility Design Guidelines (TADG) which are to serve as a reference document available to all sectors to conduct accessibility audits and to plan developments, as the City works towards making Toronto a “barrier free” community. These guidelines were updated in July 2021 and [can be reviewed by clicking here](#).

Based on the principles of respect, dignity and inclusion, the TADG is a key component of the City’s Multi-year Accessibility Plan and Corporate Accessibility Policy, and is aligned with the City’s Statement of Commitment to Creating an Accessible City. TADG is also in keeping with the City’s Official Plan, which states that “a key city-building principle is that public buildings, parks and open spaces should be open and accessible to all members of the public.”

## **B. Promoting good mental health.**

Physical and social environments can affect our mental health. From New York City to Toronto and Tokyo, more cities across the world are recognizing that good urban design is key to promoting mental well-being, help prevent mental illness, and counteracting the stresses of urban life.

Research has shown that people who live in neighborhoods that promote natural interactions among people have lower mental distress. It’s a question of making public places more social, by, for example, putting in more benches or setting up chessboards in a park or square.

In Singapore, the government is intensifying its efforts to incorporate more greenery and green spaces throughout the city-state. The Singapore National Parks Board has also started building therapeutic gardens, with features such as wind chimes gardening plots, in public parks to further boost visitors’ mental and emotional well-being.

Locally, in Toronto, the local government outlined its efforts to get citizens out of their homes and moving. Several areas in the city, including those around Union Station, its main railway station, and Ryerson University and the University of Toronto, have been converted into pedestrian-only or



*Therapeutic garden in Singapore*



*Public realm improvement project in Toronto*

pedestrian-priority zones to encourage people to take public transport and walk. Young Street will also be transformed to include pedestrian-only zones and bike lanes.

### **C. Connecting People through the Public Realm.**

Public spaces can facilitate social interaction and provide positive opportunities to build community connection and resilience. In the OPPI's Healthy Communities and Planning for the Public Realm Call for Action, planners, government, municipal departments, agencies, other related professionals, builders, developers, community groups and members of the public are called upon to make the public realm a focus in community building and placemaking efforts across Ontario. OPPI states:

*The public realm is crucial in achieving healthy communities across Ontario as it is in this realm that people are encouraged to interact. Too often the public realm is considered an afterthought in community building efforts. It is this, however, that shapes our relationship with our surroundings. In doing so, the public realm establishes a community identity, local character and a sense of place. Investing in the quality of the public realm is vital in creating harmonious and socially inclusive communities. A well-planned public realm can increase physical and mental well-being, enhance public safety, encourage private investment and allow citizens to embrace and celebrate their places and spaces.*

The City of Toronto can be looked at again for current practices on planning for the public realm in order to help connect residents and visitors within and to the City. In September 2020, City of Toronto Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 479 was approved, which introduced more robust and rigorous public realm policy directions for new developments. The new in-force public realm and built form policies are stronger and provide further clarity and design direction on standards for the public realm and consistency across built form typologies; however, they remain generally qualitative in nature. The policies advance design objectives and qualitative principles from the Tall Building and Mid-rise Design Guidelines, but do not go as far as providing quantitative metrics. Whereas the Official Plan policies were previously quite general and aspirational, the amended policies are direct and imperative.

The new and amended policies provide enhanced detail and specification for all parts of the public realm, including sidewalks, laneways, Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS) and parks. Key changes to the Official Plan (Section 3.1.1) are as follows:

- All new streets are required to be public streets, unless otherwise deemed appropriate by the City (3.1.1.9)
- New streets will provide frontage and visibility on natural and human-made features including parks, cemeteries, school yards and campus lands (3.1.1.8)
- As part of the public realm, lanes will be public and opportunities for lane enhancements should be identified as part of the development approval process (3.1.1.10)
- Parks and POPS will be located with public street frontages to establish direct visual and physical access (3.1.1.19)
- Consultation, partnerships and collaboration with Indigenous communities is encouraged for planning and design of the public realm (3.1.1.4)

What are POPs? According to the City of Waterloo, Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces, known as POPS, are spaces accessible to the public but are privately owned. Negotiated with developers as part of the application review process, they are meant to complement or extend public spaces, not replace them.

Public spaces create value and improve social well-being. POPS provide a critical bridge between publicly-owned spaces and privately-owned buildings and spaces. They play a role in place-making that benefits residents, employees and visitors to Waterloo.

Waterloo has created a set of standalone Guidelines for Privately Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces, [which can be accessed by clicking here](#).

The City of Toronto OPA 479 is clear that while POPS are spaces that contribute to the public realm and are privately owned and maintained, and they do not replace the need for new public parks and open spaces.

Policy 3.1.1.20 is also specific about the role and function of POPS, requiring that they be located in highly visible locations and programmed for users of a variety of ages and abilities.

New and modified submission requirements are also now required by the City to assist City staff in evaluating the quality of the public realm for new developments:

- The Arborist/Tree Preservation Report is replaced by three separate components: **Arborist Report, Tree Protection Plan and a Soil Volume Plan**. The Soil Volume Plan is an entirely new requirement and intended to demonstrate that adequate soil volume suitable to support plant growth is being provided on site. All three studies are required for Zoning By-law Amendment, Plan of Subdivision, Site Plan and Consent to Sever applications.
- The **Block Context Plan** provides a written and illustrated justification of how the development fits within the block and surrounding context. The Block Context Plan is expected to address matters such as the layout and design of existing and proposed streets, pedestrian circulation network, the location of existing and future public destinations, the layout of development parcels, building massing, existing and possible locations for public art, existing and proposed cycling routes, and phasing of development. Not unlike a Planning Rationale, the Block Context Plan must demonstrate conformity with the Official Plan policy and demonstrate good planning and urban design. A Block Context Plan is required for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Site Specific Zoning By-law, Plans of Subdivision, and Site Plan Control.

Public Realm Strategies can also be prepared by our local governments to ensure that, as growth and development occurs in a municipality or an area within the municipality, it is complemented by a high quality, inviting and vibrant public realm. Public Realm Strategies can look at all the spaces between buildings, including publicly owned spaces and POPs, and identify opportunities to highlight, build upon and connect them. Public Realm Strategies can also identify opportunities to integrate the community by providing a year-round connections and a range of well-planned and designed places to walk, ride, play, meet and rest.

For example, in 2014, the City of Markham developed a Public Realm Strategy, [which can be accessed here](#), to help clarify how the public realm can be improved, as well as strategies for achieving local goals. The strategy:

- Defines what the public realm means to Markham;
- Raises awareness of the importance of a high quality public realm for the community and the role everyone can play to ensure its success;
- Defines the vision and goals for the city's public realm;
- Provides a framework for the delivery and maintenance of high quality public realm; and
- Provides recommendations and actions to enhance the public realm in the City.

**An example of an action identified in the Markham Public Realm Strategy is:**

**ACTION 3.8 Promote the installation of interpretive signs in naturalized areas to help educate residents and visitors.**

*The Strategy explains that "Animating our City involves educating our citizens about our resources. It is important that users are able to clearly understand the nature of our public realm. Interpretive signage, use of technology through QR codes, and themed walks/presentations provide ways of unlocking the rich natural, historical and cultural tapestry that Markham offers."*

**Interpretive signage is helpful to almost everyone - and especially to the deaf. Gallaudet is a university in Washington DC dedicated to educating the deaf and hard of hearing, and since 2005, they've re-thought principles of architecture with one question at the forefront – how do deaf people communicate in space? 'Deaf Urbanism' and 'Deaf Space' approaches show that there are many ways to create an environment more pleasing to everyone. These include tactile elements<sup>3</sup>, visual access and wayfinding throughout the urban environment. For more information, a YouTube video from Gallaudet [can be viewed by clicking here](#).**

Concepts and approaches of 'Deaf Urbanism' and 'Deaf Space' are of particular importance to many Miltonians. Within the GTA, Milton is uniquely known for having a significant deaf population because it is home to one of Ontario's four schools for the deaf.

#### **D. Becoming a more age-friendly community.**

Since 2007, municipalities across Canada have committed to becoming age-friendly. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an age-friendly place encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities. ([Click here to review the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guide](#)).

<sup>3</sup> Tactile elements are simply changes in the walking surfaces to denote uses and boundaries.

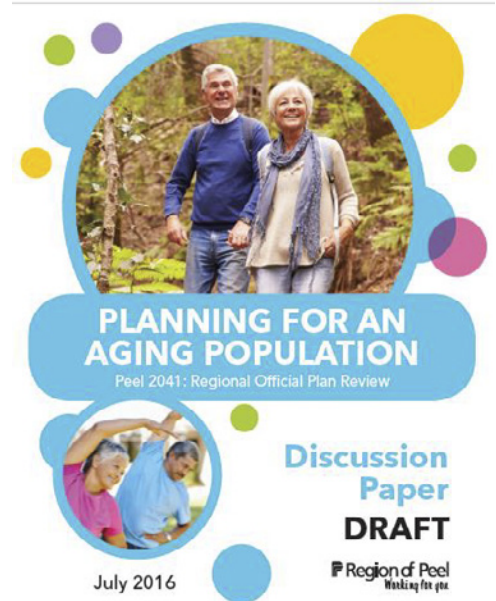


In May of 2016, as part of its on-going Official Plan Review, the Region of Peel prepared a Discussion Paper focusing on Planning for an Aging Population, [which can be viewed by clicking here](#). The discussion paper recognizes that there are existing policies within the Regional and local Official Plans (i.e., Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon), however states that these policies do not have an age-specific focus. They are dispersed throughout the plan under the following themes, but there is no standalone set of policies geared to seniors:

- Aging within the same community
- Housing options and affordability
- Accessibility and infrastructure
- Creating complete communities
- Human and health services

Based on the findings of a best-practices review, a jurisdictional scan of local policies, and an analysis of existing Region of Peel policies, the discussion paper recommends that a new standalone policy section be added to the ROP. This standalone policy section should include:

- A preamble that refers to the projected future increase of seniors in Peel Region in the coming years and explains why there is a need to plan and provide for the needs of this specific age group;
- High-level objectives that recognize the diversity and needs of Peel’s aging population to allow for opportunities to age in place, while promoting the use of universal accessible design and creating better environments for active aging;
- Specific policies that:
  - Encourage local municipalities to develop policies in local Official Plans that will provide support for seniors to age within their community;
  - Encourage the use of universal accessibility design in the built form to create a safe, barrier-free and more inclusive environment that will enhance the mobility and independence of all residents, including seniors;
  - Require local municipalities to create healthy, walkable communities close to amenities,



**All of these policy directions can apply more broadly to a range of age groups and their specific needs. For example, in Big Question #8, we explore the topic of living in Milton for youth particularly. Since many of the needs of seniors are similar to the needs of youth (i.e., independent participation in civic life, promote opportunities for health, and ensure accessible, safe, and equitable access to places and spaces), a stand-alone policy section in an Official Plan could also have a broader age-friendly focus.**

green spaces, services and programs that aid in independent, active and healthy aging for all residents in Peel; and

- Assess the built environment in neighbourhoods where there is a predominance of seniors to support universal accessibility.
- Terms related to active aging and age-friendly design in the ROP glossary.

Another approach to guide decision-making in relation to the needs of seniors and achieving an age-friendly community is to prepare a broader municipal Age-friendly Strategy/Plan. For example, in 2014, the City of Hamilton released its first Plan for an Age-Friendly City and in 2021 the Age-Friendly Plan was updated. It includes 7 strategic goals, 21 objectives and 61 recommendations related to the priorities of adults aged 55 and over who live in Hamilton currently (and who represent 30 per cent of the city's total population) focusing on the set of themes shown in Figure 18.

**Figure 18: The Seven Goals of the Hamilton Plan for an Age-Friendly City**



In addition to the examples focusing on older adults above, numerous cities have also started to seek out feedback from their youngest citizens and plan with the youth in mind, allowing teens to participate in park or street design, and prioritizing youth's perspectives of urban living. In addition, initiatives to design multi-use intergenerational spaces which can increase interaction and exchange between the youth and the elderly.

**We look more closely at opportunities for youth engagement in Big Question #8**

### **E. Promoting Sustainable Urban Design**

According to the City of Burlington's 2018 Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines document:

*Sustainable design is an integrated design process that helps to reduce infrastructure demands and costs, environmental impacts, greenhouse gas emissions, long term building operating costs, and contributes to the City's goal of being a prosperous, livable and healthy community.*

Burlington's Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines were prepared in 2018 and are enabled by the Sustainable Design policies of the Grow Bold Official Plan. The Guidelines are meant to be a tool to encourage voluntary sustainable development practices and to highlight required sustainability measures as identified in the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and other city by-laws. The purpose of ([which can be viewed by clicking here](#)) is to encourage sustainable design approaches through *Planning Act* applications, in keeping with the City's declaration as a sustainable community, and in alignment with Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040.

***"A great city is a sustainable city – and a sustainable city is one that consists of developments and buildings that minimize the use of energy and resources."***  
**City of Vaughan Official Plan, Section 9.1.3 (Sustainable Development)**

Sustainable design guidelines (also called Green Development Standards, or GDS for short) are one of the most powerful tools for achieving greener design and fighting climate change. Since municipalities have the authority over local planning decisions, including the ability to approve new developments, GDS can be used to require improved and more sustainable design features for residential building, site, and streetscape features. In fact, the current City of Vaughan Official Plan Section 9.1.3.1 states:

*It is the policy of Council to develop Green Development Standards, in consultation with the building and construction industry, and, where appropriate, specific and feasible standards may be established to:*

- a. provide a high-level of efficiency in energy consumption;*
- b. maximize solar gains and be constructed in a manner that facilitates future solar energy installations;*
- c. include or facilitate future on-site renewable energy systems;*
- d. provide a high-level of efficiency in water consumption, including rainwater harvesting and recirculation for irrigation purposes;*
- e. enhance indoor air quality;*
- f. contain or facilitate the future installation of plug-ins for electric vehicles;*
- g. use environmentally preferable building materials, high-renewable and recycled content building products, and certified sustainably harvested lumber;*
- h. provide water efficient and drought resistant landscaping, which should include the use of native plants and xeriscaping;*
- i. maximize permeable surfaces, including the provision of permeable driveways;*
- j. incorporate green roofs into building design; and*
- k. reduce construction waste and divert construction waste from landfill; and, promote Energy Star qualified development.*

Section 9.1.3.3 of the Official Plan states that “until such time as Green Development Standards are adopted by Council, all applications for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Plan of Subdivision, and/or Site Plan Approval are required to submit a Sustainable Development Report, indicating how the sustainable building policies of the York Region Official Plan and the goals contained in policy 9.1.3.1 are being addressed.”

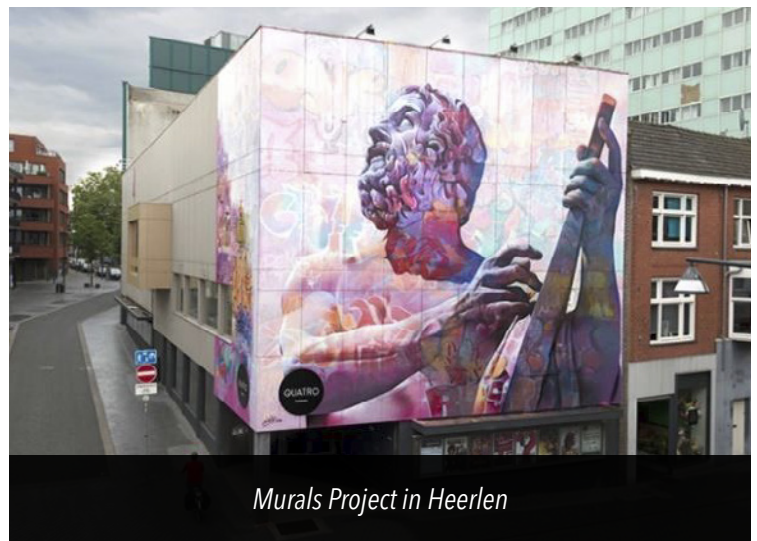
**In our exploration of Living in Milton Big Question #2 (Climate Change and Resiliency) a more detailed review of Green Development Standards and how they can be implemented through Official Plan policies is provided. Readers should review to pages X-X for more current practices.**

### **F. Public art helps create a visual identity of a place**

Public art can be used as a tool to engage with communities/residents and enhance the image of a place. An Official Plan can encourage the creation of public art in a broad range of media, themes and formats, with particular emphasis on works which stimulate play, creativity and imagination, foster civic identity, promote social interaction, provide opportunities for solitude and contemplation, and provide readable clues about changing microclimate conditions.

There are many examples of the impact art creates when considered a part of urban spaces. In Chicago, an art installation known as The Cloud Gate lead to the widespread success of a public park that was only a part of, a much larger community plan. The installation created a visual identity for the park, as well as the neighbourhood and now serves as a successful precedent of arts-based placemaking.

The Heerlen Murals project, in the Netherlands, has led to the development of a series of artworks spread out over Heerlen, all co-created by artists, local citizens and businesses. The initiative has led to a significant increase in public and private engagement in the city, as well as an increased sense of well-being.



In July 2010, the City of Mississauga created a Framework for a Public Art Program that was intended to enhance quality of life by means of public art that is relevant to the community, and which humanizes the physical environment; promotes growth of a culturally informed public; heightens the city image and identity; and creates a legacy by which future generations can judge its cultural objectives. The 2010 framework can be accessed by clicking [here](#). The framework was prepared out of recommendations from the City's 2009 Culture Master Plan.

**Mississauga will promote a strong civic identity and a city of experiences that celebrate the attractive and vibrant waterfront, the Downtown and communities, the rich history and cultural diversity, high architectural standards and quality public art. (Section 4.5 Mississauga Official Plan).**

Following the creation of the 2010 [Framework for a Public Art Program](#), the City of Mississauga Official Plan was reviewed and updated. In regard to public art policies, the following key updates were made:

**According to the City's Framework, a requirement for public art as a desired public space amenity or land use may be considered for specific sites when a holding zone is imposed on lands. The 'H' designation can remain in place until development proposals accommodate these requirements to the satisfaction of the zoning that governs it.**

- Public art policies were included throughout the document and integrated into its core goals and objectives, as a means of contributing to city/community identity, character, vitality and visual interest.
- General policies were introduced to affirm the importance of public art as an amenity when discussing the open space system, city nodes and corridors, the environment, the waterfront experience, transportation modes, urban design, community uses and heritage
- A new definition of public art was introduced.
- Policies that articulate who is obliged to provide public art were introduced inclusive of mechanisms for funding, to reinforce its importance.
- Tailored public art policies were also included, to suit the nature of uses and physical context of key areas, like intensification areas and the waterfront.

The [City of Mississauga Official Plan](#), and the entirety of Section 9.3.4 is dedicated to public art policies, however, they are also integrated throughout other sections.

Mississauga's first ever Public Art Master Plan (PAMP), [which can be viewed by clicking here](#) was prepared in 2016 as an extension of the Framework for a Public Art Program. The ultimate goal of the PAMP is to establish a unique artistic identity for the city through the formation of a design and curatorial outline. The PAMP provides specific recommendations designed to direct the development and implementation of a successful public art program and builds upon existing planning, development, and revitalization initiatives and strategies. Five specific priority zones

within the City are also specifically identified for future public art projects, as shown in Figure 19, including:

1. Existing Infrastructure Projects
2. Heritage Sites
3. Pedestrian Zones within Intensification Areas
4. Waterfront
5. Major Transit Hubs and Corridors

For each of the priority zones, the PAMP also identifies specific curatorial themes based on a public art survey used to gather input from local residents, artists and stakeholders, as shown in Figure 19 below.

**Figure 19: Priority Zones and Curatorial Themes as Identified in the PAMP**

<b>PUBLIC ART ZONES</b>	<b>CURATORIAL THEMES</b>
<b>1. Existing Infrastructure Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Natural Habitat and Features</li> <li>• Contemporary Art</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>
<b>2. Heritage Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contemporary Art</li> <li>• Classical Art</li> <li>• Living Heritage</li> <li>• Water and the Environment</li> </ul>
<b>3. Pedestrian Zones within Intensification Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian</li> <li>• Contemporary Art</li> <li>• Agricultural Heritage</li> <li>• Aviation, Industry and Commercialism</li> </ul>
<b>4. Waterfront</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations</li> <li>• Aviation, Industrial, Naval, and Military Heritage</li> <li>• Contemporary Explorations</li> <li>• Water and the Environment</li> </ul>
<b>5. Major Transit Hubs and Corridors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Mobility and Lifestyle</li> <li>• Higher Order Transit Routes and Corridors</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Local Characteristics and Industry</li> <li>• Transformation and Movement</li> </ul>

In terms of implementation, responsibilities in Mississauga have been divided into two: the Culture Division of the Economic Development Department takes the lead in preparing a Civic Public Art Master Plan governing initiatives on public lands; the Planning Division of Urban Development Services continues to work with developers to secure one percent of the construction value for each development to fund public art. Both coordinate with a Public Art Commission to review art plans and development.

## G. Places and Spaces can Thrive on Community Engagement

Good placemaking makes use of underutilized space to enhance the urban experience at the pedestrian scale. The principles of placemaking, largely promoted in North America, are implemented for the successful design of public spaces. An important aspect of placemaking is taking into account inputs of the people for which the public space is intended. In Canada, placemaking initiatives have included Ottawa's Byward Market and Halifax's Seaport Farmers Market.

Places can be dynamic and adaptable. During the revitalization of Union Market, in Washington D.C, the boundaries between visitor and vendor spaces were intentionally blurred, fostering a feeling of community between all participants. Flexible, multi-purpose venues now host a wide array of events, forums, and activities that naturally bring diverse groups together to share ideas and mutual interests. Efforts to foster inclusivity also extend to arts and creativity. By maximizing common areas throughout the district with pop-up vendors and artists, the area offers a low barrier to entry to encourage innovation and creativity. The use of the market's exterior walls as a gallery space, also provides a unique platform for artists to engage with the community.

### **WHAT IF WE BUILT OUR COMMUNITIES AROUND PLACES?**

**As both an overarching idea and a hands-on approach for improving a neighborhood, city, or region, placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. (Taken from the Project for Public Places <https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>)**



One example of equitable civic engagement is the transformation of the Superkilen Park in Copenhagen. The city used a civic involvement approach to incorporate diverse public input into the redesign of the park space. Local residents representing more than 50 nationalities were consulted for culturally unique ideas. Their input was heard equitably and objects they selected from their cultural backgrounds were reproduced or transplanted in the park. The park was transformed into a place of collective memories.



Superkilen Park in Copenhagen

## 5. Implementation Tools

Quality urban design and construction is also effectively promoted by municipalities across Ontario by using the following planning tools:

### A. Incentives

Under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, municipalities are permitted to provide financial incentives to private land owners to assist with the costs of planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency of specific areas or properties. In order to provide incentives (such as grants, loans, rebates, fee cancellations, and more), a Community Improvement Project Area must be designated and a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) must be prepared for that area.

CIPs are a very powerful municipal planning tool. Normally, under the Municipal Act of Ontario, municipalities are prohibited from providing financial assistance to private landowners and businesses; however, if a CIP has been adopted by the Council of a municipality for certain areas and revitalization purposes, such incentives can be provided.

Many municipalities across Ontario have CIPs in place, to help support local revitalization, beautification, redevelopment, and design goals. Most CIPs include financial incentive programs to assist with façade improvements for local businesses, such as the following program offered by the Town of Halton Hills. The goals of the Town's façade improvement program are:

*To promote the rehabilitation, restoration and improvement of the facades of commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings (including retail storefront display areas and signage). To promote the maintenance and physical improvement of existing commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings, in order to meet the current Building Code, improve aesthetic quality, and to provide safe and usable commercial, residential and mixed use space.*

To assist with façade improvements, the Town of Halton Hills CIP provides the following grant:

*The Façade Improvement Grant component of this program will provide a matching grant of 50% of the cost of eligible storefront improvement and facade improvement and restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings, up to a maximum grant per building of \$10,000. Eligible facades include front facades and rear facades facing public parking areas. At the discretion of Council, the matching grant for the Façade Improvement*



*Grant component can be increased by up to \$5,000 per building for: a) applications where three or more contiguous property owners submit a joint application; or b) buildings designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or listed by the Town.*

Municipalities with CIPs in place have a significant advantage because they are able to require certain design approaches and achieve local design goals through the use of eligibility criteria as established in a CIP. With the use of eligibility criteria, municipalities are able to require that, in order to receive certain financial incentives, all municipal urban design guidelines must be met. By doing so, municipalities are ensuring that local urban design goals and objectives are supported by landowners and developers, and confirming that municipal funds are directed to projects that contribute to local design excellence.

## **B. Urban Design Panels**

The Town has a range of planning tools that it can and does use to implement the urban design directives of the *Planning Act* including the Official Plan, Secondary Plans, Urban Design Guidelines, Zoning By-Laws, and Site Plan Control. Urban Design Review Panels provide a focused approach to apply these tools more effectively.

An urban design review panel is an independent advisory body that provides advice and encourages design excellence by focusing on urban design issues for new developments. The panel provides design guidance that incorporates the relationship between streets, buildings and spaces between the two, with respect to the context and uses of these spaces (Calgary Urban Design Review Panel Terms of Reference).

The City of Vancouver was the first municipality in Canada to implement an urban design panel, setting the precedence for all other panels. The panels were first introduced in Ontario by Toronto in 2006. Since then, design review panels have become much more common, with many municipalities recently finishing or currently undertaking pilot projects for the creation of design review panels in order to improve the urban design in their respective municipalities.

The City of Burlington Official Plan provides direction for the establishment of an Urban Design Advisory Panel. In Chapter 7 (Design Excellence), Section 7.1.2 states that

*f) An Urban Design Advisory Panel will be established by the City to provide independent, objective and professional advice on issues of design that affect the public realm, architecture, context sensitivity and sustainability. Membership and review rules and procedures will be set out in Terms of Reference established by the City.*

## **C. Urban Design Awards and Acknowledgements**

Cities across Ontario implement Urban Design and Architecture Awards to recognize and celebrate excellence in the design of the urban environment.

The Mississauga Urban Design Awards (MUDA) began in 1981 and is the longest-running awards program of its kind in the province. Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa, Guelph, Kington and other cities have also implemented their own Urban Design and Architecture Awards programs where architects, urban designers, planners, landscape architects, owners, developers, contractors,

engineers, students, etc. are invited and encouraged to submit high quality, innovative and human-scaled projects.

Each city establishes a selection and review process and may consider entrees for broad or specific categories. Winners are selected by a jury of members from the design community.

The City of Burlington Official Plan also provides direction for the establishment of an Urban Design Awards and Acknowledgements Program. In Chapter 7 (Design Excellence), Section 7.1.2 also states that

*f) An Urban Design Advisory Panel will be established by the City to provide independent, objective and professional advice on issues of design that affect the public realm, architecture, context sensitivity and sustainability. Membership and review rules and procedures will be set out in Terms of Reference established by the City.*

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

The following set of policy considerations have been identified as result of the above exploration of Big Question #7:

### **1. The Official Plan must guide the practice of urban design.**

Addressing certain urban design issues through our new Official Plan is not optional. In order to be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and to conform/not conflict with provincial plans and the ROP, Milton is required to establish policies that address things like:

- Accessibility
- Compact built form
- Conservation
- Energy efficiency and sustainability
- Healthy communities
- Public realm
- Public safety

Some of these design matters are already addressed through existing policies in Milton's current Official Plan and they can be carried forward and/or enhanced through We Make Milton.

From the review of current practices, there are a number of other contemporary design approaches that can be encouraged through new Official Plan policies. For example, to promote high standards of urban design and achieve development that is attractive, comfortable, safe, inclusive, promotes identity, and gives people choice, new, innovative Official Plan policies that focus on things like mental health, deaf-space, placemaking, and age-friendly design.

## *2. Our core principles, goals, and objectives regarding design excellence should be articulated in the new Official Plan.*

Through We Make Milton, there is an opportunity to define what ‘design excellence’ means to Milton and to articulate our core principles and local design goals.

- What are our core principles for design excellence through public and private projects involving the public realm, buildings and infrastructure?
- What are the dynamics of urban growth in Milton and what is ‘design excellence’ in this context?
- What is the role of urban design in achieving more complete communities?
- What are our objectives for high quality urban design in our community areas? What are our goals for supporting innovation?
- What are the desired policy outcomes for urban design.

The new Official Plan can also provide direction for the future completion of standalone design guideline documents (area-specific or focused on certain land uses, for example) that further implement urban design policies in the new Official Plan and help to achieve our vision for design excellence.

## *3. Urban design policy language should be qualitative, direct, and imperative.*

When drafting new goals, objectives, and policies for Milton’s new Official Plan related to urban design, the language used should remain qualitative (i.e., relating to, measuring, or measured by the quality of something) rather than prescribe specific quantitative measures. More specific design guidance, including quantitative measures, should remain in Milton’s standalone design guideline documents.

Often, Official Plan policies related to urban design are written to be quite general and aspirational. However, where appropriate, new Official Plan policies should be direct and imperative. For example, instead of using words like “should”, “promote”, and “encourage”, more positive directives (words like “shall” or “will” or “must”) and limitations/prohibitions (words like “shall not” and “will not” and “are prohibited” should be considered.

## *4. Urban Design policies could provide enhanced design directions for each component of the Town’s Urban Structure.*

Urban design policies should be developed with an emphasis on the different components of Milton’s future

**What is Milton’s Future Urban Structure? In September 2017, [through PD-049-17 which can be viewed here](#), Council endorsed Milton’s future Urban Structure, called “Building Possibility”. As part of the exploration of Big Questions related to Growing in Milton, there is an opportunity to confirm/update Milton’s Future Urban Structure (following future growth allocations from the Region), which could then be used as the basis for urban design direction. Existing directions in other local/area studies can also help inform the process.**

urban structure, including the downtown, mobility hub, nodes and corridors, employment and neighbourhood areas, and new opportunity areas. Within each component/area, consideration should be given to

- achieving appropriate massing and transition;
- supporting the creation of a high-quality public realm;
- enhancing the qualities of the natural environment;
- supporting and implementing land use decisions;
- supporting healthy communities and the well-being of Miltonians; etc.

Specific directions in policy can help define and support the Town's urban structure. There is an opportunity to make linkages between the components of the urban structure and the urban design goals, objectives, and policies of the Plan.

### *5. Urban Design policies could better address other built form typologies.*

Through the new Official Plan, there is an opportunity to introduce enhanced definitions and design guidance for other residential built form typologies where approved guidelines documents currently do not exist. For example, while Milton has prepared specific, standalone guidelines for Mid-Rise and Tall Buildings, many Official Plans across Ontario provide clear design direction on other typologies/land uses, such as:

- Low-rise residential;
- Townhouse and low-rise apartments; and
- Additional Residential units.

### *6. The new Official Plan could provide direction and enabling policies to the extent possible for: future planning studies; design guidelines; and the use of tools to achieve local design goals for living in Milton.*

There are a wide range of municipal plans, studies, projects and guidelines that can help Milton achieve our overall goals, objectives, and policy requirements as they relate to design excellence and the positive impacts on living in Milton. The new Official Plan could include enabling policies and/or policies that provide direction for the completion of future planning initiatives that will help achieve design excellence in Milton, such as:

- An Urban Design Review panel and program for providing awards/acknowledgement for certain projects that are innovative and exceed expectations;
- A Community Improvement Plan under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*, which would allow Milton to provide grants and loans to landowners and businesses for beautification and revitalization undertakings, such as façade improvements. Grants and loans can be dependent upon meeting certain design criteria, which will ensure that Milton is investing/partnering on beautification efforts that are consistent with our urban design goals and aspirations;
- Green Development Standards, which establish a set of criteria or metrics that can be used to evaluate the sustainable performance of new residential development or redevelopment;

- Direction for the Town’s zoning by-law(s) to require enhanced residential building and site design, where appropriate, through form based zoning standards;
- New study/checklist requirements for “complete applications” in support of development/redevelopment proposals/*Planning Act* applications, such as:
  - Accessibility Design Standards;
  - Block Context Plan;
  - Compatibility Study;
  - Computer Generated Building Mass Models; and
  - Green Development Standards.
- Direction for the consideration of green building principles to be encouraged through site plan approval process; and
- Other broader municipal strategies such as:
  - Age-friendly Strategy
  - Public Art Master Plan
  - Public Realm Strategy

# Youth Living in Milton

## Big Question #8:

How can the new Official Plan help provide for the living needs/wants of youth? How can our land use policies help make living in Milton more youth-friendly?



### Legislation and Provincial Policy Highlights

#### *Planning Act*

While there are no explicit requirements in the *Planning Act* regarding the need to plan specifically for their needs, there are many matters of provincial interest identified in Section 2 that affect quality of life for our youth (among other age-groups). For example, “the adequate provision and distribution of educational, health, social, cultural and recreational facilities” is a matter of provincial interest and it affects quality of life for all Miltonians, including youth.

There are also no explicit requirements in the *Planning Act* regarding how to engage youth as a separate group; however, there is direction in terms of engaging more generally with the public. Regarding the contents of an Official Plan, Section 16(1)(b) of the *Planning Act* indicates that a description of the measures and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public must be included in an Official Plan - specifically for: proposed official plan amendments; zoning by-laws; plans of subdivision; and consents. Section 16(2) also indicates that it is optional for an official plan to contain a description of the measures and procedures proposed to attain the overall objectives of the plan and for any other planning matters.

Land use planning topics that are related and important to youth are explored in other Big Question Reports and focus on Working in Milton and Moving in Milton.

**By the time we reach the year 2051, which is the end of the planning horizon for our new Official Plan, Milton’s youth who are the age of 15 today will be 45 years old. Our youth represent an age-group with important ideas, goals, and insights about the future of Milton.**

## Provincial Policy Statement

The PPS also does not provide specific direction on youth-related matters; however, it is clear that the needs of all ages are to be addressed by municipal planning authorities. For example, policy 1.5 of the PPS deals with public spaces, recreation, parks, trails and open spaces, and focuses on the following topics, which are about providing places for social activity and interaction, movement and independence. All of these factors can help improve the overall quality of life for youth, and other age-specific groups:

- Meeting the needs of pedestrians;
- Fostering social interaction;
- Facilitating active transportation; and
- Planning and providing settings for recreation.

## Growth Plan

Similarly, the Growth Plan for the GGH does not explicitly target youth but it is implied that their needs are to be considered and addressed. Policy 2.2.1.4 b) notes that the plan is intended to achieve complete communities that:

*Improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.*

The Growth Plan definition for 'complete communities' also states that complete communities are 'age-friendly'. We've explored this idea/approach in more detail through Big Question #7 (Urban Design), and readers should also refer to that discussion.

**What is an age-friendly community? According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an age-friendly place encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities. ([Click here to review the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guide](#)). Practical approaches to age-friendly design can also be applied to other specific groups, including youth.**

Section 5.2.3.3 of the Growth Plan also broadly encourages municipalities to engage the public and stakeholders in local implementation efforts and to provide the necessary information to ensure the informed involvement of citizens, including youth.

## Summary of Regional Policies and Plans

Similar to the province, the ROP has no existing policies that explicitly target youth. There are also no additional plans outside of the ROP, such as a youth master plan/age-friendly strategy, that focuses on meeting the needs of Halton's youth.

The youth population is specifically mentioned in Halton's current Active Transportation Master Plan (in regard to educating and promoting active transportation options to youth) and Healthy Community Guidelines (related to the provision of youth centres); however, there is no specific land use planning direction on youth-related issues.

**"Human services provided by Halton Region can contribute to a healthy community by providing youth centres" (Region of Halton Healthy Community Guidelines)**

## Local Policies, Plans, and Directions

### #MiltonYouth

Although Milton's current Official Plan has no goals, objectives or policies specifically focused on youth living in Milton, the completion of the #MiltonYouth project in 2018, and subsequent Milton Youth Strategy in 2019, is to be celebrated. These documents can provide local direction on goals, objectives, and policies in the new Official Plan. These documents together provide a robust framework for how to integrate youth-specific needs into the evolution of Milton. For example, the following directions from the Youth Strategy focus on land use, living, and quality of life for our youth population, and could be addressed by the new Official Plan:

- i. Safe and Welcoming Milton - ensure Town facilities are safe and welcoming of youth through inclusion practices;*
- ii. Youth Space - create safer and more youth-friendly gathering places; and*
- iii. Youth Empowerment - foster youth engagement, connection and participation to ensure their needs are taken into consideration when decisions are being made.*

### Milton Youth Task Force

The 2019 Youth Strategy is implemented with staff by the Milton Youth Task Force (MYTF) - a group of youth (13 to 18 years old) that live in Milton and volunteer for a school term to provide input to local projects and advocate for their needs and wants. Milton's Development Services Department has been working with the MYTF through We Make Milton, and recently undertook the following:

- An Introductory presentation and discussion about land use planning in Milton and the new Official Plan (October 2020);
- The identification of We Make Milton Youth Ambassadors from the MYTF to complete a series of research, communications, and feedback tasks (March 2021); and

**The We Make Milton team is also connecting with youth by sharing information about land use planning at our local schools. On May 26th 2021 we had a virtual meeting with Ms. Russell's grade 8 geography class at W.I. Dick Middle School, and talked about why the new Official Plan will be important to them. On February 22, 2022 we also met with Mr. Bierlings's grade 8 class at Milton Christian School to share information about the project, and to receive input.**



- A Follow-up meeting to discuss our findings and to provide input on the experience of working with planning staff (May 2021).

## Current Planning Practices

The following is a review of current land use planning practices in other places, which Milton can consider for the new Official Plan - as it relates to youth living in Milton. Examples are organized into the following categories:

1. Creating Safe, Welcoming, Age-friendly Places; and
2. Empowering Youth through Engagement, Consultation, and Participation.

### *Creating Safe, Welcoming, and Age-Friendly Places/Spaces*

Creating safe, welcoming, age-friendly communities requires an understanding of how all age-groups experience living in Milton and how they feel in indoor and outdoor spaces (either publicly or privately-owned), such as streetscapes, parks, stores, restaurants, and community centres. Crime, traffic, noise, and poor lighting are all factors that people consider unsafe and therefore do not encourage outdoor activities, physical fitness, or social interaction. Improved community connections and gathering spaces, on the other hand, enhance social interactions and sense of community

As discussed in more detail in our discussion of Big Question #7 (Urban Design), age-friendly design can be focused on the needs of all different age groups and can encourage independent participation in civic life, promote opportunities for health, and ensure accessible, safe, and equitable access to places and spaces for everyone.

**In Big Question #7, we explored the topic of active aging and age-friendly design, particularly for older adults. Since many of their needs are similar to the needs of youth (i.e., independent participation in civic life, opportunities for health, and safe, and equitable access to places and spaces), the policy considerations identified in Big Question #7 can be applied more broadly to you, and ALL AGE GROUPS, to ensure that we are also creating safe, welcoming, and age-friendly spaces.**

### *Empowering Youth through Engagement, Consultation, and Participation*

There are many advantages to youth participation in local planning projects, including:

- Obtaining views that represent a large and diverse demographic;
- Contributing to the psychological development of youth; and
- Helping youth develop an understanding of their surrounding environment<sup>1</sup>.

Barriers to youth participation include resource and budget-related constraints; assumptions about the capacity of youth to understand the planning process; and viewing youth as a problem to solve rather than a valuable stakeholder group<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> David and Buchanan. (2020) Planning Our Future: Institutionalizing Youth Participation in Local Government Planning Efforts

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

**The American Planning Association (APA) states that Young people form a large and important segment of the population and they have a substantial stake in planning the built environment. Although they may not have a planner’s vocabulary, they recognize the effects of planning on their lives. Their unique perspectives are valuable contributions to planning conversations. The APA also provides a toolkit, curriculum, and classroom activities about land use planning that can be accessed [by clicking here](#).**

In Milton, the MYTF currently fulfills an important role in terms of empowering our youth; however, it is recognized that tis volunteer group represents only a portion of the Town’s youth population, and can’t speak to all of the various needs and challenges facing youth today. There is an opportunity to explore other ways to collect and consider their ideas as part of the larger planning process. For example, the Township of Langley’s3 Age-Friendly Strategy was recognized in 2015 with an Award of Merit from the Canadian Institute of Planners and identifies a number of specific engagement and consultation activities/actions focused on encouraging youth participation in the planning process. These activities/actions are summarized below and the Strategy [can be viewed here](#):

*On-going activities/actions that should be continued:*

- *Collaboration between the Township’s Senior Advisory Committee and Youth Advisory Committee to collaborate on initiatives of mutual interest;*
- *Programs and services geared towards youth; and*
- *Maintaining the Youth Advisory Committee and continuing to provide opportunities for involvement in community decisions.*

*Future activities/actions that should be initiated:*

- *Encourage and promote recognition programs that acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and contributions of youth in the community;*
- *Review terms of reference for all Township committees to ensure there are no barriers to participation from youth; and*
- *Identify effective ways to target youth in stakeholder consultation when seeking public feedback on Township initiatives.*

**The Lafayette City Council in California, USA, invited a member of the city’s youth commission to serve on a citizens’ advisory committee that selected and advised a consultant for a two-year downtown planning process.**

**The City of Hampton, Virginia, USA, has youth planner positions for teens who are responsible for overseeing the youth component of the city’s Comprehensive Plan. This document has an entire section written entirely by young people and focused on youth issues.**

## Policy Considerations for We Make Milton

Milton is committed to empowering youth and creating land use planning policies that positively effect the way they live in Milton. Therefore, the following considerations have been identified for further discussion through We Make Milton:

### *1. We **must** continue to work with schools, the MYTF and other youth groups/young people through We Make Milton and other planning processes.*

By continuing to participate in We Make Milton, our youth can provide valuable insight into ways to make our future better. They can also ensure that youth-specific issues and needs are understood. We must continue to work with our youth by:

- Meeting with the MYTF, schools, and other youth groups to provide updates on We Make Milton and to obtain ideas and input;
- Identifying a new group of MYTF ambassadors to contribute to We Make Milton for the 2021/22 school year;
- Exploring the opportunity for youth ambassadors/youth planners to help research and contribute to other Big Questions Reports;

**“As an immigrant, I am new to Milton. I’m able to compare Milton to the different cities I have moved and lived in. Milton is a peaceful city and has many opportunities for the youth. My school Bishop Reding has helped me succeed in ways I didn’t know I could. However, my parents often worry about me because of the vaping issues at my school. However, my neighbourhood is a very safe place. My parents can trust the area enough to let me go out alone or with my friends around the city. Sometimes, me and my friends don’t find good places to hang out. The only places we can hang out are parks and only when there is no snow. I think the city would benefit from a better mall or better places for friends and family to hang out. Some ideas could be, more cafes or gaming centres.” - A description of what it is like to live in Milton as a youth today, by a member of the MYTF**

Exploring the opportunity for youth ambassadors/youth planners to participate in upcoming stakeholder committee meetings for We Make Milton; and

However, it is also important that Milton continues to seek/test new ways and tools and groups of youth to engage and consult with. Our local youth population is diverse and there are a wide range of needs to be considered. We recognize that there are a range of circumstances that make some young people more vulnerable and less likely to participate in groups like the MYTF. Therefore, it is important that engagement efforts are varied, inclusive and as equitable as possible.

*2. In addition to policy considerations identified in relation to age-friendly design (Big Question #7), other goals, objectives, and policies that specifically address Milton's youth could be identified.*

Youth in Milton are a local priority. Overall planning goals and objectives will be identified throughout the new Official Plan for Milton and if there are any that should be specific to the needs of youth, they could be articulated. For example, goals and objectives could be identified as it relates to obtaining and considering the views of youth during planning processes. In addition, the new Official Plan could include policies that encourage:

- Involving youth in more project-focused committees and stakeholder groups related to land use planning; and
- Exploring future tools that engage youth in land use planning decisions.

**The new Official Plan could include a standalone section on age-friendly design and the needs of different age-groups in Milton. A preamble that refers to the projected future increase of youth in Milton in the coming years and explains why there is a need to plan and provide for their needs. High-level objectives that recognize the diversity of needs of youth could also be included.**

## *2035: A New Generation*

### **A Poem about the Future by a member of the Milton Youth Task Force**

I pull the curtains (a)  
The sun looks odd, even though it is a clear mid-summer's day (b)  
When I go outside, I feel the air is filled with heat, that's for certain. (a)  
I think, change is still quite far away. (b)  
I've been taught about the environment and ecology since kindergarten, and  
we are doing all we can. Is there something we are not doing right? I ask  
As I snatch up my dossier

Another day at work at a ginormous energy company, and I set my mind to the task.  
My colleague Jacob says two of the reactors broke down.  
Oh, well, I thought. Sometimes big companies can be a little too taken aback.

Our belittled nuclear energy department is so small that it always gets pounced. But later  
that day, I heard talk about Jacob setting up a campaign to support our department.  
Now it's time for us to bound back.

Our little campaign gains  
It spreads around like fire across the country  
Protest groups with young people form. Watch out! They will not be detained.

Schools everywhere teach kids green, sustainable ecology at the absolute elementary level.  
Which makes us even more powerful.  
We do this so that we can live free.

The energy company and the government get toppled  
And by the end I realized, change is already here.



# MILTON

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