



# The Corporation of the Town of Milton

---

Report To: Council  
From: Jill Hogan, Commissioner, Development Services  
Date: July 17, 2023  
Report No: DS-039-23  
Subject: We Make Milton - Working in Milton Policy Considerations Report  
Recommendation: **THAT Council receive Report DS-039-23 for information;**

**AND THAT the recommended Policy Considerations for the theme of Working in Milton be endorsed by Council and that they be used to guide subsequent stages of We Make Milton - Milton's new Official Plan.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Council endorsed the Policy Considerations for the **Living in Milton** theme in June 2022 and the **Moving in Milton** theme in June 2023.
- This report identifies the Big Questions for the third theme, '**Working in Milton**', and is requesting Council endorsement of these Policy Considerations to be used to develop policy through Stage Four of the We Make Milton project, Drafting and Discussing.

## REPORT

### Background

The We Make Milton project includes five project stages:

- Stage One - Listening and Learning
- Stage Two - Vision and Guiding Principles
- Stage Three - Big Questions
- Stage Four - Drafting and Discussing
- Stage Five - New Official Plan

The work undertaken in Stage One and Stage Two resulted in the creation of a new land use planning Vision Statement and Guiding Principles that were endorsed by Council in February 2021 through Report DS-005-21. They have been used to guide the development of Policy Considerations through the Big Questions stage.

## Background

### **We Make Milton Stage Three - Big Questions**

Following Council endorsement of the new planning Vision Statement and Guiding Principles in February 2021, Stage Three of We Make Milton was initiated. The purpose of Stage Three is to investigate and understand the current planning context of Milton in more detail and to explore specific land use planning matters raised by the community so far, including how they can be addressed by our new Official Plan.

The Big Questions focus on identifying the Policy Considerations for local planning opportunities and challenges, which emerged from the feedback of stakeholders and the community through extensive engagement in Stages One and Two. These Policy Considerations will guide the development of the new Official Plan in Stage Four (Drafting and Discussing).

To organize information and explore community ideas about key land use planning issues, a series of We Make Milton reports is being prepared. The reports are focused on four themes - Living, Moving, Working and Growing. However, it is noted that there is crossover between themes.

For each theme, two separate reports were prepared, for the purpose of facilitating additional discussion with the community, updating and informing Council and setting guidance for drafting the New Official Plan. This includes:

1. A 'Background and Information' Report (Appendix 'A'), which provides an overview of the planning context of Milton as well as an analysis of community and stakeholder input received so far. It leads to a series of Big Questions about how to manage change and provide more choice for the year 2051, following our new land use planning vision and guiding principles, endorsed by Council.
2. A 'Policy Considerations' Report (Appendix 'B'), which provides an exploration of the Big Questions and the identification of various Policy Considerations, that link to the Council-endorsed Guiding Principles, intended to answer the Big Questions and that are to be considered as the New Official Plan is drafted in the next stages.

The "Living in Milton" and "Moving in Milton" themes of Stage Three were endorsed by Council in June 2022 and June 2023, respectively. The last theme of "Growing in Milton" will be completed later this year.

## Discussion

### Working in Milton

When it comes to Working in Milton, residents are concerned about the availability and ability to work regionally, locally and from their homes. Residents and businesses want flexibility and certainty when it comes to employment opportunities. They also prefer to work closer to home and to have good transportation and transit connections. Businesses are concerned about the availability of land for employment and the sustainability of their premises. Our rural residents value the protection of agricultural lands for future food production and rural businesses favour opportunities to support economic diversification and viability. Infrastructure planning is also crucial to expand and support choices for Working in Milton.

The theme of Working in Milton will explore options for the new Official Plan to support and facilitate a balance of employment choices for present and future generations.

### Big Questions and Policy Considerations

In June 2023, Staff released the Working in Milton Big Questions Reports for community and technical advisory review and comment. The engagement process and the feedback received are summarized later in the report. The Big Questions Reports included six Big Questions and seventeen Policy Considerations. These updates have led to a total of eighteen Policy Considerations. An additional Policy Consideration was added to address the issues of minerals and aggregates. Some changes were made to the draft Policy Considerations, including additional guidelines to be considered and the refinement of language and context to clarify and elaborate the meaning of the Policy Consideration. The final Big Questions and Policy Considerations for Working in Milton are:

#### Big Question 1: Support Employment Base and Businesses

How can the new Official Plan policies protect Milton's existing and future employment base?

##### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 1.1:

- The new Official Plan must continue to protect existing and future employment areas to attract new businesses and ensure the diversity of the Town's employment base.

##### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 1.2:

- The new Official Plan should consider the trend in the local and provincial labour pools when creating policies to support the local employment base and businesses.

## **Big Question 2: Accommodate a Spectrum of Industries and Businesses**

How will the new Official Plan policies accommodate and attract a spectrum of industries and businesses?

### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 2.1:**

- The new Official Plan should ensure employment lands provide sufficient space to attract, retain and expand industrial uses, knowledge-based businesses and the cultural, service and hospitality sectors.

### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 2.2:**

- The new Official Plan should encourage diverse employment lands that increase employment opportunities and support the Town's economic growth and competitiveness.

### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 2.3:**

- The new Official Plan should protect, expand, and support employment areas in mixed-use districts, campus institutions, and a provide variety of jobs and services to increase the diversity of employment uses.

## **BQ3: Formulate Flexibility and Adaptability**

How can the new Official Plan policies sustain and foster future employment growth through flexibility and adaptability?

### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 3.1:**

- The new Official Plan Policies must sustain and foster future employment growth through flexibility and adaptability.

### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 3.2:**

- The new Official Plan could enable opportunities for small independent businesses, non-profit organizations, and employers in arts and culture who are at risk of displacement due to redevelopment, rising rents, insecure tenures, and competition for space.

### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 3.3:**

- The new Official Plan Policies should support economic development opportunities for shared location, flexible workspace arrangements, and alternate ownership models to

## Discussion

increase the viability of commercial areas and to address the displacement of small businesses, city-serving industrial, community-serving spaces, and First Nations.

### **BQ4: Achieve a Sustainable Environment in Employment Area**

How can the new Official Plan policies for employment areas address the impacts of a changing climate and develop approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality?

#### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 4.1**

- The new Official Plan Policies must ensure that 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.

#### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 4.2:**

- The new Official Plan must prepare policies for climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; plan for more resilient, environmentally sustainable, and complete communities; and support sustainable development such as low impact development, district energy, and water conservation measures in our employment areas.

#### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 4.3:**

- The new Official Plan shall promote green innovation, green infrastructure and low-impact development strategies for employment areas.

### **BQ5: Encourage Employment Intensification outside Employment Areas**

How will the new Official Plan policies encourage employment intensification in mixed-use areas and Strategic Growth Areas such as the MTSA, Downtown Milton, Milton Education Village and other nodes in our community areas?

#### **Working in Milton Policy Consideration 5.1:**

- The new Official Plan must direct major office and institutional developments to the Town's current and future Major Transit Station Areas and Strategic Growth Areas.

## Discussion

### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 5.2

- The new Official Plan should protect and expand areas for compatible employment uses in neighbourhoods, fostering more complete and walkable transit-supportive neighbourhoods with a mix of housing, jobs, shops, and services.

### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 5.3

- The new Official Plan should explore opportunities to increase employment through the intensification of employment lands and commercial sites.

### BQ6: Support and Expand Rural Employment

How will the new Official Plan policies support and expand existing and future employment concerns in our rural areas?

#### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 6.1:

- The new Official Plan must protect employment and economic activities in our prime agricultural areas for long-term agricultural use while enabling the agri-food sector to thrive.

#### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 6.2:

- The new Official Plan should create a healthy, integrated and viable rural area that builds on rural Milton's character, infrastructure, amenities and assets, including reliable broadband internet and the expansion of infrastructure to encourage employment.

#### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 6.3:

- The new Official Plan policies must protect prime agricultural areas for all types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and normal farm practices.

#### Working in Milton Policy Consideration 6.4:

- The new Official Plan policies must identify and protect adequate mineral aggregate reserves for long-term use, while minimizing any adverse environmental impacts.

## Discussion

### Summary of Engagement

Engagement is a crucial part of We Make Milton. Stage Three (Big Questions) provides significant opportunities for the community to stay involved.

Engagement on the Official Plan Review began in late 2021. Engagement involved obtaining feedback from Town staff, the public, stakeholders, community leaders, and local organizations, agencies, and advisory committees/task forces.

A summary of community engagement activity is provided below.

#### We Make Milton Public Engagement Online (Ongoing)

- The Let's Talk Milton website has served as the main platform for public engagement and input into the Official Plan project since its launch. The Feedback Forum remained open throughout the We Make Milton - Official Plan project and continued to receive comments from across the OP review's themes.
- The Working in Milton policy background report Appendix 'A' and Policy Considerations Appendix 'B' were shared on Let's Talk Milton on May 29, 2023.

#### Technical Advisory Committee Meetings (March 1, 2023 and June 12, 2023)

- Staff established a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to obtain technical advice and to help identify and resolve planning issues. TAC members include staff from the Town of Milton, Halton Region, conservation authorities, the Niagara Escarpment Commission, school boards and other relevant agencies. The TAC met to provide input on Big Questions and Policy Considerations. Staff adjusted reports based on TAC feedback before further public consultation.

#### Working in Milton Survey (May 29 to June 21, 2023)

- Members of the public were invited to have their say about the Policy Considerations identified for each Big Question through an online Let's Talk Milton survey.
- The survey was promoted using social media posts, social media ads, notices in the Chamber newsletter, media stories, website posts, printed flyers, digital signs, and more.
- The responses to rural concerns indicate more preferences for protecting existing agricultural uses than diversification of employment uses.
- A record of the survey participants and responses is provided in Appendix C'.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

- The We Make Milton team continues to engage with a variety of key stakeholders, using direct communication with those identified as having a unique interest in the OP review.
- Staff expanded the stakeholder list developed at the beginning of the OP project.
- Stakeholders were invited to participate in the public information sessions, the survey and all other avenues, while we also offered to hold sessions for stakeholder groups upon request. For this phase, the Downtown Milton Business Improvement Area requested a stakeholder engagement meeting. This meeting was held on June 6, 2023.

### **Public Virtual Feedback Sessions (June 8, June 14 and June 19)**

- Virtual Public Feedback sessions provided an opportunity for discussion in more detail than is possible using the online survey.
- The virtual sessions used various tools to collect feedback, including verbal comments shared over Zoom and the Zoom chat tool. Morning, afternoon and evening sessions were held in June.

### **Public in-person Session (June 20)**

- A Public in-person feedback session provided an opportunity for discussion in person at Town Hall.
- The session collected feedback through voting with sticky dots and comments after the presentation in the Milton Room.

### **Summary of Participation - Working in Milton:**

Overall, survey respondents were in favour of the Policy Considerations identified in the Working in Milton survey. The public engagement sessions and stakeholder meetings gave productive conversation that provided more context into community concerns related to Working in Milton, resulting in an additional Policy Consideration and refinement to existing considerations. Staff will continue to engage with the public and stakeholder groups through the project's next phases. The shareholder and public sessions saw good representation from a reasonable cross-section of different stakeholders and community interests.



## Discussion

### Next Steps

Based on the input received, it is recommended that all of the refined Policy Considerations identified for the theme of Working in Milton be carried forward and used to inform subsequent stages of the new Official Plan project. As we advance into Stage Four (Drafting and Discussing), there will continue to be opportunities for the community to help us draft, discuss, and refine new land use planning policies based on these recommended policy directions. In the coming months, Staff will be undertaking the same process for the themes of Growing in Milton, and we look forward to collecting additional feedback and input on these important policy areas.

Following the completion of Stage Three (Big Questions), late summer/early fall this year, Stage Four (Drafting and Discussing) will commence.

The New Official Plan will be brought forward in two parts. The first part will set the high-level vision, strategic goals and objectives, and strategic policy directions in the form of a new municipal land use structure and growth management strategy. The second part will be fully implementing Milton's New Official Plan through more detailed and area-specific land use policies.

## Financial Impact

There is no financial impact associated with this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Hogan

Commissioner, Development Services

For questions, please contact: Anthony Wong, Senior Policy  
Planner

Phone: Ext. 2565

## Attachments

Appendix 'A' - Working in Milton Background and Information Report

Appendix 'B' - Working in Milton Policy Considerations Report

Appendix 'C' - Working in Milton Survey Results

Approved by CAO

Andrew M. Siltala

Chief Administrative Officer



### Recognition of Traditional Lands

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.