



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Jill Hogan, Commissioner, Development Services

Date: November 13, 2023

Report No: DS-051-23

Subject: We Make Milton – Growing in Milton Policy Considerations Report

**Recommendation: THAT Council receive Report DS-051-23 for information;
AND THAT the recommended policy considerations for the theme of Growing in Milton be endorsed by Council and that they be used to guide subsequent stages of We Make Milton.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Council endorsed the policy considerations for the We Make Milton Living in Milton theme in June 2022, the Moving in Milton theme in June 2023, and the Working in Milton theme in July 2023.
- The subject report identifies the Big Questions for the fourth theme, 'Growing in Milton', and is requesting Council endorsement of the set of 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 is a multi-year Official Plan review and update that was launched in July 2019 and 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 Stages One and 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. The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles have been used to guide the development of policy considerations through Stage three - Big Questions.

We Make Milton Stage Three - Big Questions

Following Council endorsement of the 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 and how our new Official Plan can address them.

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 the background information and explore community ideas about key land use planning issues, a series of We Make Milton reports have been prepared on the themes of: Living; Moving; Working; and Growing. There is some crossover between these themes. Two reports were prepared for each theme. These include:

1. A 'Background and Information' Report (attached as 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; and
2. A 'Policy Considerations' Report (attached as 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. The policy considerations intended to answer the Big Questions and are to be considered as the New Official Plan is drafted in the next stages.

The 'Living in Milton', 'Moving in Milton' and 'Working in Milton' recommended policy considerations were endorsed by Council in June 20, 2022 (Report [DS-060-22](#)); June 19, 2023 (Report [DS-032-23](#)); and July 17, 2023 (Report [DS-39-23](#)), respectively. Through the subject report, Town staff seek Council endorsement of the recommended policy considerations for the last theme discussed in Stage Three of We Make Milton, 'Growing in Milton'.

Discussion

Growing in Milton

The Growing in Milton theme explores where and how future growth could take place in Milton. This involves thinking about how Milton will plan for a sustainable, complete community, including the conservation and protection of its environmental resources.

In the context of our new planning vision, our community and our community building partners will have a wide range of choices to support where and how Milton grows. Some parts of Milton, will grow through higher density development and intensification. Parts of Milton will grow through new complete communities and employment lands. While at the same time, growth will be managed to support the revitalization or conservation of the existing character, important features and characteristics of specific parts of Milton.

The new Plan will manage growth by providing long-term certainty about land use and development while adapting in a flexible and innovative way as the needs of the community change over time.

Big Questions and Policy Considerations

In August 2023, Staff released the Growing in Milton Big Questions Reports for community and technical advisory review and comment. These reports included six Big Questions and twenty-one Policy Considerations. Following the engagement, summarized below, are the commentaries received through the engagement process. Resulting from the feedback received, no additional policy considerations were added. However, some changes were made to the draft considerations to clarify and elaborate the recommended policy directions.

The final Big Questions and Policy Considerations for 'Growing in Milton' are:

Big Question 1: Promoting a Local Approach to Growth

How can Milton's new Official Plan provide a local approach to managing growth? What are Milton's growth objectives and how do we achieve them?

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 1.1:
 - The new Official Plan should identify and describe the features that make the Town a unique place, reflect the new land use planning vision, Milton 2051: Choice Shapes Us, and address local Council and community' priorities for future Milton.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 1.2:

- The new Official Plan must accommodate the Town's updated population and jobs forecast to the 2051 planning horizon of the Plan.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 1.3:
 - The new Official Plan should implement a balanced approach to growth by responding to provincial directions on growth and the future needs of the community, addressing residents' expectations and concerns and implementing the principles of complete community and sustainable development.

Big Question 2: Establishing Milton's Future Land Use Structure

What does our future land use structure look like? What is the role of the Town Structure's components and how should they function in 2051?

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 2.1:
 - The new Official Plan should illustrate the physical make-up of the community's long-term structure for the municipality. The community structure could recognize components of the urban and rural environments that either already exist or are expected to emerge during the life of the plan.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 2.2:
 - For the Urban Area, the new Official Plan should establish an urban structure and hierarchy of urban places with long-term policy outcomes, intentions and directions that will be foundational to planning for a complete, thriving and healthy community.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 2.3:
 - The new Official Plan should ensure that the policies for approved secondary plans that cover stable built-out areas (for example, Bristol Survey) are consistent with and do not duplicate the Official Plan community goals, objectives and strategic policies.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 2.4:
 - For the rural area, the new Official Plan must establish a local rural structure to provide places for businesses and amenities that serve the rural community while protecting the environment and natural resources.

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 2.5:
 - The new Official Plan should develop legible and easy-to-understand text, schedules and figures that can assist the reader in understanding the proposed outcomes, intentions and directions.

Big Question 3: Managing Growth within the Settlement Areas

How can the new Official Plan manage growth and provide a framework and guidance for where and how to intensify? What is our capacity for intensification?

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 3.1:
 - The new Official Plan must detail where and how the Town will grow within the urban area, integrating land uses and transportation and making efficient use of resources and infrastructure.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 3.2:
 - The new Official Plan should provide direction to achieve a greater mix of housing choices, affordability and densities in proximity to services and amenities in strategic growth areas, existing neighbourhoods, and future community.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 3.3:
 - The new Official Plan should guide opportunities for sustainable growth within the rural settlement areas (the hamlets) in order to ensure their long-term viability.

Big Question 4: Envisioning Growth and Promoting Good Development Practice

What will future growth look like in Milton? How can the new Official Plan accommodate growth in a manner that achieves a high quality of life and sense of place? How can we achieve more complete and healthy communities?

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 4.1:
 - The new Official Plan should establish direction in policy for the design and visual appearance of the built form typologies that will represent Milton's urban environment over time, within the diversity of urban places and destinations.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 4.2:
 - The new Official Plan should promote a sense of place and interest by providing direction for the creation of memorable sites, buildings and public realm that people can connect and relate to.

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 4.3:
 - The new Official Plan should ensure the conservation and enhancement of character both in the rural and urban communities.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 4.4:
 - The new Official Plan could promote sustainable community design and construction practice.

Big Question 5: Promoting Resource and Environmental Protection

How can the new Official Plan protect and enhance our natural resources and landscapes while balancing the need to accommodate growth in a safe, orderly and sensitive manner?

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 5.1:
 - The new Official Plan must protect, improve, and enhance the natural heritage and water resources systems.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 5.2:
 - The new Official Plan must protect, enhance, and support the agriculture system and rural community by protecting farmland, agri-food networks and edge planning at the intersection of the urban and rural areas.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 5.3:
 - The new Official Plan must make mineral aggregate resource available for use while mitigating and minimizing potential adverse effects from resource extraction.

Big Question 6: Delivering Infrastructure and Community Services

How can the new Official Plan support the efficient, fiscally responsible and sustainable delivery and use of community infrastructure and services?

- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 6.1:
 - The new Official Plan must ensure the equitable distribution of existing and future community infrastructure; public service facilities; and institutional needs are planned for as part of future growth.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 6.2:
 - The new Official Plan should promote partnerships, co-location and shared use of facilities to contribute to cost effective operations.
- Growing in Milton Policy Consideration 6.3:

- The new Official Plan should provide direction for the Town to adapt against the challenges of climate change and build a resilient infrastructure.

Summary of Engagement

Public and stakeholder engagement is a crucial part of We Make Milton. Stage Three (Big Questions) has provided 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 the community engagement activities on the theme of Growing in Milton is provided below.

We Make Milton Online Public Forum (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 Stage Three and continued to receive comments from across the OP review themes. The Growing in Milton 'Background and Information' Report (Appendix A) and Policy Considerations" Report (attached as Appendix B) were made available to the public on [Let's Talk Milton website](#) and the [We Make Milton project web page](#) on September 29, 2023.

Growing in Milton Survey (September 1 to September 29, 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 digital newsletter, media stories, website posts, printed flyers, digital signs, and more. A record of the survey participation is provided in Appendix C to the subject report.

Technical Advisory Committee Meetings (May 17, 2023 and October 3, 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 twice to provide input on the Growing in Milton big questions and proposed policy considerations. Staff adjusted the reports based on TAC feedback.

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, Town staff held a stakeholder engagement meeting met the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation on July 7, 2023.

Public Virtual Feedback Sessions (September 12, 14 and 28, 2023)

- 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 September 2023.

Public In-person Feedback Session (September 28, 2023)

- A Public in-person feedback session provided an opportunity for discussion in person at Town Hall. Comments and feedback were collected during the presentation in the Milton Room. Likewise, attendees were invited to complete the Growing in Milton survey.

Summary of Participation - Growing in Milton:

Overall, survey respondents were in favour of the policy considerations identified in the Growing in Milton survey. The public engagement sessions and stakeholder meetings gave productive conversation that provided more context into community concerns related to future growth in Milton, resulting in refinements to some of the policy considerations.

Staff will continue to engage with the public and stakeholder groups through the project's next phases. The shareholder and public sessions continued to see a good representation from a reasonable cross-section of different stakeholders and community interests.

Next Steps

Based on the input received, staff recommend that all of the refined policy considerations identified for the theme of Growing in Milton be carried forward and used to inform subsequent stages of the new Official Plan project. As staff 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.

Following the completion of Stage Three (Big Questions) with the endorsement of the Growing in Milton policy considerations, Stage Four (Drafting and Discussing) will commence. The proposed draft policies will reflect the community input, updated provincial

