



Office of the Regional Chair
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VIA EMAIL

March 9, 2021

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Halton Region is undertaking an update to the Regional Official Plan to ensure it responds to the Provincial Planning framework.

Planning to implement extensive and impactful provincial policies for new growth, housing and jobs requires extensive community engagement to ensure that residents can meaningfully contribute in shaping the vision for growth in Halton to 2051.

While the Regional Official Plan Review is progressing, Regional Council is concerned that the significant changes to the Provincial Planning framework in recent months coupled with our overriding focus on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, does not provide sufficient time and opportunity to confirm priorities for significant long-term growth with our residents.

On February 17, 2021, Regional Council unanimously approved the attached resolution respectfully requesting that the Province enable Halton Region to delay its final report on its Official Plan Review until proper, in person, informed consultation with the public can be conducted. The resolution also requests that the Province suspend the conformity deadline until the impacts of the pandemic on growth planning can be better understood and addressed as part of the land needs assessment framework.

Halton Region remains supportive of Provincial objectives to increase housing supply and support growth and economic development. Additional time will enable a result that is responsive to Provincial goals while allowing Halton to continue our long standing approach in managing growth in an environmentally, socially and fiscally sustainable manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Carr", written in a cursive style.

Gary Carr
Regional Chair

Regional Municipality of Halton

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- c. The Honourable Ted Arnott, MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills
Jane McKenna, MPP, Burlington
Parm Gill, MPP, Milton
Stephen Crawford, MPP, Oakville
Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP, Oakville North – Burlington
Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Brian Rosborough,
City of Burlington, Kevin Arjoon,
Town of Milton, Meaghen Reid
Town of Oakville, Vicki Tytaneck,
Town of Halton Hills, Valerie Petryniak
Andrea Horwath, MPP, Leader of the Official Opposition
Steven Del Duca, Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party
Mike Schreiner, MPP, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario
County of Northumberland, Nancy MacDonald
County of Peterborough, Lynn Fawn
City of Peterborough, John Kennedy
City of Kawartha Lakes, Cathie Ritchie
City of Orillia, Gayle Jackson
City of Barrie, Wendy Cooke
County of Simcoe, John Daly
County of Dufferin, Michelle Dunne
County of Wellington, Donna Bryce, County Clerk
Region of Waterloo, Kris Fletcher
City of Brantford, Tanya Daniels
County of Brant, Heather Boyd
Haldimand County, Evelyn Eichenbaum
Region of Niagara, Ann-Marie Norio
City of Hamilton, Andrea Holland
City of Guelph, Stephen O'Brien
Region of Peel, Kathryn Lockyer
City of Toronto, John Elvidge
Region of York, Chris Raynor
Region of Durham, Ralph Walton



The Regional Municipality of Halton

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS APPROVED BY REGIONAL COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2021

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has mandated Halton Region to conduct a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) of its Official Plan whereby decisions must be made as to how all of the population and employment growth is to be accommodated in the local municipalities for the years 2031 to 2051;

AND WHEREAS since June 2019 the Province has amended a number of Provincial Statutes and policies that impact how municipalities plan for growth including the following:

- The Provincial Policy Statement,
- A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe,
- The Development Charges Act,
- The Planning Act,
- The Environmental Assessment Act, and
- The Conservation Authorities Act;

AND WHEREAS these significant Provincial changes include:

- reduced density targets in new greenfield development from 80 persons and jobs per hectare to 50 persons and jobs per hectare,
- reduced intensification targets from 60% beyond 2031 to 50%,
- setting minimum population and employment growth forecasts that can be exceeded subject to Provincial approval,
- extended the planning horizon from 2041 to the year 2051,
- introduced market demand as a consideration in determining the housing mix, and
- revisions to how municipalities fund growth;

AND WHEREAS these Provincial changes signal an abrupt shift from the emphasis on creating compact and complete communities to a planning regime that facilitates lower density and car dependent communities;

AND WHEREAS Halton Hills, Burlington, Oakville, Milton and Halton Region have all declared climate change emergencies and must consider the role of land use planning in their strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions;

AND WHEREAS these Provincial changes create pressure to convert more class 1, 2 and 3 farmland in Halton to urban uses than would otherwise be necessary which is contrary to Halton's Official Plan and its 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, which both have as a goal to protect a permanent agricultural system in Halton;

AND WHEREAS ensuring that Ontarians have access to healthy safe food in the future requires thoughtful consideration of the long term impact of converting thousands of acres of prime agricultural lands in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to urban uses;

AND WHEREAS in 2016 Halton Regional Council directed the Regional Chair to write to the Premier of Ontario expressing support for creating a provincial permanent agricultural system;

AND WHEREAS the change of the planning horizon to 2051 by the Province means that future municipal councils and the public will have little power to change decisions where they will grow after 2031 to the 2051 planning horizon;

AND WHEREAS in the rural areas internet service is often poor, making it difficult for rural residents to participate in Zoom calls;

AND WHEREAS Halton Region has adopted a public engagement charter that is based on transparency, notification and participation;

AND WHEREAS the current pandemic is making effective, in person public consultation impossible at a time when robust, informed public consultation is needed more than ever.

AND WHEREAS the nature of work has evolved in response to the pandemic which may cause long term changes to the assumptions underlying the province's Land Needs Assessment.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Regional Council direct the Regional Chair to write to request the Province to allow the Region to delay its final report on its Official Plan Review until proper, in person, informed consultation with the public has been conducted on the growth concepts and the preferred growth concept;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province be requested to make ROPA 48, being the scoped Regional Official Plan Amendment which identifies non-discretionary components of a Regional Urban Structure that support local plans and priorities inside the current urban boundaries, exempt from the requirement for in-person consultation with the public;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province be requested to suspend the timetable for municipal conformity to the Growth Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement to ensure that the public can fully participate in the process of planning their communities for the growth planning period covering 2031 to 2051;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province suspend the deadlines it has set for conformity until the Land Needs Assessment Framework can be revisited to adjust to the significant changes to the nature of work that are reducing office space and parking space needs.

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be circulated to Premier Doug Ford, the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Halton’s Local Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the leaders of the Provincial opposition parties, Halton’s MPP’s, and the Greater Golden Horseshoe municipalities.

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