

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
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| Regional Urban Structure- IGMS | |
| <p>1. How can the Regional Official Plan further support the development of Urban Growth Centres?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently Downtown Burlington is identified as a UGC in the Regional Official Plan. However, the Discussion Paper acknowledges that Burlington Council has asked Burlington Planning staff to prepare a report to consider changes to the UGC, and once received by the Region, this Local Municipal input will be considered as appropriate through the IGMS process. • As supported by the Council approved staff report PL-33-20, the City requests the Region of Halton through its Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Regional Official Plan, to adjust the boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre to generally align with the lands in proximity to the Burlington GO Station. • Staff note that in the Council approved staff report PL-33-20, the following staff recommendations were approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Request the Region of Halton, through its Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Regional Official Plan, to adjust the boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre to generally align with the lands in proximity to the Burlington GO Station; and ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to provide all related planning studies and background information to the Region to support the adjustment of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre boundary; and ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to work with the Region of Halton through its Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Regional Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station Area designation from |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|---------------------|--|
| | <p>the downtown and delineate the boundaries of all other Major Transit Station Areas in Burlington; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to work with the Region of Halton to implement a staged approval of its Municipal Comprehensive Review of their Official Plan through Section 26 of the <i>Ontario Planning Act</i> to prioritize the above issues; and ○ Request Provincial support of the Region of Halton Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan, including the adjustment of the boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre and make all necessary modifications to Provincial mapping in order to ensure all amendments are in conformity with the Growth Plan; and ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to prepare the appropriate amendments to the City of Burlington Official Plan upon Provincial approval of the Region of Halton Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station Area designation in the downtown and to reflect the adjusted boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre; and ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to provide an engagement plan with residents, businesses and community stakeholders to Council with respect to the proposed adjustment of the downtown Urban Growth Corridor and Major Transit Station Area to satisfy the regulatory and Region requirements at the September 15, 2020 Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Committee meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include policies seeking innovative approaches to master servicing in Strategic Growth Areas, such as UGCs. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region should reinforce the policies and stand behind local municipalities in their vision for implementing the objectives of their UGC. The Region is implementing high level policy and must build in ways to support local implementation. • Include prioritization of these areas in CIPs and other funding supports and programs. • Commit in policy to working in consultation with the local municipalities in terms of all elements of UGC implementation, including mapping and detailed Regional policies. |
| <p>2. Should the Region consider the use of Inclusionary Zoning in Protected Major Transit Station Areas to facilitate the provision of affordable housing?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, the Region should. • Inclusionary zoning is highlighted in the City’s adopted Official Plan and will be considered in the City-Wide Housing Strategy. • The Region should lead and collaborate with local municipalities as they work on ASPs for delineated MTSAs. • This would guard against the potential requirement by the Minister to require the use of Inclusionary Zoning. • Staff recognize that this will require background work and economic analysis to ensure affordable housing objectives can be met while still providing opportunities for development. |
| <p>3. Should the Region consider the use of the Protected Major Transit Station Areas tool under the Planning Act, to protect the Major Transit Station Areas policies in the Regional Official Plan and local official plans from appeal? If so, should all Major Transit Station Areas be considered or only those Major Transit Station Areas on Priority Transit Corridors?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an important tool to use. • All MTSAs should be considered, however there may be some argument for not pursuing it in all cases. • The only reasons not to use the tool would be if there was an MTSA where the City did not want to use inclusionary zoning in that area and where it is not appropriate to set targets and delineate boundaries and do detailed planning studies. • All MTSAs on Regional Express Rail (RER) in Burlington should be considered as Protected MTSAs. In the Council approved staff report PL-33-20, the following staff recommendations were approved: |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to work with the Region of Halton through its Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Regional Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station Area designation from the downtown and delineate the boundaries of all other Major Transit Station Areas in Burlington ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to prepare the appropriate amendments to the City of Burlington Official Plan upon Provincial approval of the Region of Halton Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station Area designation in the downtown and to reflect the adjusted boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre ● The Burlington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) is very supportive of the Protected MTSA tool to help achieve complete community objectives such as mix of land uses and job creation. The tool will help to create certainty in the market. |
| <p>4. From the draft boundaries identified in Appendix B and the Major Transit Station Area boundary delineation methodology outlined, do you have any comments on the proposed boundaries? Is there anything else that should be considered when delineating the Major Transit Station Areas?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With regards to the draft boundaries identified for Burlington GO and Appleby GO, staff have no comments and note that the variations from the previous Mobility Hub Study Area boundaries relate primarily to the exclusion of parkland and the inclusion of some sites that, while not well-connected to the area, may support the achievement of a density target. ● Staff note that the proposed MTSA boundary for Aldershot GO has the most differences from the City’s Mobility Hub boundary for Aldershot GO. The key changes in the Region’s proposed Aldershot GO MTSA boundary are the exclusion of Grove Park, Aldershot Park and the properties located at 1135 Gallagher Road and 1200 King Road. Staff note that the lands at 1200 King Road are addressed in Minutes of Settlement between the City and the |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|---------------------|---|
| | <p>owner of those lands, Paletta International Corporation. The City agreed, through the Minutes of Settlement, to conduct a review to determine whether the portion of the 1200 King Road lands located west of Falcon Creek should be developed with MTSA land uses. That review, which includes a natural heritage component, has not yet been completed. City staff await a response from the Province respecting the natural heritage review that has been completed for these lands. Once received, the City will consider the Province’s comments and conclude its review. Through previous correspondence, the Region has noted that the proposed Aldershot GO MTSA boundary as presented in the IGMS Discussion Paper is consistent with the Region’s delineation methodology to following the Natural Heritage System (NHS) boundary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regards to Downtown Burlington, staff have no concerns with the Region’s proposal to remove the Downtown Burlington MTSA/Mobility Hub from the ROP as permitted by the Province. This aligns with the following Council approved staff recommendation (PL-33-20): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Direct the Director of Community Planning to prepare the appropriate amendments to the City of Burlington Official Plan upon Provincial approval of the Region of Halton Municipal Comprehensive Review of its Official Plan to remove the Major Transit Station Area designation in the downtown and to reflect the adjusted boundary of the Downtown Burlington Urban Growth Centre. Through work on the adopted Official Plan (2018), references to Mobility Hubs have been modified to reference MTSA Special Planning Areas. • The delineation methodology appears to be appropriate. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This element should be part of the first phase of the ROPA to inform the bigger picture moves in the Regional Urban Structure, namely decisions on employment conversion requests. (Refer to PL-33-20 – UGC MTSA report suggesting phased approach to ROPA) |
| <p>5. How important are Major Transit Station Areas as a component of Halton’s Regional Urban Structure? What is your vision for these important transportation nodes?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very critical to the Region as a whole. • The City sees these areas as transit supportive, mixed use, employment nodes that will become complete communities. • These areas can be complete communities that can help reduce climate change and an opportunity to plan for adaptation, as well as include green infrastructure and look for district energy opportunities. • Consistent with the Growth Plan • MTSAs are places where significant investment and planning is required to meet objectives. • Many MTSAs will be planned within an existing built context and many will represent redevelopment. The Regional policy approach must acknowledge the great diversity of MTSAs and build a supportive and informative structure for many unique contexts. • BEDC notes that the creation of complete communities needs to have more emphasis, especially post-Covid since working from home has become more prevalent. Providing for and supporting initiatives such as flexible zoning to accommodate new trends such as coworking spaces is critical. As firms rethink employee environments, a mix of uses in areas such as MTSAs with particular emphasis on office space is going to be even more important. |
| <p>6. Building on the 2041 Preliminary Recommended Network from the Defining Major Transit Requirements, should corridors be identified as Strategic Growth Areas in the Regional Official Plan? Is so, should a specific minimum density target be assigned to them?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Burlington has concerns with the identified network. • Allow local municipal work to inform the ultimate corridor. Refer to the Frequent Transit Corridor in adopted OP • They could be identified as SGAs. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any specific minimum density target is identified, as required, there should be guidance or direction to be undertaken by the local municipality. • The implementation of minimum density targets along corridors should be at the discretion of the local municipality. The perceived / relative importance of achieving targets in the consideration of development approvals could mean that these targets could distort the good planning principles behind identifying these areas as SGAs. • This response is also supported by the City’s Transportation and Transit departments. Focus should be placed on local vision to align these corridors. Transit investment including increased transit frequency has already been implemented on these corridors. |
| <p>7. Should the ROP identify additional multi-purpose and minor arterial roads in the Regional Urban Structure, not for the purposes of directing growth, but to support a higher order Regional transit network?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, the Region should not. • It is important to understand what “the Regional transit network” means in this context? Is it very broadly transit or narrowly focused on the need for different Regional infrastructure? Is this an extension of Defining Major Transit Requirements (DMTR)? • The City’s Transportation Department also agrees that the Region should not. As the transit provider, the local municipality should define vision through processes such as the Integrated Mobility Plan and determine the appropriate facilities to achieve our vision. |
| <p>8. Are there any other nodes in Halton that should be identified within the Regional Official Plan from a growth or mobility perspective (i.e. on Map 1)? If so, what should the function of these nodes be and should a density target or unit yield be assigned in the Regional Official Plan?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the City’s Urban Structure (Schedule B) established in the adopted Official Plan (e.g. Uptown Urban Centre as a Primary Growth Area). • It is likely not appropriate to establish targets, however if this is being considered by the Region, it should be at the discretion of the local municipality. |
| <p>9. Are there any other factors that should be considered when assessing Employment Area conversion requests in Halton Region?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process is detailed and nicely laid out. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of changes to the assessment considerations will be required as a result of the recent amendment to the Provincial Growth Plan. • There may be cases, once the Region is actually considering the full list of conversions, that do not fit well into the categories or elements. • There may be some assessment considerations that in the end are determined to be non-negotiable. The Region will ultimately need to define the threshold for achieving the stated principle. • The most important element of the consideration of conversions and the development of conversion recommendations is the determination of the Regional Urban Structure which should be appropriately informed by the Local Urban Structures. • COB suggests that the delineation of the MTSAs and any other SGAs should occur in advance of any decisions on the conversion requests to inform the conversion assessment considerations. |
| <p>10. Are there any areas within Halton Region that should be considered as a candidate for addition to an Employment Area in the Regional Official Plan?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For more details please refer to Staff Report PL-28-20 Section 1.4.2 Employment Area Additions • The extent of the area recommended to be added to the Area of Employment may be refined through the approval process for the adopted Official Plan. • Changes in policy at the Provincial level have identified the role for employment lands outside of employment areas to accommodate employment growth. • Some lands still should be considered to be added. • Other lands will, through the approval of the adopted Official Plan, identify the key role of accommodating space for employment. • Staff are supportive of working closely with Regional Staff to identify areas that should continue to be considered for addition to the Employment Area. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|--|
| <p>11. How can the Regional Official Plan support employment growth and economic activity in Halton Region?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burlington Economic Development suggests that the Region participate in lower tier CIPs to support employment growth. Strategic leverage of key opportunities. Policy sets the framework but can only get us so far; need to also seriously consider broadened Regional incentive programs. • Programs and supportive policies (including within the Rural Area and particularly for the agricultural sector, even though it is not a part of the Employment Area or traditional employment planning) • A broader, region-wide employment strategy would support the connections among policy, economic development and programs. • The policy framework is predominantly focused on the protection of employment area (in order to ensure that the land can accommodate the broadest range of employment uses in supportive contexts). The Region should consider what other strategic objectives and policy requirements should be established to encourage flexibility and innovation to encourage more investment. In particular, building tools to encourage more employment uses in future growth nodes like MTSAs. • Continue to encourage the Provincial government to ensure more Planning Act tools to support more spaces for jobs throughout the community – zoning with conditions. • Comments from Burlington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) highlight the need for stronger tools to actually make employment happen. BEDC supports and recommends that innovation is required from a policy to an implementation perspective to support a broad range of mixed uses in key areas, this could even include light industrial uses. This innovation could include incentives, targets for different types of employment uses in mixed use areas, design guidance and partnerships. • Further BEDC, recommends the use of tools such as CIPs and DC exemption for minimum amount of office, to help attract office. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|---|
| | <p>Look to Brampton example where they have used DC exemptions for major office. Consider this for MTSAs.</p> |
| <p>12. What type of direction should the Regional Official Plan provide regarding planning for uses that are ancillary to or supportive of the primary employment uses in employment areas? Is there a need to provide different policy direction or approaches in different Employment Areas, based on the existing or planned employment context?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office parks (2.2.5.16) • Ancillary Employment Uses • Size or scale thresholds for Major Retail uses– should be examined • Density targets as directed by Growth Plan • The Burlington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) recommends that the Region discuss Child Care, which is something is challenging to have incorporated as an ancillary use. Zoning or policy direction from the Region would be beneficial. |
| <p>13. How can the Regional Official Plan support planning for employment on lands outside Employment Areas, and in particular, within Strategic Growth Areas and on lands that have been converted? What policies tools or approaches can assist with ensuring employment growth and economic activity continues to occur and be planned for within these areas?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See responses to Question 11 • Careful to ensure that office buildings are welcomed into these key growth areas. Particularly while policy makers are evolving their understanding of the impact of the pandemic with respect to the changing realities of work. • Existing office space market may have more vacancy which will impact the case for commercial builders to build new office. • Mixed use buildings which combine office space and residential uses in a condominium format face operational challenges. Is there some way for policy to support this mix of uses and highlight the need to change approaches in terms of the importance of achieving truly mixed and complete communities? • The Regional Official Plan could consider direction to establish a target ratio of people and jobs in Strategic Growth Areas. Research other best practices. The balance among residents and jobs, particularly in new Strategic Growth Areas will be challenging to achieve. • Policy should be written with the awareness that office uses take more time to come online (in one discussion the delay was in the order of 7 – 10 years) - Residential and retail typically come first. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional policy could provide guidance for protecting lands for employment within the SGAs. This is not the traditional employment land protection but rather relates to delivering jobs alongside the development of housing in order to achieve the target ratio of residents and jobs. • Property tax exemption – holding lands for employment uses in Strategic Growth Areas may be a necessary incentive to land owners to be patient. • Build policy to require local planning for the development of space for employment in line with the Growth Plan on employment lands and within Strategic Growth Areas. • Consider the development of a Rural/Agricultural Community Improvement Plan or equivalent, or expand CIP funding to support programs at the local level. Ensure that the land use planning policy framework does not unnecessarily restrict the economic viability of the agricultural sector and that efforts to reduce ‘red tape’ across policy implementation processes are continued. |
| <p>14. Are there other factors, besides those required by the Growth Plan, Regional Official Plan or Integrated Growth Management Strategy Evaluation Framework that Halton Region should consider when evaluating the appropriate location for potential settlement area expansions?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is quite a strict framework already in place between the criteria in the Growth Plan, the Region’s Official Plan as well as the Growth Concepts Evaluation Framework established as part of the IGMS. • Cumulative impact assessment to address the permanent and irreversible loss of prime agricultural lands and the encroachment of non-agricultural uses, supported by comprehensive edge-planning policies that can be implemented as mitigation <u>requirements</u>, through Agricultural Impact Assessments. While it is understood that the PPS and Growth Plan do not require the permanent protection of prime agricultural lands outside of the Greenbelt Area, there are no established quantitative goals as it relates to preserving prime agricultural lands- when is the loss considered “too much”? What is the threshold at which point the |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|---|---|
| | <p>impact ceases to be “minor” and development does not proceed? This issue is further exacerbated by the overall lack of baseline data and comparative measures to qualify the meaning of a “viable” agricultural sector that is sensitive to the local context (beyond Census of Agriculture statistics). Consideration should also be given to opportunities for enhancement and restoration of remaining prime agricultural lands as mitigation measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship between intensification/avoiding settlement area boundary expansions and protecting the agricultural and natural heritage systems should always be re-iterated as a key priority in discussions evaluating growth scenarios. • What about a retrospective approach to considering expansions over a longer time scale? • How is the Region assessing full life cycle? An example could be the City’s Fiscal Impact Study (2017) prepared by Watson and Associates • Any Settlement Area boundary expansions should be done so properly with an emphasis on the best environmental standards such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, efficient buildings, energy use, etc. • Staff recognize that proposed policy changes to the Growth Plan (through Amendment 1) will have an impact on settlement area expansions given that the proposed growth forecasts represent minimums which could result in more land needed to accommodate future growth. |
| <p>15. What factors are important for the Region to consider in setting a minimum Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) density target for Halton Region as whole, and for each of the Local Municipalities? Should the Region use a higher minimum Designated Greenfield Area density target than the 50 residents and jobs per hectare target in the Growth Plan?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region should strive to achieve a higher density target given that the analysis conducted in the preparation of the Growth Scenarios report observed that recent developments in Halton’s newer DGAs significantly exceeds the minimum density target. The Region should continue to build on this success. • Furthermore, recent changes to the Growth Plan resulted in the DGA target applying only to the Community Areas (excluding |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|--|
| | <p>Employment Areas) with additional exclusions or net outs that are not factored into density target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration needs to be given on how employment land employment fits in the bigger picture given that these lands are no longer considered in the DGA target. |
| <p>16. Are there any additional considerations or trends that Halton Region should review in terms of the Regional Urban Structure component of the Regional Official Plan Review?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic-related trends • Office market trends • Transportation and Transit ridership trends impacted by the Covid pandemic. • Working with the Local Municipalities on the Local Frequent Transit Networks. • The Region should clarify any intent to shift into the Region as a transit operator • Consider update to ROP through a series of amendments, rather than with one large amendment. Proceed first with MTSA delineation, followed by the Employment Area to enable the lower tier municipalities to move forward with implementing area specific planning work at the local level. • Fight against planning by numbers - use numbers where you need it and rely on policies otherwise. |
| <p>Appendix C: Proposed Technical Revisions to Halton’s Employment Areas – A. Proposed Revisions to the Employment Areas in Burlington</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review comments previously provided to the Region on the proposed changes. |
| <p>17. The introduction of new sensitive land uses within or adjacent to Employment Areas could disrupt employment lands being used for a full range of business and/or industrial purposes. Are there other land use compatibility considerations that are important when considering where employment conversions should take place to protect existing and planned industry?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Compatibility is an important consideration. Given that the City is nearing build out issues of sensitive uses and employment uses are becoming more prevalent • Transportation issues and connections to major goods moving routes • Growth Plan policies already establish this important principle in developing policy related to employment areas within settlement areas (2.2.5.7) |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Discussion Question | City of Burlington Response |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Prohibiting residential uses and prohibiting or limiting other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to the primary employment use;” • BEDC has highlighted the role of other levels of government that have legislation that we look to for guidance. |
| <p>18. Having appropriate separation distances between employment uses and sensitive land uses (residential, etc.) is important for ensuring land use compatibility. What should be considered when determining an appropriate separation distance?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Region has a very good set of Land Use Compatibility Guidelines that assist in determining appropriate separation distances. There is always a need for that assessment to take place in the context of the specific uses in discussion. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Natural Heritage | |
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| <p>1. As required by the Growth Plan, the new Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan mapping and policies must be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan. Based on options outlined in Section 3.3, what is the best approach in incorporating the NHSGP into the ROP?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 2 seems most favourable- create a single constraint overlay, designate mapped key natural heritage features separately and distinguish any nuanced differences in permissions etc. through both policy and more detailed mapping shown in additional schedules. |
| <p>2. RNHS policies were last updated through ROPA 38. Are the current goals and objectives for the RNHS policies still relevant/appropriate? How can the ROP be revised further to address these goals and objectives?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider stronger policy options to implement objectives relating to enhancement and restoration • Contemplate nuances between urban/rural, greenfield/developed in terms of RNHS goals and objectives and implementing policies (i.e. impacts to study scope and requirements for EIAs, subwatershed studies etc., impacts to buffer requirements) • Consider enhanced recognition of ecosystem services/natural assets provided by the RNHS and climate change mitigation/adaptation • Consider the relationship between cultural heritage landscape objectives and RNHS • “Preserve the aesthetic character of natural features...”, consider incorporating language to reiterate the importance of ecologic/hydrologic function, in addition to aesthetics (which should be secondary) • Consider means to avoid the impact of buffers evolving over time (e.g. lack of disturbance enabling successional growth) and eventually being integrated into a key feature and triggering the application of a new buffer. This is of particular concern in areas where detailed studies have not been conducted on the ground and boundaries are applied based on aerial imagery. How can buffer boundaries be clearly documented and maintained over time? |
| <p>3. Based on the discussion in Section 4.2, to ease the implementation of buffers and vegetation protection zones, should the Region include more detailed policies describing minimum standards?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response to question 2 re: nuances between urban/rural, greenfield/developed (e.g. requiring a ROPA might be too extensive) |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>in some circumstances but would be required frequently if stringent numbers were included in ROP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer to enhance Regional buffer framework rather than incorporating minimum standards into ROP- might end up being too difficult to reach consensus on a buffer that is on the more extensive side. Include a policy in the ROP to enact the framework, rather than incorporating a minimum through policy. • Could also develop policy that simply references the standard buffer (e.g. starts at 30m in x scenario) and will be refined through appropriate study at the time of application. • Supportive of incorporating VPZ requirements as outlined in provincial plans |
| <p>4. Given the policy direction provided by the PPS and Provincial plans, how should policy and mapping address the relationship between natural heritage protection and agriculture outside of the Urban Area or the Natural Heritage System? Options are provided in Section 5.3.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of Option 2: mutually exclusive designations for Prime Agriculture and Key Natural Heritage Features, with remaining NHS shown as constraint overlay • Preference is to avoid scenarios where an underlying designation permits a set of uses that are almost entirely prohibited by an overlay. Reasonable constraints are expected in an overlay but near complete prohibitions make implementation challenging and can be confusing for applicants • Careful consideration must be given to the mapping of key natural features that do not prohibit agriculture (earth science ANSIs), to avoid unintended restrictions • The process for refining mapping that was not determined based on an on-the ground study or in-field observations should be clear and transparent for landowners • Consideration should be given to mapping/policy approaches in the rural vs. urban area, as there are unique factors in each area that make it difficult to apply a singular approach |
| <p>5. The Greenbelt Plan 2017 and Growth Plan 2019 require municipalities to identify Water Resource Systems (WRS) in Official Plans. Based on the two (2) options provided in Section 6.3, how should the WRS be incorporated into the ROP?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City is supportive of Option 1, where RNHS and WRS are combined to the extent possible (i.e. where they overlap), with policies to distinguish slight differences between Key NH Features vs |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>Key Hydrologic Features, and Key Hydrologic Areas mapped separately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to coordinate w/ other municipalities and conservation authorities within the same watersheds re: WRS mapping and policy implementation |
| <p>6. Preserving natural heritage remains a key component of Halton’s planning vision. Should Halton Region develop a Natural Heritage Strategy and what should be included in such a strategy?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City is generally supportive of this concept • Identify critical areas for enhancement and securement efforts within the Region, with concrete/specific recommendations for actions and appropriate funding mechanisms • Opportunities for collaboration with NEC to better achieve the objectives of the world biosphere reserve in partnership with landowners • Explore opportunities to partner with other groups/agencies etc. • Recognize the contributions of rural land owners to preserving and enhancing natural heritage and their continued vital role in stewardship, rather than attributing the majority of the success of the NHS only to restrictive land use policies (which may actually discourage stewardship in some circumstances). Work with land owners to understand what will motivate them to participate as partners in additional stewardship programs and opportunities. • Support farmers in adopting practices and technologies for soil restoration/improvement through re-generative agriculture and explore opportunities to provide compensation for the ecosystem services provided for the greater public benefit (similar to programs such as Alternative Land Use Services) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See “Building Natural Capital (Forests and Agriculture)” section of Corporate Knights 2020 Report: Building Back Better with a Bold Green Recovery ○ This comment also applies to climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, should there be consideration of Regional strategy or action plan |
| <p>7. Should the ROP incorporate objectives and policies to support/recognize the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City is generally supportive of recognizing the importance of the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System but cautions careful consideration (involving program partners, including private land |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>owners) of any approach that would embed components on the strategy/management plans directly in Official Plan policy. Thus far, the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System has been successfully developed as a voluntary partnership, which could be impacted by formal inclusion in the Regional Official Plan.</p> |
| <p>8. The Regional Official Plan is required to conform to applicable Source Protection Plans and must be updated through this ROPR process. What is the best approach to address Drinking Water Source Protection policies and mapping?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of incorporating SPP mapping in ROP, include more generalized policy to reference schedule that will indicate which SPP plan applies to a given area and then refer to that plan for detailed policies |
| <p>9. The ROP is required to conform to the updated Natural Hazard policies in the PPS. What is the best approach to incorporate Natural Hazard policies and mapping?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive of Option 3 • If RNHS contains floodplains, there should be policies to distinguish where the floodplain has actual ecological value/merit that warrants its inclusion in NHS mapping. Separate mapping should also be available to clearly distinguish where natural hazards exist. |
| <p>10. How can Halton Region best support the protection and enhancement of significant woodlands, through land use policy?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Heritage Strategy presents an opportunity to hone in on partnership opportunities to better support landowner stewardship and reflect the greater public benefit that is achieved by individual landowners maintaining these features • See response to question 2 for ecological function over aesthetic value, and also in relation to enhancement and restoration |
| <p>11. Are there any additional considerations or trends the Halton Region should review in terms of the Natural Heritage component of the ROP?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a policy to enable more frequent updates to RNHS mapping (i.e. outside of MCRs) • Review the definition of ‘development’ in the context of triggering various study requirements, such as EIAs, to clarify applicability to various scenarios. The Agricultural community has expressed concerns with study requirements in situations where no planning act application is required- is there a way to provide additional clarity around this issue? |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Rural & Agricultural System | |
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| <p>1. Mapping options A. Should the updated ROP designate prime agricultural areas with a separate and unique land use designation? B. Are there any additional pros and cons that could be identified for any of the options? C. Do you have a preferred mapping option? If so, why?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See answer to NHS discussion paper questions 1 and 4 • Previous direction from Regional Council with respect to the designation of prime agricultural areas should also be noted and considered. |
| <p>2. Agriculture-related uses A. Should the ROP permit the agriculture-related uses as outlined in the Guideline on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas in its entirety? B. What additional conditions or restrictions should be required for any agriculture-related uses? C. Should some uses only be permitted in the Rural Area as opposed to Prime Agricultural Lands?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. B. Provincial guidelines should be encouraged as the common basis/minimum requirement with flexibility for municipalities to refine policies to suit local context • ROP should simply state that these uses shall be permitted and direct local municipalities to implement policies in their OP in a manner that should be consistent with the Provincial guidelines. Regional guidelines for on-farm businesses should be discontinued. • Consideration should be given as to how agriculture-related uses will be implemented for agricultural operations that are considered an <i>existing use</i>- additional restrictions should not apply and these uses should be permitted as long as they meet existing use policy requirements (i.e. expansion/intensification of an existing use), while recognizing that agricultural operations change and evolve constantly over time and must have the flexibility to do so to remain viable. • C. No- this wouldn’t be consistent with Provincial policy |
| <p>3. On-farm diversified uses A. Should the ROP permit on-farm diversified uses as outlined in the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas in its entirety? B. What additional conditions or restrictions should be required for any on-farm diversified uses? C. The Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas limit on-farm diversified uses to no more than 2 percent of the</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial guidelines should be encouraged as the common basis/minimum requirement with flexibility for municipalities to refine policies to suit local context • ROP should simply state that these uses shall be permitted and direct local municipalities to implement policies in their OP in a manner that should be consistent with the Provincial guidelines. Regional guidelines for on-farm businesses should be discontinued. |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| <p>farm property on which the uses are located to a maximum of 1 ha. As well, the gross floor area of buildings used for on-farm diversified uses is limited (e.g. 20 percent of the 2 percent). Are these the appropriate size limitations for Halton farms?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration should be given as to how on-farm diversified uses will be implemented for agricultural operations that are considered an <i>existing use</i>- additional restrictions should not apply and these uses should be permitted as long as they meet existing use policy requirements (i.e. expansion/intensification of an existing use), while recognizing that agricultural operations change and evolve constantly over time and must have the flexibility to do so to remain viable. |
| <p>4. To what extent should the updated ROP permit cemeteries in: A) Urban areas B) Rural areas C) Prime agricultural areas Explain the criteria e.g. factors that are important to you, that should be considered when evaluating cemetery applications for each?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. and B. Policies should be examined for opportunities to better incorporate planning for long-term cemetery needs as a component of complete communities. This should be supported by a cemetery land needs analysis. • C. -Not supportive of locating cemeteries in Prime Agricultural areas • Policies regarding consideration of non-agricultural uses in prime agricultural areas should be strengthened, utilizing Provincial guidelines • It is challenging to comment on how cemeteries should be addressed in rural & urban areas in the absence of a cemetery land needs analysis that complements the IGMS work • Duration of cemeteries (i.e. typically planned for 100 years) is a key consideration in Prime Agricultural areas, given that it will take the Prime Agricultural land out of production permanently (in this case, how would the Prime Agricultural designation be impacted? Since lands cannot be re-designated outside of a settlement area expansion) • In terms of cemeteries as a component of ‘complete communities’, is proximity a factor in application evaluation? I.e. to urban uses and transportation infrastructure • Policies encouraging and supporting the upgrading and renewal of existing cemeteries to extend capacity should be considered • The relationship between cemeteries and the natural heritage system, park lands and public space should also be evaluated to |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>identify innovative or emerging opportunities to address the challenges associated with cemetery demand and limited land supply. For example, cemeteries with multi-use facilities (event space, park space etc.) can provide greater benefit to the community over the long-term, even once the site has reached capacity. Perhaps they could even be encouraged through a Community Improvement Plan.</p> |
| <p>5. Do the AIA policy requirements in the ROP sufficiently protect agricultural operations in the Prime Agricultural Area and Rural Area? If not, what additional requirements do you think are needed?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIA requirements should be streamlined with updated Provincial requirements when they are released. • The need for a separate, Region-specific guidance document should be re-evaluated once the Provincial guidelines are available. • Additional requirements could likely be incorporated via policy, rather than a separate guidance document. • The local municipal role in evaluating AIAs should be clarified and enhanced, particularly for applications where the local municipality is the approval authority (e.g. consents). • Guidance should be refined to allow additional flexibility in scoping study requirements (e.g. acknowledging the differences between a consent application for lot addition vs lot creation). • Policies should be refined to acknowledge the broader concept of the agricultural <i>system</i> based on updated provincial definitions/policies, which extends evaluation beyond just the physical land base and traditional soil-based production. Agricultural buildings and structures should not be viewed as ‘taking land out of production’ and it should be clear that agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses do not require an AIA if established policy requirements are met. • Given the severely limited supply of prime agricultural lands and the numerous constraints to near-urban agriculture, a lack of agricultural infrastructure should not be weighted so heavily as justification for the removal of prime agricultural lands on the basis that ‘investment is low’ and the impacts are ‘minor’. Over the long-term and on a cumulative basis, the impacts of |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>continuous removal of PA lands will not be minor. Both cumulative effects and the temporal scale of impacts should be factored into AIAs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could a funding program be developed utilizing funds secured through mitigation requirements based on Agricultural Impact Assessments? I.e. where prime agricultural lands are permanently taken out of production, could project proponents be required to contribute to a fund for restoration and enhancement of prime agricultural lands to mitigate the impacts of the loss? Similar to how a tree removal by-law works, to ensure continued improvement of forest cover over time. |
| <p>6. Should the requirements for an AIA be included in any other new or existing ROP policies?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City does not have any recommendations at this time and instead recommends developing a means to assess/measure the effectiveness of AIAs as it relates to protecting the agricultural system and to complement the recommendations provided in the City’s response to question 5. • If the impacts are not being assessed against any meaningful baseline data or established goals/targets in relation to agricultural viability, their effectiveness is limited. For example, how many AIAs have been undertaken in Halton Region since ROPA 38? Did any applications fail to proceed as a result of an AIA? What sort of mitigation measures were required? How many hectares of agricultural land were preserved as a result of an AIA? How many hectares of agricultural land were lost despite an AIA? What are the Region’s quantitative and qualitative goals for preserving agricultural lands, and what is threshold at which impacts cease to be ‘minor’? How will we avoid continuous encroachment/fragmentation due to the incremental introduction of non-agricultural uses? • Review the definition of ‘development’ in the context of triggering various study requirements, such as AIAs, to clarify applicability to various scenarios. The Agricultural community has expressed concerns with study requirements in situations where |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>no Planning Act application is required- is there a way to provide additional clarity around this issue?</p> |
| <p>7. Should special needs housing be permitted outside of urban areas and under what conditions?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are generally supportive of special needs housing outside of the urban area where residential uses are permitted (in accordance with provincial policy) provided that health, safety and other reasonable planning standards are met (i.e. adequacy of servicing, provision of parking, etc.). • Discussion should address the distinction between special needs housing as a residential use versus an institutional use, and distinguish what is appropriate between rural areas, rural settlement areas and prime agricultural areas. |
| <p>8. Are there any additional considerations or trends that Halton Region should review in terms of the Rural and Agricultural System component of the ROP?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural policies should clarify the Region’s objectives by providing a clearer explanation of agricultural viability and how it is measured. If the Region includes lot size as a factor in assessing applications in the agricultural area, guidance should be provided around how this is to be evaluated (qualitatively- the City is not recommending that a prescriptive number be introduced), while also acknowledging the unique conditions of near-urban agriculture. • Policies should clarify the concept of taking agricultural land ‘out of production’ to aid in policy implementation. Not all agriculture is soil based and agricultural operations should not be penalized for constructing agricultural buildings/structures or taking advantage of agriculture related and on-farm diversified use permissions, as they are a component of agricultural production and the overall agri-food network. • Careful consideration is required in terms of the full implementation of these policies through related policies and processes (e.g. zoning, site plan control, development charges, taxation, business licensing etc.) • Language around a ‘thriving’ agricultural sector should be adjusted to avoid creating a potentially un-founded sense of viability in the agricultural area that may encourage complacency (e.g. not going beyond meeting basic policy conformity |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>requirements). The agricultural system is characterized in a manner that is similar to the natural heritage system, yet the impact of policy implementation is not the same.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The three maps demonstrating the chronological evolution of the NHS paint a positive picture (though supplementation with data on the level of ecological function/integrity is desirable) yet a similar map for the agricultural system would likely to show a system in perpetual incremental decline. The majority (though not all) of statistics from the Census of Agriculture are also likely to show a general downward trend with no true cap on the loss of agricultural lands due to the lack of permanent protection and overall lack of investment in economic development.• Additional comparative analysis is also desired, i.e. Burlington may have a relatively higher average Gross Farm Receipt value than some other municipalities, but it does not indicate a positive trend if all of the municipalities within the sample have below average Gross Farm Receipts. Another statistic of concern is the average age of farm operators- while the number of farms and hectares of land in production may have somewhat stabilized over time, there is risk of a significant and sharp decline as a vast cohort of farmers reach retirement age in coming years, without succession planning in place to maintain continuity and with land values that prevent transference of ownership to a new generation of farmers. This is further impacted by the impacts of a changing climate and its potential to drastically affect the agricultural sector.• For these reasons, evaluation must also consider and measure against potential future trends, rather than only focusing on past and current information. This would enable goal/target setting that would more accurately reflect the true state of the agricultural system and the impact of policies and would support consistent and transparent decision-making.• This type of comparison requires a great deal of additional context-specific supplementary data to be considered truly |
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Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>meaningful. The protections established in policy are a necessary and positive first step and have certainly enabled the agricultural system to 'survive', but the current ROPR presents an opportunity to build on these protections and develop a more contemporary and adaptive approach that enables the agricultural system to 'thrive'.</p> |
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Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| North Aldershot | |
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| <p>1. Given the environmental and other provincial policy constraints, what are appropriate future land uses that should be permitted in the North Aldershot area?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural uses in keeping with provincial policies, e.g. cemeteries, recreational uses, agricultural/agriculture related/on-farm diversified uses etc., while recognizing unique existing permissions (e.g. minutes of settlement) |
| <p>2. Are there any additional considerations or trends that Halton Region should review in terms of the North Aldershot area review of the ROP?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term viability of inter-municipal servicing agreements (e.g. Bridgeview)• Review previous reports/discussions re: Waterdown Rd/Hwy 403 interchange• Aggregates could be considered |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

| Climate Change | |
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| <p>1. Have you felt the impacts of climate change on your community? What impacts are of most concern to you in the next 20 years?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Future impacts of concern include warmer, wetter and wilder weather which result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increase in the number and length of heat waves and extreme heat events; ○ more frequent intense storms (precipitation) leading to localized flooding; ○ Lake Ontario ice free season extended causing shoreline damage; ○ increased wind gust events; ○ increased number and range of invasive species due to warmer weather impacting both humans (West Nile Virus, Lyme Disease, etc.) and the natural environment (Emerald Ash Borer, etc.). ○ cross-cutting impacts along shoreline of Lake Ontario and Burlington Bay. Examples of warmer, wetter and wilder weather include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dec 2013: Ice storm ▪ Aug 2014: Flooding ▪ High Lake Ontario levels in 2017, 2019 and early 2020 |
| <p>2. How do you think the Regional Official Plan can help Halton respond to climate change? What mitigation and adaptation actions would you like to see embedded in the ROP?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on natural heritage enhancement, valuing ecosystem services, green infrastructure for example urban forestry, stormwater, parks and open space, agriculture and urban agriculture, and green roofs and walls. ● Move away from “balancing all modes” and instead prioritize transit and active transportation. Avoid road widenings for the sole purpose of accommodating single occupancy vehicles. ● Address impacts of increased populations in urban areas including urban heat island (UHI) effect for example more paving means more heat which will intensify with climate change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce UHI though green roofs (multiple benefits), more trees (with space to mature) and natural/native |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| | <p>landscaping with increased consideration for xeriscaping where appropriate to account for decreased rain and more heat in summer, 'green' features throughout urban area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green infrastructure and also help to reduce impacts of more intense and frequent rain events. ● Address equity and access to greenspace ● Implement green building guidelines to incorporate the above (for mitigation and adaptation) ● Encourage passive building design ● Discourage over use of glass in building design as it is inefficient energy wise, does not allow one to 'shelter in place' in case of emergency situation including power outages as the unit will be too hot or too cold in extreme weather events. Also creates waste generation in a few years as glass will have to be replaced. ● Build infrastructure for future climate change scenarios (increased intense rain events and heat) not present or past. ● Encourage urban gardening and local food policies ● Promoting electric vehicle infrastructure for new and emerging sustainable modes of transportation such as e-scooters and e-bikes. |
| <p>3. Halton's population is forecast to grow to one million people and accommodate 470,000 jobs by 2041.</p> <p>What do you think about policies to plan for climate change through more compact urban form and complete communities? In your opinion, are we growing in the right direction?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishing an urban structure to focus growth in strategic areas and create complete communities is supported ● More compact complete communities if planned well will encourage active and sustainable forms of transportation. They will also help to support district energy projects. ● While we need to ensure we plan for more efficient, compact communities to reduce GHGs, we also need to ensure these communities are built to our future climate conditions. ● Reverse trend in closing local schools and moving towards 'mega schools' as this discourages kids to walk/bike to school. ● More comments may be provided pending outcomes of IGMS work |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| <p>4. What do you think the Region should be doing to help you reduce your GHG emissions? For example, if you typically commute by car to work or school every day, what would make you consider taking transit, biking, walking?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional support for local municipal priority transit corridors/grid network for example better alignment between local municipal transit priorities and Regional investment. Same goes for local growth priorities, supporting local urban structure etc. • Inter-municipal alignment/seamless service integration • More flexibility with respect to context-sensitive design of Regional roads, particularly through rural areas and ‘main street’ areas of downtowns etc. • Promote job growth in alignment with transit corridors. • Consider implications on current working from home situation and potential future impacts. For example, supporting co-working spaces in condo buildings. • Need safe routes to cycle (protected lanes); wide sidewalks for walking; safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists across major roadways and highways. Infrastructure provision for scooters and e-bikes should be provided in road allowances and not addressed in parks and trails to avoid conflict of use. • Support for EV charging stations; ensuring new and retrofit buildings have infrastructure for EV charging station. • Plan for future car sharing opportunities. • Consider first and last mile opportunities. • Consider implications of automated vehicles as this could lead to an increase in vehicles on the road and an increase in emissions. |
| <p>5. Do you think the Region should encourage and support local renewable energy sources? If so, what should be considered?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive in principle subject to appropriate study and context of individual projects • Renewable energy implementation is important to offset plans to decarbonize buildings (reducing the use of fossil fuels). • Limit restrictions for solar installations. • Incorporate into sustainable building policies. • Show policy leadership with Regional facilities |
| <p>6. Can you provide examples of opportunities to address climate change as it relates to agriculture that you would like to see in Halton?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local municipalities have the ability to decide what is appropriate for their communities |

Appendix A: City of Burlington Submission on the Regional Official Plan Review Discussion Papers

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| <p>7. Are there any additional opportunities to address climate change related to the Agricultural System?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support agricultural community in on-farm diversification to increase resiliency to the impacts of a changing climate |
| <p>8. According to the PPS, 2020, planning authorities are required to consider the potential impacts of climate change in increasing risks associated with natural hazards (e.g. fires and floods). How can ROP policies be enhanced to address climate change impacts on natural hazards?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in with Conservation Halton etc. Consider current and potential flood zones and prevent building in these zones. Ensure adequate setbacks for properties. • Will the Region be consulting with MNRF with respect to assessing wildland fire risk? • Increase use of green infrastructure to deal with water onsite, such as green roofs, permeable pavers and tree pits. This also contributes to reducing flow and improving water quality. |
| <p>9. Are there additional measures the ROP should include to improve air quality?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See comments re: transportation for questions 2 and 4 • Measures to reduce idling should be uniform and enforceable idling bylaws should be introduced across Region • Ensure existing greenspaces protected and increased where possible especially in urban centres • Maintain and enhance survivability of urban trees • Ensure adequate plans for tree planting and landscaping with all developments particularly in urban centres to help mitigate UHI effect |