Welcome to Burlington’s 2015 – 2040 Strategic Plan

The City of Burlington’s 2015-2040 Strategic Plan is the result of a year-long engagement opportunity that includes input from residents, businesses, community groups, city employees and members of Burlington City Council.

This plan is different from strategic plans created by the city for each term of Council since 1988. This strategic plan takes on the challenging issues of today and tomorrow, seizes current and future opportunities, and helps Burlington prepare for the next 25 years.

This plan is a framework for critical decision-making, and considers how we manage our resources. It encourages a common goal across Burlington in partnership with our community.

During the engagement process, the city heard what is important to the people of Burlington. Here are the four key strategic directions you will learn more about in this Strategic Plan. Burlington is:

- A City that Grows
- A City that Moves
- A Healthy and Greener City
- An Engaging City
Burlington’s Strategic Plan and other Corporate Priorities

The City of Burlington’s 2015 - 2040 Strategic Plan is the city’s guiding document. Here is how other city plans are aligned.

Long-term policy

City of Burlington’s 2015 - 2040 Strategic Plan

Medium-term policy documents

Official Plan (5 – 10 year renewal)

Related plans:
Transportation Master Plan,
Rural and Agricultural Plan,
Community Energy Plan,
Cultural Action Plan and more

Short-term implementation plans
Collectively:
The Corporate Work Plan

The City Manager’s Work Plan

City’s Senior Management Work Plan

City’s Financial Plan
Key Strategic Directions

A City that Grows

>> The City of Burlington is a magnet for talent, good jobs and economic opportunity while having achieved intensification and a balanced, targeted population growth for youth, families, newcomers and seniors.

A City that Moves

>> People and goods move throughout the city more efficiently and safely. A variety of convenient, affordable and green forms of transportation that align with regional patterns are the norm. Walkability within new/transitioning neighbourhoods and the downtown are a reality.

A Healthy and Greener City

>> The City of Burlington is a leader in the stewardship of the environment while encouraging healthy lifestyles.

An Engaging City

>> Community members are engaged, empowered, welcomed and well-served by their city. Culture and community activities thrive, creating a positive sense of place, inclusivity and community.
Key Strategic Impacts

Through the City of Burlington’s 2015-2040 Strategic Plan, we will accomplish these objectives:

**Population Growth**
- Focused and directed growth that will lay the foundation for a larger economy, more jobs, fiscal sustainability, better infrastructure and public transportation.

**Targeted Intensification**
- Higher densities in key intensification areas (including mobility hubs, urban centres, growth corridors and commercial plazas) that will encourage neighbourhoods that are environmentally friendly, infrastructure-efficient, walkable and transit-oriented.

**Economic Growth**
- A clear and focused economic development vision that will help sustain a prosperous and complete city.

**Demographic Growth**
- Attraction of younger people and newcomers to help sustain the fiscal, social and cultural fabric of the city.

**Better Traffic Flows, More Public Transportation and Modal Splits**
- Improved traffic flows within the city and region through improved public transportation, active transit and intensification that allow residents to get where they need to go more quickly and efficiently.

**A Healthier Environment**
- Better environmental outcomes that will improve quality of life, economic competitiveness and will foster civic pride.

**Engaged Residents and an Engaged Community**
- An engaged community where culture, civic activities, neighbourhood initiatives and recreational activities enhance and grow the sense of engagement, community, place and unity.

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**Our Vision**

Where people, nature and business thrive

**Our Values**

Working together,

1. We are caring, friendly and inclusive community
2. We value innovation and trusted partnership
3. We demonstrate respect by being fair and ethical.
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

A City that Grows

>> The City of Burlington is a magnet for talent, good jobs and economic opportunity while having achieved intensification and a balanced, targeted population growth for youth, families, newcomers and seniors.
A City that Grows: Visualizing 2040

**1.1 Promoting Economic Growth:**

1.1.a Local incomes have risen and Burlington continues to be a prosperous city due to the co-ordinated action of the city, region, province, educational institutions and industry.

1.1.b More people who live in Burlington, work in Burlington.

1.1.c Targets for employment lands have been met (15,000 new knowledge-based jobs by 2025) through the creation of an employment lands vision to unite the community, developers and industry. The city, along with other partners, helps with the development of employment lands through timely planning, infrastructure investments and other incentives.

1.1.d Employment lands are connected to the community and region and include transportation links and options that are easy to access and contribute to a sustainable and walkable community.

1.1.e Small businesses contribute the creation of complete neighbourhoods. Commerce aligns with land-use planning goals so that residents are close to goods and services.

1.1.f Innovative, entrepreneurial businesses have settled or developed in Burlington. The city has helped create the technological support, business supports, infrastructure and educational environment to attract startups and growing businesses.

*Complete Neighbourhoods:
Places where residents can easily access necessities, such as housing, employment, food, transportation, recreation and retail.
1.1.g Burlington’s downtown is vibrant and thriving with greater intensification.

1.1.h The City of Burlington’s rural areas will be economically and socially vibrant, producing commodities and providing unique recreational activities for the city.

How will Burlington make this happen?
These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Initiatives:
• Develop a business-friendly environment that attracts investment
• Create and invest in a system that supports the startup and growth of businesses and entrepreneurship.

Progress indicators:
• Labour force by industry
• Percentage of families with low income
• Median household income
• City’s gross domestic product
• Employment and unemployment rates
• Jobs per hectare.
A City that Grows: Visualizing 2040

1.2 • **Intensification:**

1.2.a Growth is being achieved in mixed-use nodes and corridors, including mobility hubs and urban centres.

1.2.b *Mobility hubs are developed near each GO Station and in the downtown.

1.2.c Aging plazas are being redeveloped and transformed into mixed-use neighbourhood hubs.

1.2.d New/transitioning neighbourhoods are being designed to promote easy access to amenities, services and employment areas with more opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transit.

1.2.e Older neighbourhoods are important to the character of Burlington and intensification will be carefully managed to respect this character.

1.2.f Energy-efficient buildings and other onsite sustainable features are the norm, thereby improving Burlington’s environmental footprint. Existing buildings are being renovated to improve efficiency.

1.2.g Intensification is planned so that growth is financially sustainable and supported by appropriate funding and service delivery.

1.2.h Burlington has an urban core that has higher densities, green space and amenities, is culturally active and is home to a mix of residents and businesses.

1.2.i Architecture, sustainable buildings and urban design excellence are being achieved through a commitment to creating public spaces where people can live, work or gather.

1.2.j The city will create and implement an awards program to recognize and celebrate excellence in architecture, urban design and sustainability in all developments.

**How will Burlington make this happen?**

**These are some examples of actions and measures of success:**

**Strategic Initiatives:**

- Through policy, the city will influence the redevelopment of aging plazas that transform them into mixed-use neighbourhood hubs.
- The city will work with Halton Region and other partners to develop a servicing plan for intensification areas.

**Progress Indicators:**

- Percentage of aging commercial plazas that have redeveloped
- Intensification [jobs/people per hectare] for mobility hubs, urban centres, urban corridors, commercial plazas and urban employment areas.
1.3 • Smart Population Growth:

1.3.a Burlington is an inclusive city that has a higher proportion of youth, newcomers and young families and offers a price range and mix of housing choices.

1.3.b Seniors are supported by a strategy that promotes health, recreation, transportation and aging in place.

How will Burlington make this happen?
These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Strategic Initiatives:

• Future development will be higher density, walkable, accessible and transit-oriented. The city will become a leader in walkability scores in the province, and will be fully aligned with provincial strategy and goals.

• The city will prioritize one mobility hub, and will work with partners to ensure resources are available to allow the development to proceed in a timely way. The prioritized hub will be included in the Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan. Stakeholders will be consulted to help gain consensus.

• Within two years, the city will develop a strategy in co-operation with other levels of government to support young families:
  • Housing supply will allow young families and newcomers to locate in Burlington
  • Infrastructure will support the economic, social and community goals of youth, young families and newcomers.

Progress Indicators:

• Walkability score applied to intensification and population growth
• Population by demographics
• Median age
• Immigration numbers and percentages
• Mix of available housing types.
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

A City that Moves

People and goods move throughout the city more efficiently and safely. A variety of convenient, affordable and green forms of transportation that align with regional patterns are the norm. Walkability within new/transitioning neighbourhoods and the downtown are a reality.
A City that Moves: Visualizing 2040

2.1 • Increased Transportation Flows and Connectivity

2.1.a Public transportation systems will have efficient, convenient and usable transportation options within the city and the broader region.

2.1.b Mobility hubs are being developed and supported by intensification and *built forms that allow walkable neighbourhoods to develop. Metrolinx will have worked with the city to ensure the creation of hubs aligns with intensification and built form objectives.

2.1.c A *Complete Streets vision is put in place through a co-ordinated plan, which will include on and off-road bike lanes, sidewalks, multi-use paths and trails and a public transit system that are all well-connected throughout the city.

2.1.d Employment areas are well-served by public transportation and are able to access the regional and provincial transportation network.

2.1.e All levels of government have worked to create a seamless transportation experience.

2.1.f The city worked with Halton Region and the province to address the issues of cut-through traffic.

*Complete Streets: Policy and design approach where streets are planned and designed to allow for safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for everyone using any form of transportation.

*Built Form: Look, style and functionality of buildings and areas.
2.1.g *Walkability has guided the development of new/transitioning neighbourhoods and the downtown so that people rely less on automobiles.

2.1.h Rural areas of Burlington are connected to the city and integrated into transportation planning and investments.

How will Burlington make this happen?
These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Strategic Initiatives:

- The city will prepare master plans for each mobility hub. These plans will consider urban design, land use, servicing, public transportation, parking and parks and open space needs. The city will work with Metrolinx to create hubs that align with intensification and *intra-modal split objectives.

- Future development in key mixed nodes will be higher density, walkable, accessible, and well-serviced by public transportation. The city will become a leader in walkability in the province, and will be fully aligned with provincial strategy and goals.

Progress Indicators:

- Percentage of all trips entering and leaving the city by public transportation
- Community modal split
- Walkability scores
- Number of kilometres of bike lanes, trails and sidewalks
- Connectivity measures: The ability to go from one end of the city to the other on a multi-use trail.

*Walkability: The ability of people to walk to amenities, such as grocery stores, green spaces, health care, fitness and restaurants. Walkability scores rate the ability to do day-to-day activities without a vehicle.

*Modal Split: Proportion of total person trips that uses each of the various modes of transportation such as, public transit, automobile, walking and cycling.
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

A Healthy and Greener City

The City of Burlington is a leader in the stewardship of the environment while encouraging healthy lifestyles.
A Healthy and Greener City: Visualizing 2040

3.1 • Healthy Lifestyles

3.1.a Every resident of Burlington lives within a short distance of parks or green spaces.

3.1.b Parks and green spaces are multi-dimensional. Residents and visitors will be able to use them in a number of ways.

3.1.c Burlington has a number of community gardens and other unique public spaces.

3.1.d The trail system is being linked to the city’s park network, to neighborhoods and to other regional systems, ensuring that the city’s rural area and waterfront are easily accessible.

3.1.e The Bruce Trail is being supported by planning and investments to ensure usability, safety and access.

3.1.f Burlington adopts an appropriate walkability score tool, using it to inform various planning decisions in targeted intensification areas.

3.1.g Rural Burlington is increasing access to parks and amenities, and the city is supporting several initiatives to create unique recreational offerings in the rural area.

3.1.h The city supports Halton Region’s rural strategy, including support for growing food locally.

3.1.i Recreation programs are widely available to all residents through partnerships.

How will Burlington make this happen? These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Strategic Initiatives:
• The city will facilitate the development, through citizen engagement and empowerment, of at least 10 self-sustaining community gardens by 2018
• The city will complete a plan and implement initiatives that creates connectivity of trails and parks
• The city will develop and adopt walkability scores

Progress Indicators:
• Percentage of residents satisfied with Burlington’s parks and other open spaces
• Kilometres of trails connected to parks
• Number of trail access points created.
3.2 • Environmental Leadership

3.2.a The city has a healthy natural heritage system that is protected, conserved and enhanced and forms a fundamental component of the city’s urban and rural areas.

3.2.b The city’s operations are net carbon-neutral.

3.2.c The city’s urban forest and tree canopy has increased and continues to thrive.

3.2.d Burlington’s waterfront continues to be clean, safe and usable. The city takes a leadership position in ensuring the rehabilitation and preservation of the city’s creeks and streams.

3.2.e The city achieves its major goals outlined in the Community Energy Plan, including:
   • Creating leading-edge community engagement in energy initiatives (conservation, energy and security)
   • Improving the energy efficiency of buildings
   • Increasing sustainable local energy generation in Burlington and enhancing reliability
   • Increasing energy efficiency through complete communities
   • Making transportation more efficient.

How will Burlington make this happen?
These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Strategic Initiatives:
• The city will develop and implement a plan to make city operations net carbon-neutral
• The city will update and implement the Community Energy Plan so that it is efficient, resilient and economically viable
• The city will measure and track its urban forest and tree canopy

Progress Indicators:
• Energy metrics are aligned with the Community Energy Plan
• Growth takes place in the urban forest.

*Carbon-neutral: Having a net-zero carbon footprint. Refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount not used.
STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4

An Engaging City

Community members are engaged, empowered, welcomed and well-served by their city. Culture and community activities thrive, creating a positive sense of place, inclusivity and community.
An Engaging City: Visualizing 2040

4.1 • Good Governance

4.1.a The city is known for its good governance through initiatives such as creating a Charter of Good Governance that outlines Burlington’s responsibilities and objectives in the current regional and provincial policy context.

4.1.b Open government is the norm through the use of new technological platforms that drive engagement and good governance. City information is more accessible with an increase in the number of residents who engage with the city.

4.1.c The city continues to balance increased services and investments with the need for fiscal restraint.

4.1.d Burlington is considered a leader on pressing municipal public policy issues.

4.1.e City infrastructure is in good condition and properly maintained.

4.1.f New infrastructure needed to support growth is paid for by development charges.

4.1.g Enhanced performance measurements give the community the ability to track key indicators of the city’s progress.

How will Burlington make this happen?
These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Strategic Initiatives:
• The city will create a Charter of Good Governance. This charter will outline Burlington’s responsibilities, rights and objectives in the current provincial and regional policy-making context
• The city, working with key community partners, will develop a dashboard of metrics that will report on the economic, social and environmental well-being of residents and on community health.

Progress Indicators:
• Percentage of public satisfaction with city programs and services
• Annual policy advocacy report card to support strategic initiatives
• State of city infrastructure indicators, such as pavement quality index and facility condition index.
4.2 • Public Engagement through Culture and Community Activities

4.2.a The city is a hub for public engagement that is built on neighbourhood power and empowered community activities.

4.2.b Newcomers and other groups feel welcomed and at home in Burlington’s inclusive and supportive civic environment. Services are open and accessible to all groups, and the city supports new cultural celebrations and initiatives.

4.2.c Culture is a part of every community, with traditional cultural institutions co-ordinating and reaching out to new communities and to those with diverse interests.

4.2.d New cultural initiatives ensure culture is at the heart of community.

How will Burlington make this happen?
These are some examples of actions and measures of success:

Strategic Initiatives:
- The city will support both the Community Engagement Charter and Cultural Action Plan with funding and resources
- The city will better align strategies, resources and goals of current cultural institutions with broader city objectives, including:
  - Youth and Newcomer Strategy
  - Intensification and mobility hubs.

Progress Indicators:
- Annual attendance at cultural and civic events
- Economic value of cultural events
- Percentage of new neighbourhood initiatives
- Percentage of population reporting a strong sense of belonging in their community.