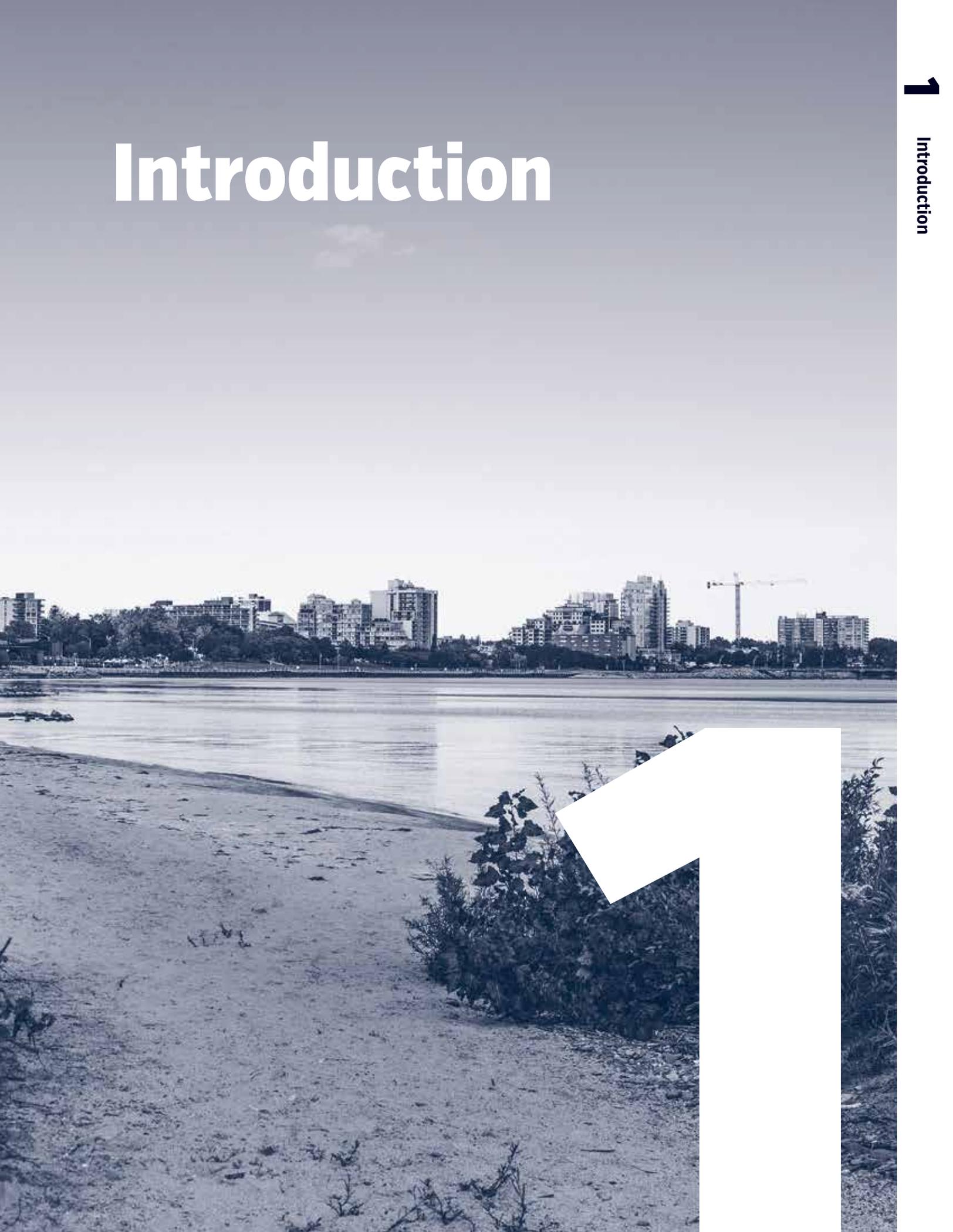


Introduction



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INTRODUCTION

The City of Burlington is at a turning point in its evolution and is transitioning from a suburban to an urban community. The City's growth is shifting from building new greenfield communities to accommodating more residents and jobs within existing areas through *re-development*. This *intensification* is being directed to targeted areas in the City. This is to ensure that denser land uses are carefully co-ordinated with *infrastructure*, either by *encouraging development* in areas that make efficient use of existing or planned *infrastructure*, or to effectively co-ordinate any *infrastructure* enhancements to accommodate future growth. Also, this targeted approach ensures that existing residential neighbourhoods of the City are protected from major change.

The focus on accommodating growth through *intensification* within the existing Urban Area aligns with the City's interest in protecting and strengthening the rural community and in retaining the special character of North Aldershot as a distinct, identifiable area. It supports the protection of agricultural lands and agricultural operations and the protection of natural heritage and water resources in line with the City's Strategic Plan and Provincial plans and Policies.

Provincial plans and policies have directed that Burlington must grow and must grow within the existing Urban Area. The City has developed a new Official Plan in recognition of the challenges and opportunities ahead as it continues to evolve into a complete city. A *complete community* provides for all of the daily needs of its residents, providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, shopping and personal services, housing, recreation and open space.

The Official Plan is a policy document that sets out the City's directions for growth and *development*, and continues the commitment to building a complete City. It was developed through planning analysis and research but also through significant collaboration and dialogue with the community as well as internal and external stakeholders. The Official Plan fuses the local community interests with Regional and Provincial policy direction and articulates the City of Burlington vision to 2031 and beyond. It includes policy to manage physical change in relation to land use and *development*, transportation, *infrastructure*, the natural environment, heritage, parks, and social, economic and environmental *sustainability*.

The Official Plan sets out a clear vision and establishes strategic priorities for *sustainable growth*, *complete communities*, environment and *sustainability*, economic activity, *infrastructure*, design excellence, land uses and public participation. This Plan sets out *development*-ready provisions and guides *development* within certain parameters allowing for private sector flexibility while ensuring the public interest is maintained. The Official Plan also includes criteria

for when and how changes to the Plan are to be considered. At times, refinements to policies of the Plan may be appropriate. The Plan will be used to guide the decision making and approval processes of the City, ensuring that all new *development* contributes to Burlington’s long-term vision.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This document constitutes the Official Plan (the "Plan") for the City of Burlington. The Plan has been prepared and enacted to comply with The Planning Act of Ontario.

The Planning Act defines an Official Plan as a document containing goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage and direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic, built and natural environment of the City. An Official Plan includes a description of the measures and procedures for informing and obtaining the views of the public along with other matters prescribed by The Planning Act.

The purpose of the Plan is to outline a long-term vision of the community and quality of life for Burlington residents through statements of objectives and policies. The Plan provides policy direction to both the public and private sectors on land use, *development* and resource management matters to guide the future planning and development of the City of Burlington towards the desired community vision.

1.2 CONTEXT

Burlington is situated on the western shore of Lake Ontario, adjacent to Hamilton and approximately 70 km west of Toronto, in the urbanized area of Southern Ontario, known as the “Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)”. The GGH is a dynamic and diverse area; one of the fastest growing regions in North America, and the largest urban region in Canada.

The City is one of four Area Municipalities within the Region of Halton. The Regional Municipality of Halton and the Regional Municipalities of Peel, York, and Durham and the cities of Hamilton and Toronto form the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), established by the Provincial government for planning purposes.

The 185 sq km of land within Burlington’s municipal boundary are characterized by the Niagara Escarpment, the Burlington Bay and Lake Ontario shorelines, and a Natural Heritage System comprising numerous creeks and *woodlands*. Around this natural framework, a number of human-made features have come to further

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define the landscape, such as settlement areas, *agricultural* areas, and *infrastructure* including highways, railways, and hydro corridors.

The Official Plan divides the City into three planning areas which each possess a unique combination of these features: the Urban Area, the Rural Area, and North Aldershot, and these constitute 8,747 ha, 8,593 ha and 1,365 ha, respectively. These planning areas are further described in Chapter 2, Sustainable Growth, of this Plan.

Aboriginal peoples inhabited the land that now makes up the City of Burlington long before the arrival of the first European and American Loyalist settlers; Aboriginal peoples have continued to play a role in shaping the City since this time, notably including Joseph Brant's sale of parcels of land to settlers in what is now the Downtown area.

The municipality of Burlington was born of the union of numerous smaller communities. The Town of Burlington, created in 1873 from the villages of Wellington Square and Port Nelson, developed primarily as a residential area through the early 1900s. In 1958, Burlington, Aldershot and Nelson Township were amalgamated and in 1973 the present municipal boundary was established through The Regional Municipality of Halton Act.

In the second half of the 20th century, Burlington experienced tremendous growth and expansion of its urban area, with infill and greenfield development spreading east to Burloak Drive and north of the QEW Highway to Dundas Street.

The development of the Orchard and Alton communities in the early 21st century extended the developed area of the city to its urban boundary. Now with little land left available for greenfield development, the City is transitioning to accommodate future growth predominately through targeted *intensification* of its existing urban area. This new approach to growth will enable the City to protect the character of its Rural and North Aldershot areas while also achieving more sustainable development patterns in its Urban area.

1.3 JURISDICTION

This Official Plan replaces the 1994 Official Plan, as amended, and was prepared to conform to Provincial land use plans and regulations and to the Region of Halton Official Plan and to be consistent with Provincial Policy Statements and Guidelines. Burlington's Official Plan policies reflect the City's individual community interests within the Provincial and Regional planning frameworks. In this manner the Plan may be more restrictive than the policies contained in Provincial and Regional Government planning documents but is not permitted to conflict with these documents.

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External policies and plans that will be referred to in conjunction with any interpretation or amendment of the City of Burlington Official Plan are:

- a) any Provincial Policy Statement issued by the Province of Ontario, as amended from time to time, subject to requirements under The Planning Act;
- b) Provincial Land Use and Transportation Plans, including specifically The Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Provincial Greenbelt Plan (2005), the “Places to Grow” Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006), the Parkway Belt West Plan, the Regional Transportation Plan (The Big Move) and any applicable amendments;
- c) the Region of Halton Official Plan, and any applicable amendments; and
- d) other government agencies' policies and plans, where applicable.

1.4 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Official Plan has also been prepared in alignment with the vision expressed in the 2016 Council Strategic Plan. In 2016, Burlington approved a 2015 - 2040 Strategic Plan that included four key strategic directions. This Official Plan builds upon the following four strategic directions in the context of a statutory land use plan with a planning horizon of 2031:

A CITY THAT GROWS: The City of Burlington attracts talent, good jobs and economic opportunity while having achieved intensification and 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.

1.5 PRINCIPLES

The following principles will guide all land use decision making to achieve *sustainable development* a *complete community* in accordance with the City's four key strategic directions.

1.5.1 A CITY THAT GROWS

- a) Co-ordinates land use and *infrastructure* strategies to achieve *complete* and *sustainable communities* that are attractive and livable;
- b) Maintains the urban boundary and recognizes the distinct role and function of the Urban Area, Rural Area and North Aldershot;
- c) Accommodates population and *employment* growth through *development* and *intensification* within targeted locations of the City's Urban Area;
- d) Provides for the long-term protection of the City's established neighbourhoods, and natural and *cultural heritage resources*;
- e) Promotes design excellence at every scale to create safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant places that foster social interaction and a sense of place;
- f) Grows and invests in a manner that supports the long-term financial *sustainability* and prosperity of a built out city in the context of a two-tier municipality;
- g) Provides for the efficient and financially responsible provision, use and maintenance of *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* to support planned growth;
- h) Ensures *employment* lands are protected over the long term to provide certainty to economic enterprises and promote economic activity and job growth; and
- i) Promotes economic development and competitiveness in all areas of the City by providing for a diverse and appropriate mix and range of *employment* and *institutional uses* to meet long-term needs.

1.5.2 A CITY THAT MOVES

- a) Integrates and prioritizes land use planning and transportation decision making to provide a range of active and *sustainable* transportation choices connecting people, goods and places; and

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- b) Supports land use patterns, densities and quality urban design that encourages travel by walking, cycling and transit.

1.5.3 A HEALTHY AND GREENER CITY

- a) Supports and protects important and unique geographic features of the City including the Lake Ontario waterfront and the Niagara Escarpment;
- b) Protects and strengthens the character of the rural community, protects *Prime Agricultural Areas* and supports and enhances the long term viability of the *Agriculture System*;
- c) Maintains and enhances a healthy *natural environment* including a Natural Heritage System;
- d) Promotes conservation and the responsible and *sustainable* use of natural resources;
- e) Promotes *development* patterns that mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts and achieve *sustainable* community and building design; and
- f) Promotes health, safety and social well-being in the community through access to a wide range of choices in housing, jobs, transportation, health care facilities, parks, green spaces and other public spaces and facilities and amenities for all ages and abilities.

1.5.4 AN ENGAGING CITY

- a) Involves citizens to enhance land use decision making and maintain active and engaged neighbourhoods;
- b) Recognizes the important role that culture, arts and design excellence play in creating a liveable community, as shaped through engagement with citizens; and
- c) Fosters the evolving urban nature and community identity of key areas of the City including the Downtown and Uptown Urban Centres, *Mobility Hubs* and identified *Intensification Areas*.

1.6 PLANNING HORIZON

The Plan will manage and direct the *development* and planning of land uses for a period extending to the year 2031. It is the intent of the Plan to accommodate and to plan for the growth associated with the underlying housing, population and *employment* projections. The planning horizon serves as an appropriate measure of the duration of the Plan and should not be regarded as a specific completion date for its implementation. There are durable elements of the urban system that extend beyond the horizon of the plan. This Plan establishes a long term vision for the urban area of a built out municipality that will grow primarily through *intensification*. Furthermore, the Plan should not be regarded as a static or inflexible document that is resistant to the pressures of economic, social or environmental change during the planning period. The validity and relevance of the Plan will be maintained through a process of monitoring, review and modification, as required.

No by-law may be passed, and no public work undertaken by the City, which does not conform with this Plan. The capital works program and the capital budget are intended to provide the *infrastructure* required to implement the land use vision, objectives and policies of this Plan.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICIAL PLAN

The Official Plan consists of fourteen Chapters and Appendices.

Chapter 1. Introduction provides the vision and overall context within which the objectives and policies of the Official Plan have been prepared.

Chapter 2. Sustainable Growth outlines a land use vision for the Plan and presents the City System, which describes the physical make-up of the City over the long term and provides the comprehensive overall framework to guide growth and *development* over the horizon of the Plan and beyond.

Chapter 3. Complete Communities outlines components of the Plan which contribute to the development of complete communities, including housing, *institutional uses, public service facilities, cultural resources and cultural heritage resources*.

Chapter 4. Environment and Sustainability reflects the City's intention to continue to be a prosperous, liveable and healthy community through the process of Sustainable Development. This includes policies to protect and enhance the Natural Heritage System, *urban forest, and watersheds*, to achieve *sustainable*

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design and environmental *compatibility* and address climate change, contamination and other environmental matters.

Chapter 5. Economic Activity sets out policies for supporting a diverse economy including the protection and enhancement of the City's *employment* lands, which are critical to the long-term economic *sustainability* of the City.

Chapter 6. Infrastructure, Transportation and Utilities contains policies for the planning and delivery of municipal transportation, *infrastructure* and *utilities*, which are critical to the support of the Plan's land use vision and an essential part of a *sustainable* city.

Chapter 7. Design Excellence contains policies designed to achieve a high quality environment, *encourage* innovative design and recognize land use *compatibility* through design.

Chapter 8. Land Use Policies-Urban Area establishes objectives and policies for land use designations shown on the City System and the Urban Area-Land Use Plan. Objectives and policies are presented for Mixed Use Intensification Areas, Employment Lands, Residential Neighbourhood Areas and the Natural Heritage System. Specific Use Policies related to uses in the Urban Area are also included.

Chapter 9. Land Use Policies-Rural Area establishes objectives and policies for major land use designations shown on the City System and the Rural Area Land Use Plan. Objectives and policies are presented for the Rural Community, the Agricultural System, the Natural Heritage System, Mineral Resource Extraction Area and Rural Settlement Area designations.

Chapter 10. Land Use Policies – North Aldershot establishes objectives and policies for major land use designations shown on the City System and North Aldershot Area Land Use Plan. Objectives and policies are presented for Residential Area, Office Area, Environmental Protection Area, Commercial Area, Parkway Belt West Area, Mineral Resource Extraction Area, Recreation/Open Space, Special Study Area and Niagara Escarpment Plan designations.

Chapter 11. Public Participation and Engagement sets out commitments, policies and procedures for public participation and engagement in the planning process.

Chapter 12. Implementation and Interpretation establishes policies affecting the use and *development* of lands in the City under The Planning Act, and monitoring to achieve the stated vision for the City.

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Chapter 13. Definitions contains a glossary of terms used throughout the Plan. These terms are indicated in *italic* type throughout the text of the Plan.

Chapter 14. Schedules and Tables to the Plan includes City System, Urban Structure and Growth Framework Schedules showing major land use activity areas such as Urban, Rural, North Aldershot, Urban Growth Centre and Rural Settlement Areas. These schedules show, in broad terms, the spatial orientation and relationship of various major land use activity areas. Land Use Plans are presented in more detail for the Urban, Rural, and North Aldershot Areas. These schedules show how lands within the major land use activity areas will be developed or maintained. Land use schedules that show the results of *Area-Specific* planning studies are included for Rural Settlement Areas within the Rural Area and for Urban Centres and *Mobility Hubs* within the Urban Area. The City's roadway classification is shown on separate schedules.

Transportation Tables to the Plan also includes tables outlining the function and classification of transportation facilities and road allowance widths.

The Appendices contain additional information, and while they do not constitute the operative part of the Official Plan, they *shall* be applicable in implementing the Plan policies, such as approved Design Guidelines, Secondary and *Area-Specific Plans*, Watershed, Sub-watershed and Water Resource Studies, City policies and guidelines, principles and objectives of Sustainable Development, Conservation Halton Regulation Limit Mapping, former Waste Disposal sites, pipelines and *cultural heritage landscape* study areas.

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