



Planning Overview and Foundations

Integrated Master Plan – Volume 2



Integrated Master Plan Report Outline

The Integrated Master Plan (IMP) for Water, Wastewater, and Transportation is a comprehensive document that describes the planning, evaluation, and decision-making process to develop long-term infrastructure strategies for water, wastewater, and transportation in Halton Region.

The IMP is organized into six volumes:



Volume 1 – Executive Summary

Provides a brief overview of the IMP including the problem and opportunity statement, study purpose, key planning policy and technical considerations, and descriptions of the recommended infrastructure strategies for water, wastewater, and transportation.



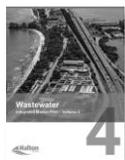
Volume 2 – Planning Overview and Foundations

Outlines the integrated planning framework and methodology used for the IMP. This volume summarizes the study vision, objectives, Municipal Class EA process, key planning policies, growth forecasts, and existing conditions. It provides the foundation for the subsequent volumes.



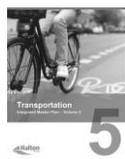
Volume 3 – Water

Provides documentation for the Region’s water system. This volume outlines study objectives, baseline data/performance, methodologies, technical analyses, and evaluation that informed the recommended water servicing strategy and its components.



Volume 4 – Wastewater

Provides documentation for the Region’s wastewater system. This volume outlines study objectives, baseline data/performance, methodologies, technical analyses, and evaluation that informed the recommended wastewater servicing strategy and its components.



Volume 5 – Transportation

Provides documentation for the Region’s transportation infrastructure system. This volume outlines study objectives, baseline data/performance, methodologies, and technical analyses informed the recommended transportation strategy and its components that support all road users including transit, active transportation and auto.



Volume 6 – Consultation and Engagement

Provides documentation of the consultation and engagement process, including notices, presentation materials from Public Information Centres (PICs), and records from workshops with agencies, local municipalities, and other interested parties.

This report is the complete **Volume 2 – Planning Overview and Foundations** which is one of six volumes that together form the complete Integrated Master Plan Report and should be read in conjunction with the other volumes.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANSI	Area of Natural and Scientific Interest
ASP	Archaeological Screening Process
ATMP	Active Transportation Master Plan
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CH	Conservation Halton
COSEWIC	Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
COSSARO	Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario
CVC	Credit Valley Conservation Authority
DC	Development Charge
DFO	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
DMTR	Defining Major Transit Requirements
EA	Environmental Assessment
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESR	Environmental Study Report
GGH	Greater Golden Horseshoe
GHD	General Habitat Description
GRCA	Grand River Conservation Authority
GTHA	Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area
HOV	High Occupancy Vehicle
IGMS	Integrated Growth Management Strategy
IMP	Integrated Master Plan
JBPE	Joint Best Planning Estimates
MBCA	Migratory Birds Convention Act
MCEA	Municipal Class Environmental Assessment
MEA	Municipal Engineers Association
MECP	Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
MMAH	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
MNDMNRF	Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources
MTO	Ministry of Transportation
MTSA	Major Transit Station Areas
NEP	Niagara Escarpment Plan
PPS	Provincial Planning Statement
PSW	Provincially Significant Wetland
QEW	Queen Elizabeth Way
Region	Regional Municipality of Halton
ROP	Regional Official Plan
ROPA 49	Regional Official Plan Amendment 49

RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SAR	Species at Risk
SARA	Species at Risk Act
SWH	Significant Wildlife Habitat
SWHMIST	Significant Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Tool
TMP	Transportation Master Plan
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Master Plan Objectives
 - 1.2 Components of the Integrated Master Plan
 - 1.3 Vision Statement and Considerations
 - 1.4 Problem Opportunity Statement
 - 1.5 Study Area
-

1.0 Introduction

Halton Region has undertaken an Integrated Master Plan (IMP) to develop the next region-wide Water, Wastewater, and Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plans. The outcome of this work is a long-term integrated servicing strategy for Regional infrastructure to accommodate future growth to 2051. This IMP provides the strategies and tools required to meet future water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure needs beyond 2031.

The IMP ensures that water and wastewater infrastructure and services are effectively planned and implemented to maintain appropriate levels of service for residents and businesses as the Region continues to grow. In parallel, the development of a robust multi-modal transportation network supports Halton Region's long-term vision by accommodating increasing travel demand and enhancing connectivity. Together, these infrastructure strategies have been developed to align with local growth priorities and remain flexible to adapt to evolving needs through Halton's Enhanced Growth Monitoring process.

The purpose of Volume 2 is to present the IMP planning framework and methodology, summarizing the study vision and objectives, Municipal Class EA process, relevant planning policies, growth forecasts, and existing conditions. This volume provides the foundation for the subsequent volumes.

1.1 Master Plan Objectives

The key objectives of the IMP are to:

- guide the management and development of the Region's water, wastewater and transportation (including the active transportation network) systems;
- maximize capacity, system flexibility and life expectancy of Regional water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure;
- identify the need, timing and cost of servicing and infrastructure; and,
- provide the strategies and tools required to meet the water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure needs of the community now and in the future.

1.2 Components of the Integrated Master Plan

The IMP is comprised of three (3) key components:

- Water: focuses on the delivery of safe, clean drinking water to homes and businesses within the urban areas.
- Wastewater: addresses the collection and treatment of wastewater from the urban areas before returning the treated water to the environment.
- Transportation: focuses on a Regional transportation network for transit users, active transportation (e.g., pedestrians and cyclists), cars and trucks (including farm vehicles) that accommodates all users and all abilities.

Recognizing that the needs of the communities are changing, the IMP brings together these systems in a coordinated way that allows the Region to evolve and support a dynamic and resilient future.

1.3 Vision Statement and Considerations

The vision statement is a compact, high-level statement that guided the master planning process and informed the considerations developed for the plan. The overarching vision statement of the IMP is:

“Building a safe, equitable and sustainable future for the Region’s Water, Wastewater and Transportation systems through responsible and proactive planning”.

In support of this overarching vision, the IMP also includes two focused vision statements specific to the study components:

The Water and Wastewater vision focuses on:

“Planning for a future Regional water and wastewater system that is safe, efficient, resilient and prioritizes the environment”.

Meanwhile, the Transportation vision focuses on:

“Planning for a future multi-modal Regional transportation system that is safe, continuous, and connected across Halton Region to support all modes of travel, all users and all abilities”.

In addition to the vision statements, key considerations were developed to help guide the IMP decision making process and the development of the infrastructure strategies. The considerations include:

- **Equitable Infrastructure Services** – Provide for water and wastewater services in urban areas and access to multi-modal Regional transportation infrastructure (including active transportation, transit and auto).
- **Safe and Healthy Communities** – Support healthy and active lifestyles and community well-being. For example, the provision of active transportation infrastructure and the provision of safe drinking water.
- **Sustainability** – Balance social, environmental and economic goals to support growth in a sustainable manner.
- **Climate Change** – All phases of Regional water, wastewater and multi-modal transportation infrastructure planning must recognize and incorporate climate change.
- **Communication and Consultation** – Ensure the IMP process and strategies are clearly and openly communicated and consulted with stakeholders.
- **Integration of Planning for Regional Infrastructure** – Ensure a coordinated approach to implementation of Regional water, wastewater, and multi-modal transportation infrastructure.
- **Technical Innovation** – Include innovation in the development of Regional water, wastewater and multi-modal transportation infrastructure strategies.

Together the vision statements and considerations provide a strategic foundation for shaping priorities, evaluating alternative solutions, and making informed decisions throughout the course of the IMP.

1.4 Problem Opportunity Statement

The problem and opportunity statement serves as a foundation for the Master Plan process in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process and helps establish the overall scope of the project. The IMP problem or opportunity statement is defined as follows:

“The Integrated Master Plan has been initiated to update the Region’s long-term servicing strategy and capital implementation plan for Water, Wastewater and Transportation to support future growth to 2051.”

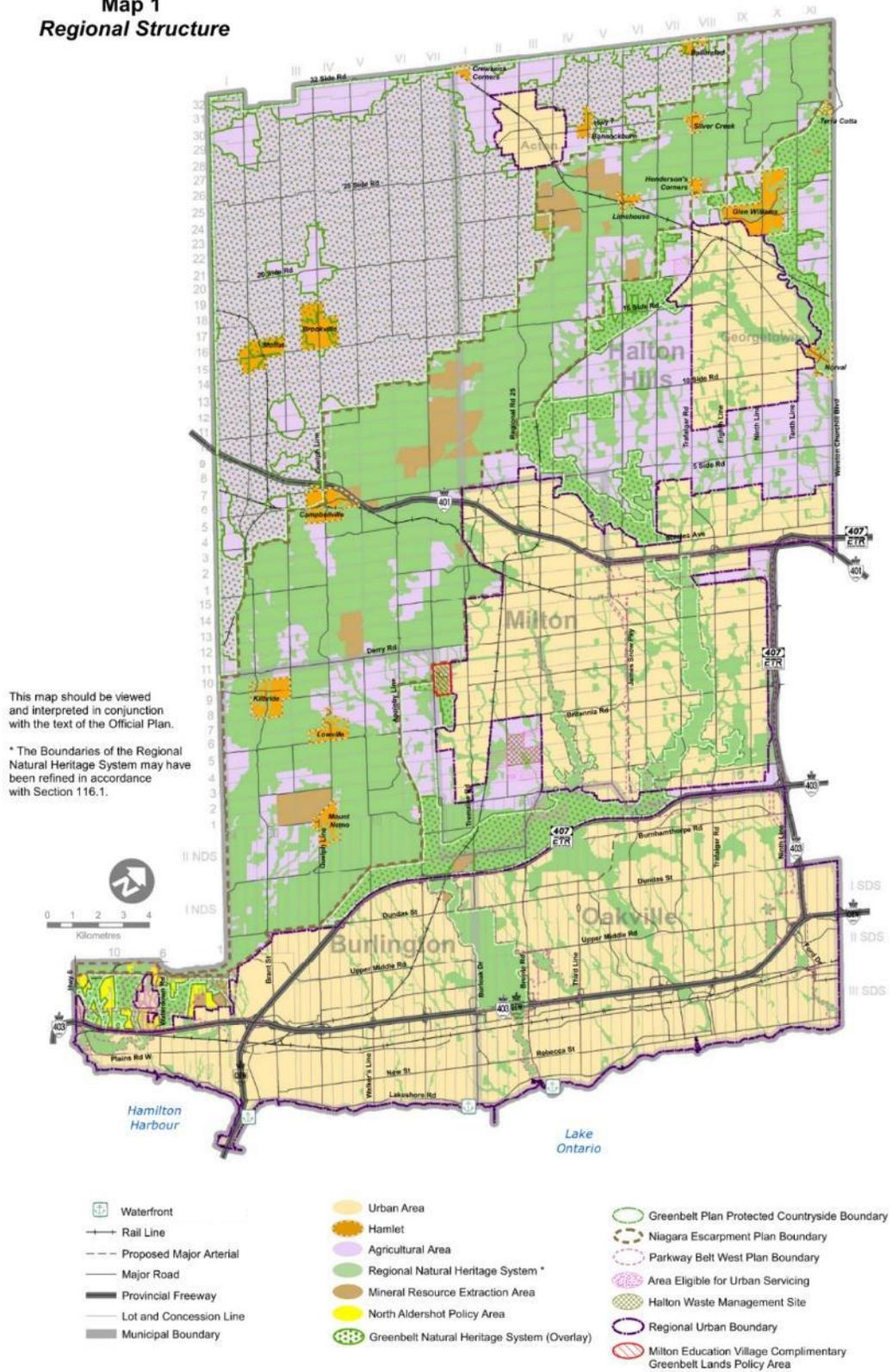
1.5 Study Area

Halton Region is located in southern Ontario and is bordered by the City of Hamilton to the west, Peel Region to the east, Wellington County to the north and Lake Ontario to the south. The Region is comprised of four Local Municipalities including the City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills (including the Communities of Acton and Georgetown), the Town of Milton and the Town of Oakville.

Halton Region covers an area of 966 square kilometres with a population of over 650,000. The Region features a diverse range of urban centres, suburban communities, rural areas, and protected natural landscapes, including parts of the Niagara Escarpment and the Greenbelt, which contribute to its unique environmental and cultural character.

The overall study area can be seen in **Figure 1**.

Map 1 Regional Structure



May 16, 2024

Figure 1 – Halton Region Study Area

2.0 Municipal Planning Process

- 2.1 Municipal Class Environmental Process
 - 2.2 Master Plan Process
 - 2.3 Master Plan Methodology
-

2.0 Master Planning Process

The MCEA process defines master plans as:

“Long range plans which integrate infrastructure requirements for existing and future land use with environmental assessment planning principles. These plans examine an infrastructure system(s) or group of related projects in order to outline a framework for planning for subsequent projects and/or developments.”

This Master Plan was undertaken in accordance with the MCEA process developed by the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) (October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011, 2015, 2023 and 2024), which is an approved process under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act*. The IMP demonstrates the decision-making process of why infrastructure is needed, how the strategies will be implemented including future studies, and the costs associated with the recommendations.

The IMP follows Approach 1 of the MCEA process for Master Plans, which involves completing Preliminary Phases 1 and 2 and documenting the outcomes in a Master Plan. While this approach allows for a high-level assessment of infrastructure needs, more detailed investigations at a project-specific level are required to fulfill the MCEA requirements for the identified Schedule B and C projects including detailed consideration of the natural, social, and cultural environments. As such, the Master Plan will serve as the foundation for, and be used in support of, future studies for Schedule B and C projects.

2.1 Municipal Class Environmental Process

2.1.1 Environmental Assessment Act

Municipal infrastructure projects are subject to the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act (EA Act)*. The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) is responsible for administration of the *EA Act*. The MCEA is an approved self-assessment process under the *EA Act* for a specific group or “class” of projects. Projects are considered approved, subject to compliance with an approved MCEA process. The MCEA applies to municipal infrastructure projects including roads, water and wastewater.

2.1.2 Class Environmental Assessment

“Class” Environmental Assessments (Class EAs) were approved by the Minister of the Environment in 1987 for municipal projects having predictable and mitigable impacts. The MCEA process has been updated over time and most recently in 2023 and 2024. The Class EA approach streamlines the planning and approvals process for municipal projects that are:

- Recurring;
- Similar in nature
- Usually limited in scale;
- Predictable in the range of environmental impacts; and,
- Responsive to mitigation.

The MCEA process, prepared by the Municipal Engineers Association outlines the procedures to be followed to satisfy MCEA requirements for water, wastewater and road projects. The recent 2024 amendments provided updates to water, wastewater and transportation project schedules. The amendment also identifies projects that may be exempt from the Schedule B Class EA process if an Archaeological Screening Process (ASP) is completed, and the site is cleared of any archaeological potential.

The MCEA process includes five phases:

- **Phase 1:** Problem or Opportunity Definition;
- **Phase 2:** Identification and Evaluation of Alternative Solutions to Determine a Preferred Solution while taking input from the public and other stakeholders into consideration;
- **Phase 3:** Examination of Alternative Methods of Implementation of the Preferred Solution while taking input from the public and other stakeholders into consideration;
- **Phase 4:** Documentation of the Class EA process in the form of an Environmental Study Report (ESR) for public review; and,
- **Phase 5:** Implementation and Monitoring.

Public and agency consultation are integral to the MCEA process. Projects subject to the MCEA process are classified depending on the degree of the expected impacts. **Figure 2** illustrates the MCEA planning and design process with the phases required for each schedule.

MUNICIPAL CLASS EA PLANNING AND DESIGN PROCESS NOTE: This flow chart is to be read in conjunction with Part A of the Municipal Class EA

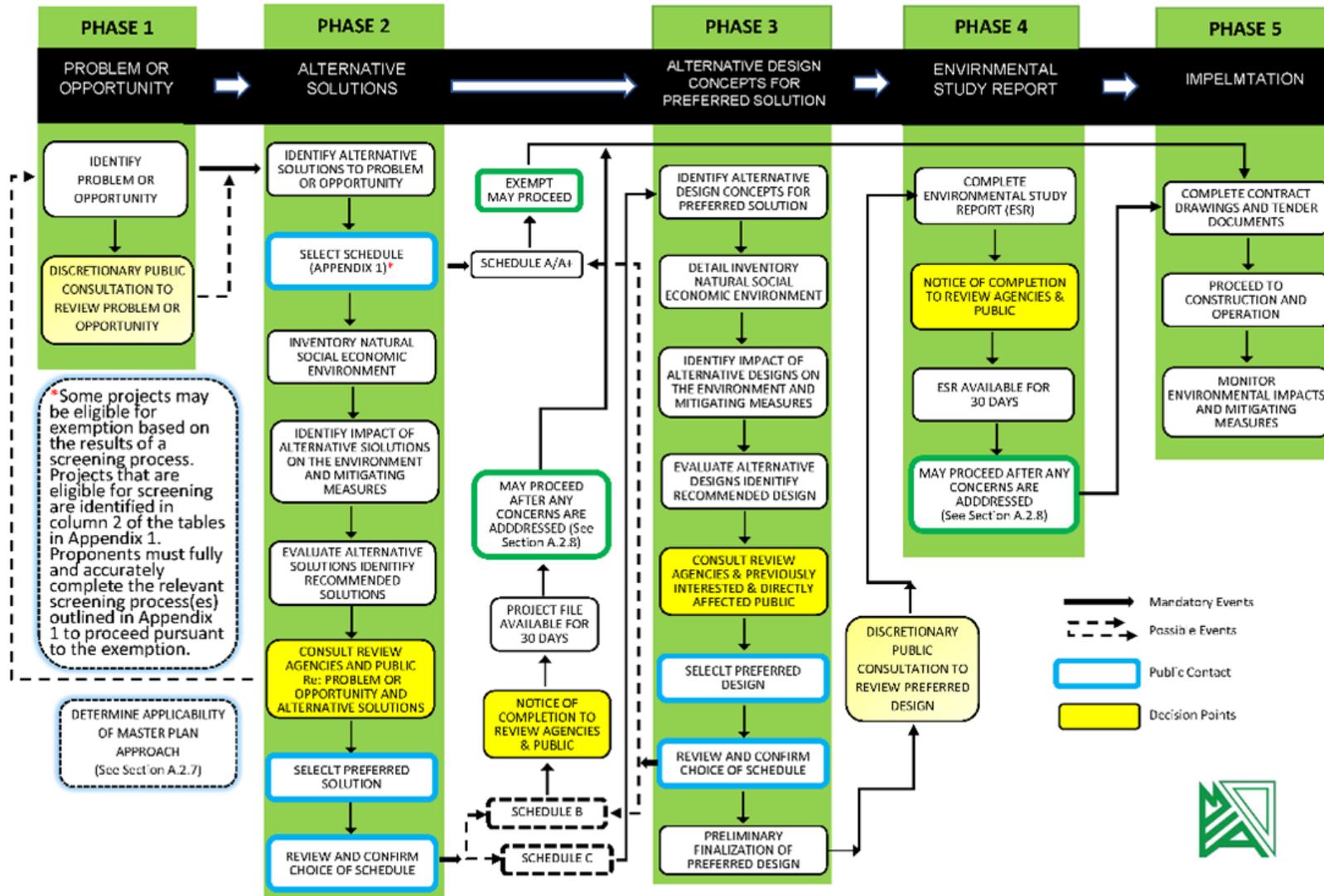


Figure 2 – Municipal Class Environmental Planning and Design Process

2.1.3 Project Schedules

Under the MCEA, projects are classified by schedules based on the potential for environmental impact and the complexity of the undertaking. Each schedule dictates the level of assessment, consultation, and documentation required.

Exempt Projects

As of the 2024 Amendment, many projects previously categorized as Schedule A and A+ are now officially **exempt** from the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*, as they are generally limited in scale and have minimal adverse effects on the environment. These include routine, maintenance, or low-impact work that is small in scale, with predictable and easily manageable impacts.

- **Water Example:** New watermain along existing road allowance or existing utility corridor.
- **Wastewater Example:** Increasing pumping station capacity by upgrading or adding equipment inside an existing building or structure.
- **Road Example:** Construction of sidewalks, multi-purpose paths, or cycling facilities within existing or protected rights-of-way, construction of localized operational improvements at specific locations, and construction of intersections and roundabouts within an existing right-of-way.

Although exempt, proponents must ensure projects comply with all other applicable legislation and municipal standards.

Eligible for Screening to Exempt

Some projects may appear to have a minimal environmental impact but are not automatically exempt. Projects eligible to be screened undergo an Archaeological Screening Process (ASP), outlined in Appendix 1 of the MCEA. The ASP includes First Nations and Indigenous Communities engagement, consultation with Ministries and completing a checklist related to archaeological potential of the proposed locations. If the project passes the screening process, showing no significant impact, they may proceed without undergoing additional EA phases, for example:

- **Water:** Install a new well on an existing municipal well site.
- **Wastewater:** Construct a new pumping station where the facility is not located in or adjacent to a sensitive area.
- **Road:** Construction of underpasses or overpasses for pedestrian, cycling, where the facility is not located in or adjacent to a sensitive area.

If the screening indicates potential for significant effects, the project must follow the full MCEA process as a Schedule B or C project.

Schedule B Projects

Schedule B projects have the potential for moderate environmental impacts and must undergo Phases 1 and 2 of the MCEA process. This includes defining the problem/opportunity, assessing alternative solutions, and engaging with the affected public, Indigenous Communities and relevant review agencies. A Project File Report is prepared and made available for public review. Examples include:

- **Water:** Establish a well at a new municipal well site.
- **Wastewater:** Increasing pumping station capacity where new equipment is located in a new building outside the existing site.
- **Road:** Reconstruction of a water crossing where the reconstructed facility will not be for the same purpose, use, capacity or at the same location

If no objections or Section 16 (formerly Part II) Orders are received, the project may proceed with implementation.

Schedule C Projects

Schedule C projects have the greatest potential for environmental effects and require completion of all five phases of the EA process. These involve extensive evaluation of alternative designs, detailed environmental and technical studies, and significant public consultation. A formal ESR must be prepared and filed for a 30-day public review period. Examples include:

- **Water:** Construction of a new water treatment plant.
- **Wastewater:** Expansion of a wastewater treatment plant beyond its rated capacity.
- **Road:** Construction of a new road or widening of an existing road.

If the ESR receives no unresolved concerns or Section 16 Orders, the project may proceed to implementation.

2.1.4 Public Consultation

Public engagement was completed as part of the Integrated Master Plan including consultation with Regional Council, the Local Municipalities, the public, First Nations and Indigenous Communities, agencies, development industry and other interested parties at key milestones throughout the study.

Communication and consultation have been key elements of this study process. The key objectives of public consultation include:

- providing interested parties with clear, concise information at important stages of the study;

- gathering input from the public, First Nations and Indigenous Communities, agencies, development industry and other interested parties at key milestones; and,
- fulfilling the consultation requirements outlined in the MCEA process.

To meet the consultation requirements and to strengthen the overall MCEA process, consultation included:

- Public Information Centre #1 carried out virtually from November 27, 2023, to January 2, 2024, to seek feedback on the vision and key considerations as well as the opportunities and considerations for development of the infrastructure strategies. The Project website was viewed more than 2,000 times. A Frequently Asked Question response was posted on the project page to respond to inquiries received through Public Information Centre #1, such as protection of the natural environment, supporting active transportation and ensuring strategies are responsive to evolving legislation and technology.
- Public Information Centre #2: carried out virtually from April 10 to May 12, 2025, to present the preliminary preferred strategies. The project website was viewed approximately 2,600 times. A Frequently Asked Question was posted to the Region's website to respond to inquiries received through PIC #2, such as prioritizing infrastructure for transit, cycling and walking, as well as questions related to growth priorities and timing and phasing of infrastructure.
- In January 2025, a workshop was held with Regional Council to provide an overview of the IMP, the study status, the process for development of the infrastructure strategies and the preliminary preferred strategies for growth to 2051 for water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure.
- A second workshop was held for Regional Council in June 2025 to provide a more detailed discussion of the development of the Transportation Master Plan, including the vision, criteria, modelling and infrastructure plan and a summary of input collected during the second Public Information Centre.
- Local Municipalities were engaged as the study progressed to seek input at key milestones to ensure that the IMP reflects their visions and priorities, recognizing that the IMP must be adaptable to potential changes in growth forecasts.
- Technical Agency Committee meetings with Local Municipalities and agencies were held in advance of each Public Information Centre to obtain feedback on the material to be presented.
- First Nations and Indigenous Communities were informed throughout this study by letters and Notices at key study milestones.

The development community was updated at key milestones to keep them informed and to receive feedback. Feedback was obtained through the Public Information Centres and through presentations at the Halton Developers' Liaison Committee and other related meetings.

Further details on the consultation and engagement strategy are available in **Volume 6 – Consultation and Engagement**.

2.2 Master Plan Process

Master Plans typically represent long-term plans that identify strategies and solutions for water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure. The MCEA process for water, wastewater and transportation projects highlights the critical role of master plans in supporting development of a long-term infrastructure strategy.

Master plans differ from project-specific studies in several fundamental aspects, including the following characteristics:

- Master plans are broad in scope and focus on the analysis of a system for the purpose of outlining a framework for the provision of future infrastructure.
- Specific projects recommended in a Master Plan are part of a larger system and are distributed geographically throughout the study area. The implementation of specific projects may occur over an extended time frame.

The IMP process is informed by a combination of technical, community and interested parties' input, which collectively shape the direction and integration of the water, wastewater and transportation strategies.

Technical inputs are essential to ensure the IMP is grounded in data-driven analysis, aligned with broader strategic goals and reflective of current and future servicing needs. The IMP builds on the recommendations of previous Regional Master Plans and utilizes the Joint Best Planning Estimates as a foundation to develop strategies for infrastructure requirements to accommodate future growth from 2031 to 2051. Inputs into the IMP included background studies and plans by the Region, Local Municipalities, as well as adjacent municipalities and other agencies such as the Ministry of Transportation and Metrolinx. Along with new/updated analysis tools, including new water, wastewater and transportation models, these inputs formed a comprehensive and integrated base for understanding and planning infrastructure in Halton Region. The technical elements help establish a foundation that supports the plan's feasibility, consistency with municipal policies and long-term sustainability.

In parallel, community and interested parties' inputs provide insight to the evolving needs of the Halton Region community. These inputs are gathered through engagement with the public, Local Municipalities, review agencies and First Nations and Indigenous Communities. The feedback received offers context specific knowledge, highlights local challenges and priorities, and help identify opportunities that may not be captured through technical analysis alone.

The outputs of this comprehensive process include the IMP document with its recommended actions, as well as a detailed project list outlining associated costs and implementation plans. These outcomes collectively guide strategic infrastructure planning and investment decisions.

2.3 Master Plan Methodology

Determining Halton Region's long-term water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure needs involved a series of tasks and evaluations carried out through the IMP. This master planning approach

was aligned with the MCEA process and supported the overall vision and objectives of the IMP study. The tasks completed as part of this process are included below:

- Establishment of existing conditions and available background information;
- Identification of opportunities and considerations;
- Update of design criteria, levels of services and analysis tools;
- Assessment of existing and future infrastructure capacity;
- Development of evaluation criteria;
- Identification of alternative servicing concepts and strategies;
- Evaluation of alternative servicing concepts and strategies;
- Selection of preferred servicing strategies; and,
- Development of implementation plan and cost estimates.

The identification of preferred servicing strategies through this process does not replace the need for project-specific Municipal Class Environmental Assessments where required.

Figure 3 below outlines the overall process and includes the inputs described above.

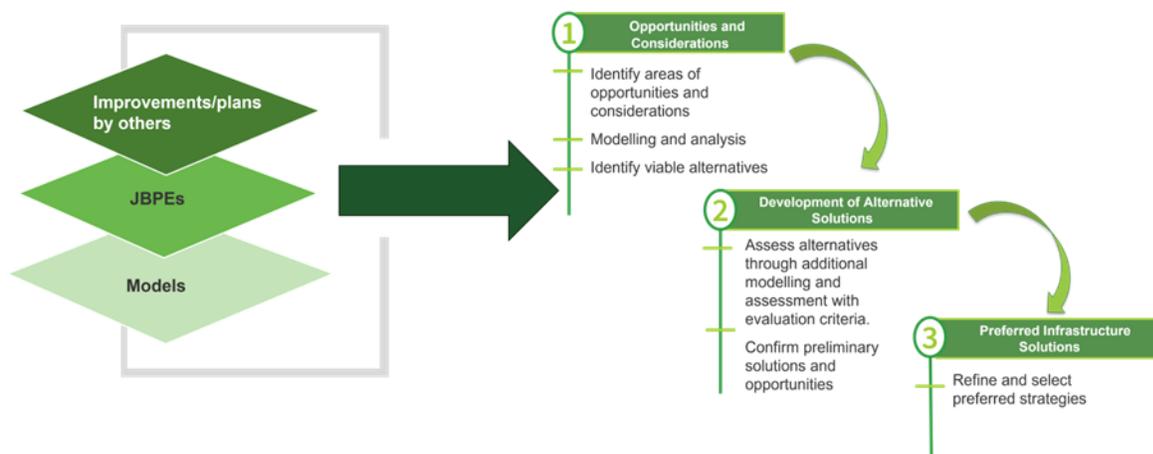


Figure 3 – Process for Development of Preferred Strategy

3.0 Related Studies and Background Information

3.1 Previous Master Plans

3.2 Development Charges Technical Reports



3.0 Related Studies and Background Information

The following sections provide an overview of the key background information considered in developing the preferred strategies. Additional details are available in the water, wastewater and transportation volumes (volumes 3 to 5).

3.1 Previous Master Plans

3.1.1 Sustainable Halton 2011 Water & Wastewater Master Plan

The Sustainable Halton 2011 Water and Wastewater Master Plan served as a framework and vision for the water and wastewater servicing needs within the urban areas of Halton Region to 2031. This study provided the servicing strategies required to meet expected population and employment needs to the year 2031.

3.1.2 Transportation Master Plan to 2031 – The Road to Change (2011)

Halton Region's 2011 Transportation Master Plan, *The Road to Change*, was designed to guide the development of a Regional transportation system that supports the objectives of a sustainable Halton and meet the Region's transportation needs safely, effectively and cost efficiently to 2031. The Plan put forward a vision for transportation planning that accommodates various travel choices and supports a sustainable and multi-modal network.

As the Region continues to grow beyond 2031, the types of mobility options and how people move within and beyond the Region will continue to evolve. It is critical to continue to plan for a multi-modal transportation network that prioritizes infrastructure for transit and active transportation. The IMP builds on the recommendations of the 2011 Transportation Master Plan to guide the Region's transportation vision into the future to 2051 and beyond.

The Region continues to implement improvements from the TMP to 2031, including the following ongoing MCEA studies:

- New North Regional Road Corridor (formerly 5 ½ Line)
- North Halton Coordinated Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study
 - James Snow Parkway (Britannia Road to Highway 401), 4 to 6 lanes
 - Steeles Avenue (Regional Road 25 to Trafalgar Road), 4 to 6 lanes
 - Regional Road 25 from 5 Side Road to 10 Side Road, localized improvements
- Norval West Bypass Transportation Corridor Improvements, new 4 lane corridor from Highway 7 to 10 Side Road
- Regional Road 25 Corridor Study (Speers Road to Derry Road), 4 to 6 lanes
- Trafalgar Road Corridor Study (Highway 407 ETR to Steeles Avenue), 4 to 6 lanes
- James Snow Parkway Extension Addendum (Highway 407 ETR to Britannia Road), new 6 lanes corridor

3.1.3 Active Transportation Master Plan (2015)

The Halton Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) supports the transportation network set out in the 2011 Halton Transportation Master Plan, which includes addressing cycling and walking along Regional roads to fulfill the transportation needs in Halton Region. The ATMP identifies active transportation infrastructure to 2031, with a vision of providing walking and cycling facilities on all Regional roads in urban areas, and paved shoulders on all Regional roads in rural areas. As part of this vision, active transportation infrastructure will be planned, designed and incorporated within roadway resurfacing and capital projects. The IMP updates the recommendations from the 2015 ATMP in consideration of updated guidelines and best practices, including facility type and intersections.

3.2 Development Charges Technical Reports

The 2012, 2017 and 2022 Development Charges (DC) Technical Reports consolidated and updated capital infrastructure requirements originally identified in the 2011 Master Plans for water, wastewater, and transportation.

The 2022 DC Update supported the establishment of the 2022 DC By-law, following a similar approach to the 2012 and 2017 reports. It provided the basis for estimating capital costs and implementation timing for water, wastewater, and transportation projects needed to accommodate population and employment growth between 2022 and 2031. Its objective was to define a region-wide servicing strategy and establish a financial framework to help fund infrastructure such as water supply, wastewater collection, treatment facilities, and transportation infrastructure projects.

4.0 Background and Policy Context

- 4.1 Federal Legislation and Policy
 - 4.2 Provincial Legislation and Policy
 - 4.3 Regional Plans
 - 4.4 Municipal Plans
 - 4.5 Water and Wastewater Legislation and Policy
 - 4.6 Conservation Authorities
-

4.0 Background and Policy Context

All municipalities in Ontario operate within administrative, legislative, and financial frameworks established by senior levels of government. The following section provides an overview of key Federal, Provincial, Regional, and Local plans, policies, and initiatives relevant to the IMP study and for consideration in subsequent project-specific MCEA studies.

4.1 Federal Legislation and Policy

4.1.1 Department of Fisheries and Oceans – Fisheries Act

The *Fisheries Act* is a federal legislation for the protection of fish habitat from biological, physical, or chemical alterations that are harmful and/or destructive. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, in conjunction with various other agencies (Environment Canada, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks) are responsible for the enforcement and management of fisheries resources. Under the *Fisheries Act*, no undertaking or activity, including in-water works, shoreline works, and creek crossings should result in serious harm to fish or fish habitats. Impacts must be avoided or mitigated.

4.1.2 Environment Canada – Migratory Birds Convention Act

The *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (MBCA) was established in 1917 and last amended in 2024, to protect migratory birds, their eggs, and their nests. The MBCA was created to implement the Migratory Birds Convention between Canada and the United States. The Act lists protected families and subfamilies of migratory birds and lays out legislation surrounding activities that may impact migratory birds or nests, including when and where activities may occur.

4.1.3 Environment Canada – Species at Risk Act

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) focuses on restoring and maintaining population of species that are at risk of extinction or extirpation due to human activity such as habitat destruction, hunting, introduction of competing species, or other anthropogenic causes.

Species are designated at risk by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) by using biological information on a species deemed to be in danger. The COSEWIC reviews research information on population and habitat status, trends and threats and applies assessment criteria based on international standards. Once a species is added to Schedule 1 – List of Wildlife Species at Risk, it benefits from legal protection afforded and the mandatory recovery planning required under the Act. While SARA applies to species on federal land, it also applies to species at risk migratory birds under the MBCA and fish anywhere they occur.

4.2 Provincial Legislation and Policy

4.2.1 Provincial Planning Statement

The *2024 Provincial Planning Statement* (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Replacing both the *2020 Provincial Policy Statement* and

A Place to Grow, the 2024 PPS establishes a unified framework while maintaining certain *Growth Plan* policies where referenced in the *Greenbelt Plan*. Municipalities now have greater flexibility to plan for growth based on local conditions, including setting growth targets and delineating Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs). Corridors for infrastructure and transportation must be protected for current and future needs, with development adjacent to these corridors designed to minimize adverse impacts. The Ontario Government's Planning Act, 1990, requires that all planning decisions in the province be consistent with the PPS.

4.2.1.1 Relevant infrastructure policies

The key PPS policies guiding infrastructure planning for water, wastewater and transportation include:

- Infrastructure and public service facilities must be provided efficiently to accommodate projected needs, optimized before expansion, and financially viable over their lifecycle.
- Planning must integrate infrastructure with land use and growth management, leveraging existing systems and encouraging adaptive reuse.
- Infrastructure should support emergency management, protect public health and safety, and promote co-location of facilities for cost-effectiveness.

4.2.1.2 Water and Wastewater Servicing Policies

Section 3.6 in the PPS, highlights the relevant water and wastewater servicing policies, including:

- Services must accommodate growth efficiently, be financially and environmentally sustainable, and align with municipal servicing plans.
- Priority is given to optimizing existing municipal services, promoting water and energy efficiency, and allocating unused capacity to meet housing needs.
- Municipal sewage and water services are the preferred servicing approach for settlement areas to minimize risks to health and the environment.

4.2.1.3 Transportation Planning Policies

Section 3.2 and 3.3 in the PPS, highlights the relevant transportation planning policies, including:

- Transportation systems should be safe, energy efficient, and multi-modal, supporting zero- and low-emission vehicles and improved connectivity.
- Existing infrastructure should be used efficiently, incorporating demand management strategies where feasible.
- Corridors for infrastructure and transportation must be protected for current and future needs, with development adjacent to these corridors designed to minimize adverse impacts.
- Co-location of linear infrastructure is encouraged where appropriate, along with preserving abandoned corridors for compatible uses.

The 2024 PPS emphasizes greater local responsibility in planning while supporting infrastructure investments that align with housing and economic growth goals. Its policies promote sustainable, integrated water, wastewater, and transportation systems that protect environmental and community health.

4.2.2 A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The “*A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*” has been integrated into the new PPS 2024. This new document replaces both the Provincial Policy Statement 2020 and the *Growth Plan*, streamlining land use planning policies to support economic growth, housing supply, and sustainable development.

The PPS 2024 continues to build on the principles of the *Growth Plan*, ensuring that the Greater Golden Horseshoe remains a dynamic and prosperous region while protecting its natural and cultural heritage.

4.2.3 Greenbelt Plan

The *Greenbelt Plan* (2017) remains a key framework for protecting agricultural lands, water resources, and natural areas within the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Recent administrative amendments (August 2024) ensure continued application of relevant Provincial Policy Statement and *Growth Plan* policies, maintaining protections for the Greenbelt following their revocation.

4.2.4 Niagara Escarpment Plan

The *Niagara Escarpment Plan* (NEP) includes a variety of topographic features and land uses extending 725 kilometers from Queenston on the Niagara River to the islands off Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula. Designated a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve in 1990, the Niagara Escarpment is an internationally recognized landform and is the cornerstone of Ontario’s Greenbelt.

The NEP (2017) builds on the 2011 Plan and has been updated to reflect new legislation and to coordinate with the Greenbelt Plan and other provincial land use planning policy documents. The plan serves as a framework of objectives and policies aimed to balance between development, protection and the enjoyment of the Niagara Escarpment and the resources it supports.

Some of the objectives of the NEP include:

- To protect unique ecologic and historic areas;
- To maintain and enhance the quality and character of natural streams and water supplies;
- To ensure that all new development is compatible with the purpose of the Plan; and,
- To support municipalities within the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area in their exercise of the planning functions conferred upon them by the *Planning Act*.

4.2.5 Endangered Species Act

Ontario’s *Endangered Species Act* was enacted in 1971 and was subsequently replaced by the current *Endangered Species Act*, 2007 (ESA), which came into force in 2008. The ESA establishes a framework

for identifying, protecting, and recovering species at risk and their habitats in Ontario. Similar to the federal *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*, the ESA aims to protect plant and animal species that are at risk of extinction or extirpation within the province. The ESA was most recently amended in June 2025, through the *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025*. Future legislative changes may replace the ESA with the Species Conservation Act, 2025, once the Act is proclaimed in force.

Species thought to be at risk in Ontario are initially determined by the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO), and if approved by the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), formerly the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNDMNR), species will be added to the provincial list of endangered and threatened species in compliance with the ESA. The ESA immediately provides habitat protection to all species listed as threatened, endangered or extirpated.

The ESA provides guidance on determining whether anthropogenic activities, such as construction, could impact regulated species and considers biology and behaviour of the species, details of the activity, and how the activity may affect the species' ability to carry out its life processes.

Where applicable lands have potential to interfere with plant and animal species at risk, the ESA policies and regulations must be taken into consideration.

4.2.6 Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (February 2022)

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation's Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, was created to provide a 30-year vision for enhanced mobility across and beyond the Greater Golden Horseshoe Region (refer to Figure 2 and Figure 3). The Plan lays out a framework for a transportation system that provides safe, efficient and convenient options for people and businesses and supports the well-being and economic prosperity of the region into the future. The Plan's vision for 2051 includes infrastructure, service improvements and policies organized under the four inter-related themes of: fighting gridlock and improving road performance; getting people moving on a connected transit system; supporting a more sustainable and resilient region; and efficiently moving goods.

Examples of key transportation improvements include but are not limited to the development of Highway 413 from Highway 400, between King Road and Kirby Road to the 401/407 ETR interchange east of Trafalgar Road and the 407 Transitway (an east-west bus rapid transit corridor parallel to Highway 407). Other improvements including widening of various segments of Highway 401, Highway 403 and QEW throughout Halton Region.



Figure 4 – Map 4 from MTO Connecting the GGH (2022) showing current, planned and conceptual future road infrastructure

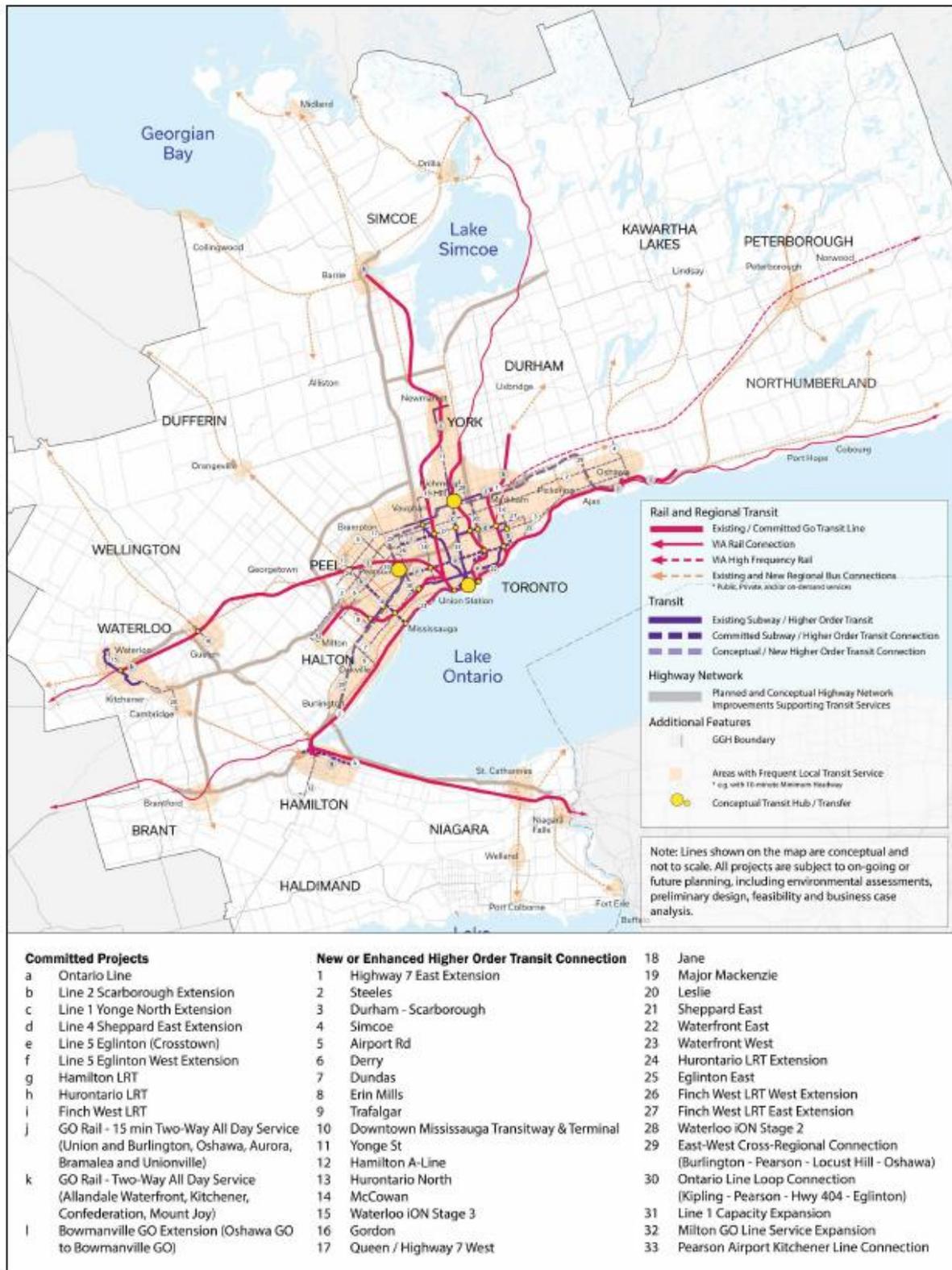


Figure 5 – Map 5 from Connecting the GGH (2022) showing current, planned and conceptual future transit infrastructure and services

4.2.7 The Metrolinx 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

In March 2018, Metrolinx released the 2041 *Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP) for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). The vision of the 2041 RTP is for “a sustainable transportation system that is aligned with land use and supports healthy and complete communities.” Metrolinx is currently undertaking an update to the plan to 2051.

The Plan recommends the development of a Frequent Rapid Transit Network. This network consists of expanded 15-minute GO Rail service, Bus Rapid Transit, Light Rail Transit, and subway projects, as well as a series of Priority Bus Corridors. Several Frequent Rapid Transit Network projects identified in the Metrolinx RTP are located, in whole or in part, in Halton Region.



Figure 6 – Map 6 from the Metrolinx 2041 Regional Transportation Plan, Complete 2041 Frequent Rapid Transit Network

4.3 Regional Plans

4.3.1 Strategic Business Plan

The Halton Region 2023-2026 Strategic Business Plan provides an aligned framework between the Region’s Council priorities, corporate and departmental business planning and processes, and the Region’s Budget and Business Plan. It focuses on what the Halton community prioritizes, while setting the goals and specific actions to achieve the Halton vision and mission to shape the future of the Region. It includes four strategic themes, each with specific objectives and outcomes:

- **Community Well Being:** focuses on collaborating with partners to deliver the programs, services and support that the community needs to be safe and healthy.
- **Infrastructure and Growth:** focuses on ensuring that the necessary infrastructure and services are in place to maintain the high quality of life as the Region continues to grow.
- **Climate Change and the Environment:** focuses on reducing our collective carbon footprint to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- **Excellence in Government:** focuses on our commitment to strong financial management, Truth and Reconciliation and being an employer of choice as well as transforming service delivery.

Together, these themes guide Halton Region’s priorities and actions, ensuring that growth, infrastructure, and services are delivered in a way that reflects community needs and supports a sustainable, prosperous future.

4.3.2 Halton Region Official Plan (2022)

As of July 1, 2024, the Halton Region Official Plan is no longer an official plan for the Regional Municipality of Halton as the *Planning Act* identifies the Region as an “upper-tier municipality without planning responsibilities”. Instead, it is now deemed an official plan of each of the Local Municipalities in Halton (e.g., the Town of Halton Hills) until such time as it is revoked or amended by the respective municipality.

The 2022 Regional Official Plan (ROP) is a land use policy document that guides how Halton Region grows and develops. It includes goals and objectives for new development that reflect the vision of residents and Regional Council. The ROP addresses region-wide issues and provides a consistent vision for land use in the Local Municipalities of Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. Each Local Municipality has an official plan of their own, which will work alongside the adopted ROP until they undertake a review of their official plan.

The ROP sets out Regional structure consisting of systems, land use designations and constraints to development. The ROP also focuses on four thematic areas, these include: planning vision, healthy communities, land stewardship and implementation. As noted above, the ROP, in conjunction with Official Plan of the Local Municipalities, continues to provide direction and high-level guidance for the Region’s growth and development.

4.3.3 Mobility Management Strategy (2017)

Halton Region has developed a Mobility Management Strategy based on the principle of ‘Mobility-as-a-Service.’ This principle recognizes that mobility options are no longer clearly divided between roadway and transit options. In addition, transit options are no longer defined by fixed-route, fixed guideway, or demand-responsive transit-services, but rather, are offered as a menu of travel options provided by both the public and private sector and supported by technology. This Strategy guides the evolution of a region-wide inter- and intra-transportation network to 2041.

The development of a Region-wide Transit Priority Mobility Network is one of the key recommendations of the Mobility Management Strategy study. A network of east/west and north/south Transit Priority Corridors were identified.

4.3.4 Defining Major Transit Requirements in Halton Region (2019)

The Defining Major Transit Requirements (DMTR) in Halton Region study was a continuation and fulfillment of the next steps established through the Mobility Management Strategy in support of the vision for a multi-modal transportation network. The focus of the DMTR was on Regional infrastructure investment to support transit.

As part of the DMTR Study, Preliminary 2031 and 2041 Recommended Transit Priority Corridor Networks – Infrastructure, were identified which served as a key input into the IMP. Table 1 illustrates the types of Transit Priority corridors considered through the DMTR and carried forward to the IMP.

Table 1 – Transit Priority Corridors

	Priority Bus Corridor – Bus in Mixed Traffic with Priority at Intersections	Priority Bus Corridor – Bus in HOV Lane with Priority at Intersections	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor – Bus in Dedicated Lane with Priority at Intersections
FORM			
TYPE	<p>Transit Signal Priority and/ or Queue Jump Lanes give bus priority at intersections.</p> <p>Bus operates in general purpose travel lanes.</p> <p>Can be accommodated in a 4 or 6-lane cross-section.</p>	<p>Transit Signal Priority give bus priority at intersections.</p> <p>Bus operates in curbside HOV lanes.</p> <p>HOV lanes can be for specific days/times (for example peak periods).</p> <p>Typically accommodated within a 6-lane cross-section.</p>	<p>Transit Signal Priority give bus priority at intersections.</p> <p>Bus operates in curbside dedicated bus only lanes.</p> <p>Typically accommodated within a 6-lane cross-section.</p>



4.4 Municipal Plans

4.4.1 Burlington

4.4.1.1 Official Plan

As indicated on the City's website, the City of Burlington is undertaking its Official Plan Targeted Realignment Exercise. This project will advance the policies of the Burlington Official Plan, 2020 (BOP, 2020) by identifying where changes to the Official Plan should be considered to make sure that the Official Plan:

- Responds with a Burlington approach to the recent changes to Legislation, Provincial and Regional Plans, and policies;
- Represents the community and Council's vision for growth; and
- Embeds policies that further the objectives of the City's Strategic Plan, Housing Strategy, Integrated Mobility Plan and other master plans.

More information can be found in the following link: <https://www.burlington.ca/en/planning-and-development/official-plan.aspx>

4.4.1.2 Integrated Mobility Plan (2023)

The Burlington Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) was approved by Burlington City Council on November 14, 2023. The plan is built around eight pillars which, when implemented, will result in a new era of transportation that:

- Provides a wide range of options for getting around regardless of age, means or ability, including walking, cycling, public transit and automobiles;
- Uses compact modes of travel like buses, bicycles and walking to efficiently move larger number of people;
- Is well connected to transportation systems in surrounding regions;
- Offers fast, reliable and more frequent transit; and,
- Features improved facilities and safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

4.4.1.3 Cycling Plan (2020)

The City of Burlington updated its Cycling Plan in 2020. The objective of the City of Burlington Cycling Plan is to realize the City's vision to make cycling a viable and convenient mobility option. The goal is achieved through the development of a grid of safe, well connected, convenient and accessible cycling infrastructure features. The proposed cycling network includes a series of spine network and connector routes throughout the City.

4.4.1.4 Rural Active Transportation Plan (2022)

The City of Burlington released its Rural Active Transportation Plan in November 2022. The Plan provides a framework to support walking and cycling in Burlington's rural areas. It addresses the need for improved and expanded cycling facilities. Recommendations include the expansion of multi-use paths and paved shoulders, safety improvements such as traffic calming and intersection improvements, and increases to

the sidewalk network in rural areas. The Plan also recommends increased wayfinding, trailheads, marketing campaigns, and open road days to encourage active transportation.

4.4.2 Halton Hills

4.4.2.1 Official Plan

The Town of Halton Hills Official Plan was adopted by Town Council in September 2006, approved by Halton Region in March 2008, and consolidated on April 30, 2024. The intent of the Town of Halton Hills Official Plan is to refine and expand upon the policy direction contained within the Regional Official Plan in a manner that reflects the Town's character, role and location within the Region of Halton and the Greater Toronto Area by setting out the Town's policies for growth and development.

The strategic planning process and the Official Plan process have resulted in the development of a Land Use Vision for the future of the Town that is expressed in this Plan. This vision is based on the following planning principles:

- Protect and enhance the natural environment and cultural heritage features of the town;
- Manage growth by directing it to appropriate locations that have access to full urban services;
- Protect and enhance the character of both urban and rural areas in town;
- Protect good agricultural land from incompatible development;
- Provide appropriate municipal services to support an excellent quality of life;
- Foster the development of a prosperous economy by encouraging appropriate economic development in the best locations; and,
- Deliver responsive and effective local government.

The Town has initiated the development of a new Official Plan to shape the future growth and development of Halton Hills. More information can be found in the link below.

<https://www.haltonhills.ca/en/residents/official-plan-review.aspx>

4.4.2.2 Transportation Master Plan (2011)

The Town of Halton Hills Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was approved by Council in 2011. This plan provides strategies, policies and tools required to meet transportation needs in a safe, effective and cost-efficient process. The TMP identifies a vision for a transportation system that accommodates the needs of existing and future developments. Regional arterial roads will continue to provide intra-Regional travel between communities and support improvements to the local road infrastructure. As of 2025, the Town of Halton Hills has begun the process of updating its Transportation Master Plan.

4.4.2.3 Active Transportation Plan (2019)

Town of Halton Hills developed its first Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) in 2019. This Plan lays out the foundation for cycling (both on and off road) within the Town and details a trails strategy. Recommendations are grouped around the themes of climate, culture, growth, sustainability, and finances. As part of the Town's Transportation Master Plan update, the Town will be reviewing and updating its ATP.

4.4.3 Milton

4.4.3.1 Official Plan

The Town of Milton's Official Plan was first developed in 2016 and consolidated in December 2024. As part of the ongoing *We Make Milton Official Plan Review*, Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 92 was adopted by Town Council on March 17, 2025, and subsequently approved by the Province, coming into effect on December 20, 2025. OPA 92 provides updated policy direction to guide growth and development within the Town to the year 2051.

The Official Plan establishes the policy framework to guide land use planning and development within Milton, with the objective of maintaining a strong sense of community and the neighbourly environment that characterizes the Town. The plan promotes:

- A diverse and vibrant economy.
- A safe, liveable and healthy community.
- A Town with heritage, identity and character.
- Sustainable development.
- Conservation, stewardship and enhancement of natural areas.
- Efficient land use.
- Community design that puts people first.
- Responsible, cost-effective local government and services.

Additional information regarding the Town of Milton Official Plan can be found in the link below.

<https://www.milton.ca/en/business-and-development/official-plan.aspx>

4.4.3.2 Transportation Master Plan (2024)

The Town of Milton Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was developed in 2018 and updated in November 2024. The update aligns the Town's transportation policy with its growth plan and priorities. The TMP focuses on a balanced approach to transportation, offering a multi-modal network that includes transit, active transportation and other transportation demand management measures to provide viable travel alternatives to the automobile. The TMP makes recommendations around such things as the implementation and phasing of the Town's active transportation network, the expansion of the town's transit network, as well as improvements to the road network, goods movement, and transportation demand management.

4.4.3.3 Transit Master Plan Update (2024)

The Milton Transit Five-Year Service Plan and Master Plan Update was adopted by Town Council in June 2024. The Update, which builds upon the previous 2019-2023 Milton Transit Service Review and Master Plan Update, sets out a strategic framework to guide transit planning and operations for 2024-2029 and beyond. The Update is designed to ensure local transit grows in line with anticipated population growth. Recommendations include the enhancement of Milton Transit's network and services, a transit investment strategy aimed at expanding the current system by 150 percent, and a Zero-Emission Bus Feasibility Strategy and Fleet Transition plan to support fleet electrification. The Update also highlights

program service requirements for the development of the Transit Operations Facility, currently in progress.

4.4.4 Oakville

4.4.4.1 Official Plan

Following the 2024 changes to the planning framework, the Town of Oakville operates under three Official Plans – the Livable Oakville Official Plan, the North Oakville Secondary Plans and the Halton Region Official Plan. The Livable Oakville Plan, adopted in 2009, establishes the policies and land use designations that implement the Town’s vision “to be the most livable Town in Canada”. The Livable Oakville Plan applies to all lands within the Town except the North Oakville East and West Secondary Plan areas. The Livable Oakville Plan contains goals, objectives and policies established primarily to manage direct physical change and the effects on the social, economic, and natural environment of the municipality. The Plan:

- Establishes the desired land use pattern for lands within the Town, south of Dundas Street and north of Highway 407, to 2031;
- Coordinates land use and infrastructure requirements to ensure that the anticipated growth can be accommodated;
- Establishes a framework and policy context for decision making that provides certainty for the planning process; and,
- Conforms or does not conflict with provincial plans, has regard to matters of provincial interest, and is consistent with provincial planning statements.

The Town of Oakville is currently consolidating its Official Plans, updating them to be consistent with provincial legislation and the Regional Official Plan. More information can be found in the link below.

<https://www.oakville.ca/business-development/planning-development/official-plan/>

4.4.4.2 Transportation Master Plan (2025)

The Town of Oakville has completed a new Transportation Master Plan that will serve as an update to the 2018 Transportation Master Plan – Switching Gears, as well as the 2017 Active Transportation Master Plan. The consolidated update focuses on building walkable, bikeable and transit-friendly neighbourhoods.

The update takes a multi-modal “Complete Streets” approach to transportation planning that promotes more sustainable modes of transportation. The new TMP update, which was approved by Council on October 6, 2025, includes recommendations that will improve travel within neighbourhoods, between neighbourhoods, and travel to the broader regions.

4.5 Water and Wastewater Legislation and Policy

Understanding water and wastewater legislation and policies is essential for guiding the master planning process and supporting the identification and evaluation of servicing strategies.

The Region’s overall goal is to develop and maintain efficient, reliable, sustainable, and well-managed water and wastewater systems that deliver high-quality service to the community.

To support this goal, the servicing legislation and policies are listed below:

- Sustainable Water and Sewage System Act
- Water Opportunities and Conservation Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Clean Water and Source Protection Act
- CCCME Strategic Vision for Water
- Canada-wide Strategy for Management of Municipal Wastewater Effluent
- Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations
- Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks Procedure F-5-1

4.6 Conservation Authorities

Conservation Authorities are local agencies that protect and manage water and other natural resources at the watershed level. There are three Conservation Authorities within Halton Region, including Conservation Halton (CH), Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC) and Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA).

Ontario’s conservation authorities operate under the Conservation Authorities Act, which is administered by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) provides provincial oversight related to natural hazard management responsibilities.

The legislative mandate of the conservation authority, as set out in Section 20 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, is to establish and undertake programs designed to further the conservation, restoration, development, and management of natural resources in watersheds in Ontario.

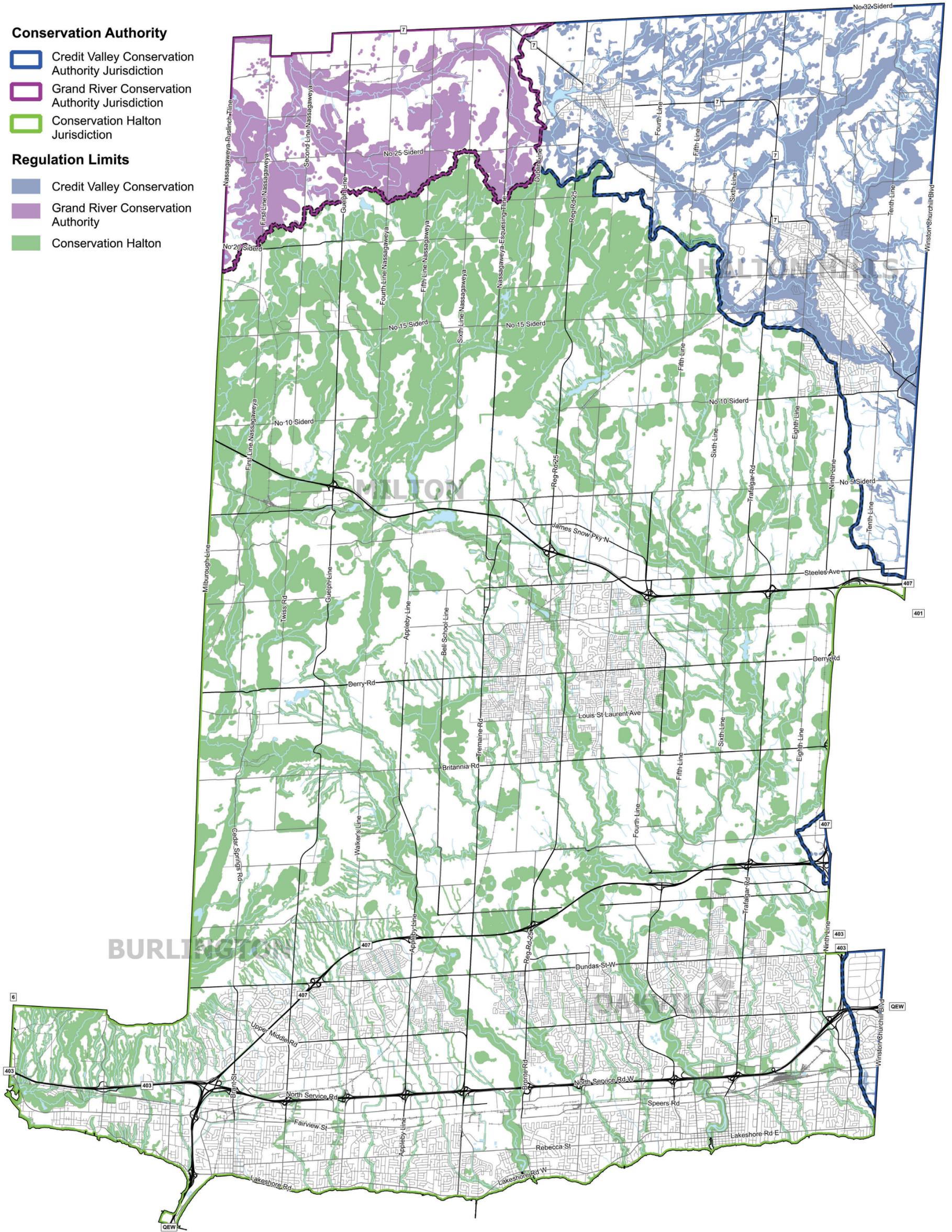
Under Ontario Regulation 686/21: Mandatory Programs and Services, conservation authorities are required to deliver programs related to understanding and managing natural hazard risks, including flooding and erosion, and to support the prevention and mitigation of these risks. Conservation authorities also have provincially delegated responsibilities to review development proposals and planning applications on behalf of the Province to ensure consistency with the natural hazard policies of the *Provincial Planning Statement*, including Sections 5.1.1 to 5.2.8 related to protecting public health and safety.

Legislative changes introduced through the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23)* modified aspects of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and related regulations. These changes clarified the roles of conservation authorities in development review, natural hazard management, and permit approvals.

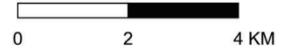
Conservation authorities regulate development and certain activities within regulated areas through permits issued under the *Conservation Authorities Act* and *Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits*, which came into effect in 2024. These regulations establish the framework for permitting activities within regulated areas and are intended to protect people and property from risks associated with natural hazards such as flooding, erosion, unstable slopes, and other hazards.

Regional infrastructure projects identified through the IMP may require permits or review from the applicable conservation authority where works occur within regulated areas or may affect natural hazards or water resources.

- Conservation Authority**
- Credit Valley Conservation Authority Jurisdiction
 - Grand River Conservation Authority Jurisdiction
 - Conservation Halton Jurisdiction
- Regulation Limits**
- Credit Valley Conservation
 - Grand River Conservation Authority
 - Conservation Halton



Conservation Authority



5.0 Population and Employment Planning Forecasts



5.0 Population and Employment Planning Forecasts

Following the completion of Halton’s Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) and the Regional Official Plan Amendment 49 (ROPA 49), the Region developed the comprehensive Joint Best Planning Estimates (JBPE) update for population and employment in the fall of 2023 with the Local Municipalities. The JBPEs are essential input for planning and delivering Regional infrastructure, ensuring services like water, wastewater and transportation can accommodate future growth.

The 2023 JBPEs version 3.032 to the year 2051, align with the new housing targets set out in Bill 23. The updated forecasts consider new direction from the Province of Ontario as well as recently approved growth areas. As a result of the new housing targets, the JBPEs anticipate higher population growth over the next decade across all of the Halton Region’s Area Municipalities than the initial IGMS and ROPA 49.

As the Region’s population and employment base is forecasted to increase between 2031 and 2051, the IMP builds on the long-term servicing strategies previously outlined in the 2011 water, wastewater and transportation master plans to reflect the population and employment growth projections to 2051.

Table 2 highlights the residential population forecasts to the year 2051 as per the JBPEs, and **Table 3** highlights the employment population forecasts to the year 2051 as per the JBPEs.

Table 2 – Residential Population Forecasts

Municipality	2051*
Burlington	324,000
Halton Hills	167,000
Milton	455,000
Oakville	443,000
Total	1,389,000

* The 2051 forecasts are based on the Minister’s decision on ROPA 49 through Bill 162, Get It Done Act, 2024, which received Royal Assent on May 16, 2024, as well as Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, which received Royal Assent on November 28, 2022.

Table 3 – Employment Population Forecasts

Municipality	2051*
Burlington	150,000
Halton Hills	87,000
Milton	175,000
Oakville	212,000
Total	624,000

** The 2051 forecasts are based on the Minister’s decision on ROPA 49 through Bill 162, Get It Done Act, 2024, which received Royal Assent on May 16, 2024, as well as Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, which received Royal Assent on November 28, 2022.*

6.0 Existing Conditions

- 6.1 Natural Environment
 - 6.2 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment
 - 6.3 Existing Water System
 - 6.4 Existing Wastewater System
 - 6.5 Existing Transportation System
-

6.0 Existing Conditions

The natural, socio-economic, archaeological and cultural environments were reviewed to identify components that could be affected by the IMP. The following sections summarize the existing conditions within the study area, including an overview of the current water, wastewater, and transportation systems.

Further details on the existing water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure systems can be found in volumes 3 to 5.

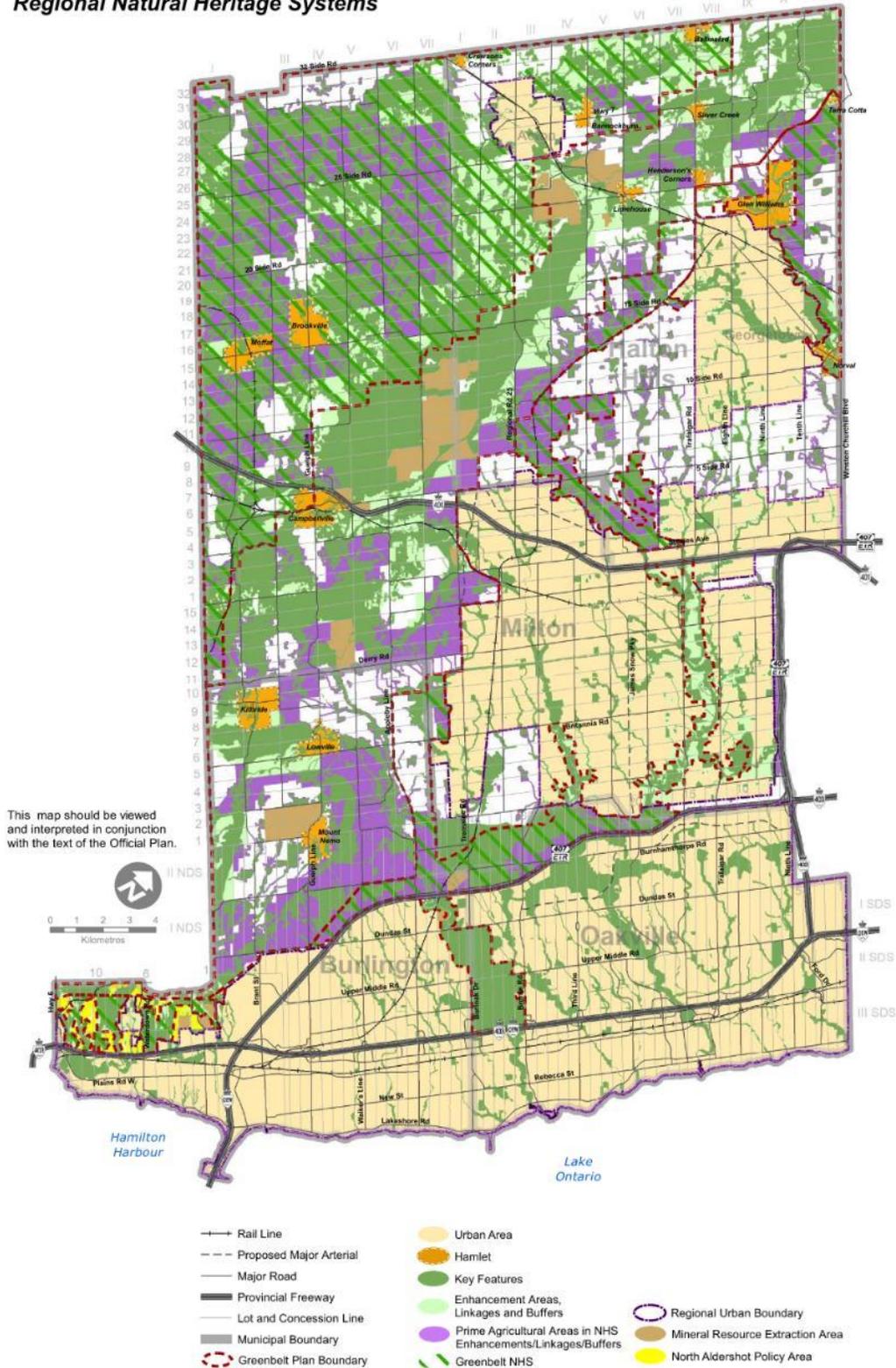
6.1 Natural Environment

Key natural areas and major landscape features in Halton include the Greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment, Lake Ontario, and numerous streams, creeks, rivers, and other significant natural areas. In addition, the Region contains Key Features within the Greenbelt and the Regional Natural Heritage System, which provide important ecological functions and contribute to the overall natural heritage framework. These features are identified in the Regional Official Plan and are illustrated on **Figure 8**, which provides spatial context for the natural environment within the study area.

This section provides an overview of the key natural environment features within the study area. The natural environment review has been undertaken at a Master Plan level, consistent with the requirements of the MCEA Master Plan process. It offers a high-level assessment of existing conditions, opportunities, and constraints, with the understanding that more detailed fieldwork and technical studies will be required through future Class EA projects, where applicable. As such, the findings presented here are intended to inform the IMP recommendations, while recognizing that project-specific investigations may be necessary to confirm and refine these outcomes.

As outlined in Section 4.3.2, recent changes to the Planning Act (effective July 1, 2024) have identified Halton Region as an upper-tier municipality without planning responsibilities. The Regional Official Plan is no longer an official plan for the Regional Municipality of Halton. Instead, it has been deemed the official plan of each lower-tier municipality until amended or revoked by the respective municipality. Accordingly, the analysis in this section references the policies of the in-effect Regional Official Plan while acknowledging that Local Municipalities may update their planning frameworks over time, and these updates should be considered during future stages of project planning and implementation.

Map 1G
Key Features within the Greenbelt and
Regional Natural Heritage Systems



May 16, 2024

Figure 8 – Natural Environment - Key Features within the Greenbelt and Regional Natural Heritage System

6.1.1 Watersheds

Watersheds are contiguous areas of land where all rainfall and snowmelt drain into the same body of water. The term is defined in the PPS (MMAH 2024) and the *Conservation Authorities Act* (Ontario 1990a) as “an area that is drained by a river and its tributaries”. Watersheds can be defined at various geographic scales and provide the basis for the jurisdictional boundaries of Ontario’s conservation authorities.

Halton Region is situated within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River primary watershed and includes areas within two secondary watersheds (Northern Lake Ontario and Niagara River; Lake Ontario), two tertiary watersheds (Sixteen Mile Creek-Credit River; West Lake Ontario Shoreline), and six smaller quaternary watersheds.

The IMP recognizes the importance of watershed-scale planning in managing growth-related pressures on natural systems. Although this Master Plan does not include project-specific impact assessments, future Schedule B and C projects will require detailed investigations that consider potential cumulative and downstream effects. This will include coordination with the appropriate Conservation Authorities to ensure consistency with their regulatory and advisory roles.

6.1.2 Wetlands

Wetlands are transition zones between terrestrial and aquatic systems and provide a range of ecological and hydrological functions that support biodiversity, improve water quality, store floodwaters, and contribute to climate resilience. These functions offer environmental, social, and economic benefits. In southern Ontario, significant wetland loss has occurred over recent decades, prompting stronger protections through provincial policy and legislation.

Within the IMP study area, wetlands are found throughout the landscape, including along watercourse corridors, within wooded areas, and in depressional features in agricultural lands. Many of these wetlands have been evaluated and designated as Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs), while others remain unevaluated. Wetland mapping and evaluations maintained by conservation authorities and other agencies may be updated from time to time as new information becomes available. As such, the most current mapping available from the applicable conservation authority should be consulted during future planning and design stages, except where more detailed site-specific hazard delineations are required.

The IMP recognizes the importance of maintaining and protecting wetlands as part of an integrated approach to environmental stewardship and sustainable servicing. More detailed investigations will be required for identified Schedule B and C projects to confirm the presence, extent, and significance of wetlands, and to determine appropriate mitigation and avoidance measures in consultation with relevant agencies, where applicable.

6.1.3 Surface Water Features

Surface water features include intermittent and permanent streams and rivers (i.e., watercourses), inland lakes and waterbodies, seepage areas and springs, and headwater drainage features (HDFs). These features form part of broader watershed systems and often intersect with wetlands and other sensitive natural heritage features. Together with groundwater features and their associated ecological functions,

they contribute to the Water Resource System identified in the Regional Official Plan and the Greenbelt Plan.

Several watercourses and waterbodies are located within the IMP study area, falling within the Sixteen Mile Creek, Bronte Creek, Credit River, and Burlington Canal–Hamilton Harbour watersheds. Notably, Fairy Lake is a named waterbody within the study area, and several unnamed waterbodies have also been identified. These may include ponds on agricultural lands or intermittent areas of standing water associated with seasonal runoff or drainage features.

The IMP considered the location and function of surface water features when identifying high-level servicing strategies, with the objective of avoiding potential adverse impacts. Further detailed investigations will be required during the planning and design of Schedule B and C projects to confirm feature boundaries, assess potential impacts, and determine appropriate mitigation measures in consultation with relevant agencies.

6.1.4 Groundwater Features

Groundwater features include significant groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers, and their associated ecological functions. They also encompass source protection elements such as Municipal Wellhead Protection Areas, as identified in the Regional Official Plan and source water protection plans. Collectively, groundwater and surface water features and their associated functions comprise the Water Resource System, as defined in both the ROP and the Greenbelt Plan.

The IMP study area contains several areas identified as highly vulnerable aquifers and groundwater recharge areas, which play a critical role in supporting municipal water supply and maintaining ecological integrity. The IMP considered the location and sensitivity of these groundwater features during the development of high-level water/wastewater servicing strategies.

Further detailed investigations will be required for identified Schedule B and C projects to assess site-specific conditions, ensure protection of vulnerable groundwater systems, and address applicable source water protection policies.

6.1.5 Fish Habitat

Fish habitat includes aquatic environments that directly or indirectly support the life processes of fish, such as spawning, rearing, nursery, foraging, and migration. The Regional Official Plan defines fish habitat as areas that support these critical functions, while the *Fisheries Act* defines “fish” broadly to include all fish, shellfish, crustaceans, and marine animals.

Within the IMP study area, fish habitat was identified based on available watercourse mapping, species occurrence data from the MNR’s Fish ON-Line database, Land Information Ontario (LIO), and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Species at Risk (SAR) mapping tools. Watercourses in the area support warmwater, coolwater, and coldwater habitat types.

Native and non-native fish species have been documented in the Sixteen Mile Creek, Bronte Creek, Credit River, and Burlington Canal–Hamilton Harbour watersheds. Common warmwater species include Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), White Bass (*Morone chrysops*), and Common Carp (*Cyprinus*

carpio). Coolwater and coldwater species include Walleye (*Sander vitreus*), Yellow Perch (*Perca flavescens*), Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), and Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*). Invasive species such as Goldfish (*Carassius auratus*) and Round Goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) have also been reported.

Historical records indicate the presence of federally and provincially listed SAR in the study area, including American Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), Redside Dace (*Clinostomus elongatus*), Silver Shiner (*Notropis photogenis*), and Spotted Gar (*Lepisosteus oculatus*).

The IMP acknowledges the presence of fish habitat throughout the study area, including habitat that supports both common and at-risk species. While no project-specific assessments were completed at this stage, future Schedule B and C projects will require detailed investigations to confirm habitat presence, characterize site-specific conditions, and ensure compliance with applicable fisheries and species at risk legislation.

6.1.6 Significant Woodlands

As defined in the ROP (section 295), woodlands are lands with at least: 1000 trees of any size per ha, or 750 trees over 5 cm in diameter per ha, or 500 trees over 12 cm in diameter per ha, or 250 trees over 20 cm in diameter per ha but does not include an active cultivated fruit or nut orchard, a Christmas tree plantation, a plantation certified by the Region, a tree nursery, a narrow linear strip of trees that defines a laneway or a boundary between fields.

Although significant woodlands are not mapped at a Regional scale, key features of the Regional NHS containing woodlands are present within the study area. Future Schedule B and C projects will require project-specific assessments and detailed studies to confirm significant woodlands and ensure adherence to the applicable legislation.

6.1.7 Significant Valleylands

Valleylands are landform depressions that contain running water during at least a portion of the year (MNR 2010). According to the ROP (Section 276.4.5), a valleyland may be classified as significant if it is deemed ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributes to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. Recommended criteria for designating significant valleylands include prominence as a distinctive landform, degree of naturalness, importance of ecological functions, restoration potential, and historical and cultural values.

Within the IMP study area, significant valleylands are associated with the main branches. Major tributaries and other tributaries of watercourse corridors draining into Lake Ontario, including Sixteen Mile Creek, Bronte Creek, Fourteen Mile Creek, Joshua's Creek, Black Creek, and Grindstone Creek.

Although significant valleylands themselves are not mapped at a Regional scale, key features of the Regional NHS within valleylands are present throughout the study area. Urban River Valleys – a related designation of the Greenbelt Plan (MMAH 2017) appears throughout the study area as well.

Future Schedule B and C projects will require project-specific assessment and detailed studies to confirm significant valleyland and any potential negative impacts.

6.1.8 Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) are defined in the PPS (2024) as areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education. ANSIs are identified for their Life science or Earth science value and are classified as regionally or provincially significant. According to the ROP (Section 276.4.2), ANSIs may be designated as provincially significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

Several ANSIs were found in portions of the IMP study area, these included provincially significant Earth Science and regionally significant Life Science.

Future Schedule B and C projects will require detailed studies to confirm potential impacts where appropriate.

6.1.9 Hazard Lands

Hazard lands are defined by the ROP (Section 244) as properties or lands that may be unsafe for development due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of Lake Ontario and Burlington Bay, this means the land, including that covered by water, between a defined offshore distance or depth, and the furthest landward limit of the flooding, erosion, or dynamic beach (areas of unstable accumulations of shoreline sediments) hazard limits. Along river, stream and small inland lake systems, this means the land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the flooding or erosion hazard limits, riverine erosion hazards associated with watercourse meander belts and unstable valley slopes.

Mapping and regulation of hazard lands is administered by the applicable Conservation Authorities – Conservation Halton, Credit Valley Conservation and Grand River Conservation Authority. Hazard mapping maintained by conservation authorities may be updated from time to time as new information becomes available. As such, the most current mapping available from the applicable conservation authority should be consulted and used to inform future planning and design stages, except where more detailed site-specific hazard delineations are required.

Within the IMP study area, regulated flood plains are found along rivers, streams, and inland waterbodies – included smaller watercourses.

Future Schedule B and C projects will require project-specific assessment and detailed studies to confirm hazard lands, and assess potential impacts.

6.1.10 Significant Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species

General habitat protection is provided by the ESA to all threatened species and endangered species. General habitat is defined as the area on which a species depends directly or indirectly to carry out life processes, including reproduction, rearing, hibernation, migration or feeding (Ontario 2007). Species-specific habitat protection is only afforded to those species for which a habitat regulation has been prepared and passed into law as a regulation of the ESA. A habitat regulation outlines specific habitat features and associated buffers that are protected and specifies the geographic area(s) of the province

where the habitat regulation applies. In some cases, a General Habitat Description (GHD) may also be prepared to help define and refine the area of protected habitat in advance of a habitat regulation.

Similarly, SARA provides protection to the habitat of endangered, threatened or extirpated species on all federal lands. Observation records and potential habitat areas of endangered or threatened species were found in several parts of Halton Region. This included amphibians, birds, fish, insects, mammals, mollusc, reptiles and vascular plants.

The IMP acknowledges significant habitat of endangered and threatened species, and the importance they contribute to the natural environment. Project-specific assessments have not been completed at this stage; future Schedule B and C projects will require detailed studies to confirm potential impacts.

6.1.11 Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH)

The Natural Heritage Reference Manual (MNR 2010), SWHTG (MNR 2000,) and Significant Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Tool (SWHMIST) provide criteria and guidelines for designating Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH). SWH should be evaluated in the context of the entire planning authority's jurisdiction, and only the best examples are considered significant (MNR 2000). In the context of Regional Natural Heritage System, the ROP (Section 276.4.5) defines significant natural heritage components, such as SWH, as ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system.

Future Schedule B and C projects will require project-specific assessment and detailed studies to confirm SWH and any potential negative impacts.

6.1.12 Linkages and Corridors

Linkages (also referred to as "corridors") are components of the natural heritage system that accommodate the natural movement patterns of plants and animals throughout the landscape (MNR 2010). Chapter 4.1.2 of the PPS (2024) states that linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and groundwater features should be recognized in efforts to maintain, restore, or improve the function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems. They are preferably associated with existing natural areas and functions and should be considered at a local and Regional scale (landscape-level). Linkages support biodiversity and long-term viability of healthy ecological systems.

Similar to SWH, linkages and corridors are typically identified on a site-specific basis and not mapped at a landscape level except as part of broader designations. The location and extent of these features can be assessed in the context of proposed infrastructure works.

Future Schedule B and C projects will require project-specific assessments and detailed studies to confirm their location and any potential negative impact through future studies, where required.

6.2 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment

Halton Region is characterized by a diverse socio-economic profile that reflects its rapid growth and evolving urban-rural landscape. The socio-economic and cultural environment review has been

completed at a Master Plan level, in line with the requirements of the MCEA Master Plan process. At this stage, the review provides a broad overview of existing community conditions, opportunities, and potential constraints, recognizing that more detailed fieldwork, stakeholder engagement, and technical studies will be required as part of future Class EA projects, where applicable. As such, the findings presented here are intended to inform the IMP recommendations, while recognizing that project-specific investigations may be necessary to confirm and refine these outcomes.

As outlined in Section 4.3.2, the Regional Official Plan is no longer an official plan for the Regional Municipality of Halton, and land use policies of the respective Local Municipal official plans will apply when the Local Municipalities undertake review of their official plans.

6.2.1 Urban System

The urban structure is composed of the following key components:

- **Strategic Growth Areas**, which include lands identified within the Urban Area that are to be the focus for accommodating population and employment intensification and higher-density mixed uses in a more compact built form. Strategic Growth Areas include Urban Growth Centres, Major Transit Station Areas, Regional Nodes, Regional Corridors, and Local Nodes.
- **Employment Areas**, which are areas designated for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices and associated retails and ancillary facilities.
- **Built-Up Areas**, which include all land within the Built Boundary.
- **Designated Greenfield Areas**, which include the areas within the Urban Area that is not Built-Up Area.

The objective of the urban structure is to provide a framework to guide population and employment growth within the Urban Area.

6.2.2 Agricultural System and Agricultural Areas

The Agricultural System is comprised of two components: lands designated as Agricultural Area, and portions of the Natural Heritage System that lie outside Key Features or where the only Key Feature is a significant Earth Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. While these areas are governed by the goals, objectives, permitted uses, and policies of the Natural Heritage System, agricultural operations are considered compatible uses and are actively supported and encouraged within them as part of the broader Agricultural System.

6.2.3 Hamlets and Rural Clusters

Hamlets are outlined as compact rural communities, designated to accommodate future residential growth in the rural area and small scale industrial, commercial and institutional uses serving the farming and rural communities.

Similarly, Rural Clusters are existing small settlement areas that have a historic identity, where limited residential growth and some small scale commercial and institutional uses serving the local community may be permitted. The locations and boundaries of Rural Clusters are identified in local Official Plans.

6.2.4 Natural Heritage Systems

The Natural Heritage System consists of the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System and the Regional Natural Heritage System. Additional information regarding, the Natural Heritage Systems can be found in section 6.1 Natural Environment.

6.2.5 North Aldershot Policy Area

The objectives of the North Aldershot Policy Area are to recognize and preserve the area's distinct and unique character within the context of the surrounding built-up areas. The policy supports a limited amount of development in specific locations, while prioritizing the protection of significant natural areas and ensuring that the predominantly rural and open space character of the landscape is maintained.

6.2.6 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage resources, including built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes, and areas of cultural value, are an important component of the cultural environment and contribute to the historical identity and character of the Region. These resources are protected and managed through provincial legislation and policy, including the Ontario Heritage Act.

As part of the IMP, cultural heritage considerations have been reviewed at a high level, consistent with the scope and intent of an Approach #1 Master Plan under MCEA process. The IMP does not include detailed cultural heritage inventories or site-specific evaluations. Instead, it recognizes the presence and importance of cultural heritage resources within the study area and identifies them as a key consideration in long-term infrastructure planning.

More detailed cultural heritage assessments, including field investigations and evaluations of potential impacts, will be undertaken, as required, as projects advance through subsequent Class EA/planning studies and detailed design, where project locations, footprints, and construction methods are defined. These future assessments will be completed in accordance with applicable provincial guidelines and regulatory requirements.

6.2.7 Archaeological Resources

Archaeological resources form an important part of the cultural environment and provide evidence of past human activity and Indigenous presence. These resources are protected under the Ontario Heritage Act, and their identification and evaluation are guided by provincial standards, including the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultants Archaeologists* (Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism [MCM], 2011).

For the purposes of the IMP, archaeological considerations have been addressed at a high-level only, consistent with the Approach #1 Master Plan scope of work and the MCEA process. The IMP does not include Stage 1 or Stage 2 archaeological assessments, nor does it confirm archaeological potential at a project-specific level. Rather, archaeological resources are identified as an important planning consideration that may influence future infrastructure projects.

As infrastructure projects identified through the IMP advance to subsequent stages, the need for archaeological assessment will be determined through project-specific Class EA/planning studies, where applicable, based on project location, scope, and applicable provincial requirements. Where required,

these assessments will be undertaken by licensed archaeologists and in consultation with First Nations and Indigenous Communities and relevant regulatory agencies, with the results informing project design, mitigation measures, and implementation decisions.

6.3 Existing Water System

Halton Region's water system services the City of Burlington, The Town of Halton Hills including the communities of Acton and Georgetown, the Town of Milton and the Town of Oakville.

The existing water system is comprised of the lake-based system and groundwater system as shown in the existing water system figure below. The existing lake-based system distributes drinking water to the City of Burlington, the Town of Oakville, portions of the Town of Milton and a small portion of the Town of Halton Hills (401 corridor and south Georgetown). There are four groundwater supply systems currently operating and servicing residents of Milton, Georgetown, Acton and Campbellville.

Since the early 1990s, the City of Hamilton has supplied municipal water to several properties within Halton Region along the City of Burlington-City of Hamilton border. On November 17, 2011, a formal Agreement was entered into between Halton Region and the City of Hamilton for the City of Hamilton to supply water to the Bridgeview, Snake Road and North Aldershot communities in the City of Burlington. An in-depth review of each of the components of the lake-based and groundwater systems including pressure zones, treatment plants, wells, storage facilities, pumping stations and distribution systems is contained in **Volume 3 – Water**.

6.4 Existing Wastewater System

Halton Region's wastewater system services the City of Burlington, the Town of Oakville, the Town of Milton, and part of the Town of Halton Hills including the communities of Acton and Georgetown. The existing wastewater system is comprised of the lake-based system and stream-based system.

The lake-based wastewater system is primarily defined through four distinct drainage areas that are delineated based on conveyance of flow to one of the following treatment plants, namely Burlington's Skyway, Mid Halton, Oakville Southeast, and Oakville Southwest Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTP). The stream-based wastewater system is comprised of two main drainage areas delineated by treatment plants: the Acton WWTP and the Georgetown WWTP.

An in-depth review of each of the components of the wastewater collections system including treatment plants, pumping stations and main trunk sewer systems is contained in **Volume 4 – Wastewater**.

6.5 Existing Transportation System

The existing transportation system serving Halton Region consists of a multi-modal network of roads and walking and cycling infrastructure. All elements of the system are interconnected through rural and urban areas and play a role in the provision of healthy and safe communities, supporting active lifestyles and providing multi-modal transportation options for all users, including the movement of goods and farm-related vehicles. Within the transportation network, Halton Region is responsible for planning, construction, operating and maintaining a network of Major Arterial roads, which are key connectors to

the provincial highway system and are designed to support safe, reliable, and efficient movement of people and goods.

The existing transportation network in Halton Region consists of:

- **Road Networks:** including Provincial Freeways/Highways, Regional Roads and Local Municipal Roads. Regional Roads are major arterials that:
 - Support transit, active transportation, goods movement and farm vehicles;
 - Connect rural and urban centres; and,
 - Provide inter/intra-regional connections.
- **Active Transportation Networks:** including a combination of walking and cycling facilities, such as:
 - Paved shoulders;
 - Cycle tracks;
 - Boulevard multi-use paths; and,
 - Sidewalks;
- **Transit and Rail Services:** transit and rail is operated by others and includes:
 - Local and specialized municipal transit services;
 - Metrolinx GO Transit (Rail and Bus) Services; and,
 - VIA Rail.

Additional information on the Region's multi-modal transportation system is provided in **Volume 5 – Transportation**.

7.0 Conclusion

7.0 Conclusion

This volume of the IMP outlines the foundational planning context and methodology used to guide the development of long-term water, wastewater, and transportation strategies for Halton Region. It summarizes the legislative and policy framework, master planning process, population and employment forecasts, and existing conditions that form the basis of the IMP. By integrating the requirements of the MCEA process and aligning with local and provincial planning priorities.

The planning foundations presented herein ensure that the IMP reflects both technical considerations and broader community goals, while remaining adaptable to local growth priorities. The approach outlined in this volume supports sustainable growth, protects natural and cultural resources, and coordinates infrastructure delivery across Halton Region's municipalities.

This document is the second of six volumes, with subsequent volumes focusing on water, wastewater, transportation, and consultation.