

# Preparing a Community Infrastructure Strategy

Regional Official Plan Guidelines





# Halton Region Official Plan Guidelines

The **Regional Official Plan (ROP)** is Halton's guiding document for land use planning. It contains policies that guide decisions related to, among other things, managing growth and its effects on Halton's social, economic and natural environment.

The **ROP Guidelines** are a set of documents that clarify, inform, and aid in the implementation of the Plan's policies.

The Guidelines have been prepared in accordance with Section 192 of the ROP. They provide direction and outline approaches that can be used to satisfy the relevant policies of the Plan. They do not introduce additional policy requirements, and, in the event of a conflict between the Guidelines and the Regional Official Plan, the Plan shall prevail.

The Guidelines may be updated from time to time as required through a report to Regional Council.

For more information, visit [halton.ca/ROP](http://halton.ca/ROP) or [halton.ca/ROPguidelines](http://halton.ca/ROPguidelines) or call 311.

**"This Plan calls for the preparation of certain guidelines or protocols to provide more detailed directions in the implementation of its *policies*."**

**Halton Region Official Plan – Section 192**  
*as adopted by Regional Council, December 16, 2009*



# Preparing a Community Infrastructure Strategy

This Guideline provides a framework for developing a community infrastructure strategy as input to Area Specific Plans.

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<b>Purpose</b>	To provide a framework for developing a Community Infrastructure Strategy as input into Area Specific Plans that address the provision of public sector services in: health; education; recreation; socio-cultural activities; security and safety; and affordable housing.
<b>Application</b>	Greenfield Areas; Built Boundary; Employment Areas;
<b>Use</b>	Area Specific Plan preparation
<b>Supporting Documents</b>	In addition to the policy direction provided by the Regional Official Plan, the following documents should be considered alongside this Guideline, as appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public Service Sector Facility Needs Assessments</li></ul>
<b>Version</b>	<b>Version 1.0</b> This version of Preparing a Community Infrastructure Strategy was brought before the Inter-Municipal Liaison Committee on June, 18 2014 through Report No. IMLC01-14.0

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

This Guideline provides a framework for developing a community infrastructure strategy as input to Area Specific Plans. Area Specific Plans are approved through Local Official Plan Amendments. A strategy identifies the land, building and structural needs of public sector services in: health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, security and safety, and affordable housing.

Section 77(5)p) of the Regional Official Plan states that the Region will:

“Require the Local Municipalities to prepare Area-Specific Plans or policies for major growth areas, including the development or redevelopment of communities. The area may contain solely employment lands without residential uses or solely an Intensification Area. Such plans or policies shall be incorporated by amendment into the Local Official Plan and shall demonstrate how the goals and objectives of this Plan are being attained and shall include, among other things:

- p) a community *infrastructure* plan, based on Regional guidelines, describing where, how and when public services for health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, safety and security and *Affordable Housing* will be provided to serve the community, ...”

This Guideline provides guidance for preparing a community infrastructure strategy and outlines the basic information that may be included in the document.

## 1.2 Scope

Community Infrastructure Strategies (CIS) are compiled by municipal land use planners, and/or their consultants, during the preliminary stages of Area-Specific Plan preparation for major growth areas. The content of a CIS is generally a compilation of area specific information based on population/employment growth contained in plans and studies prepared by Regional and Municipal public sector service providers. These documents are prepared in advance of area-specific planning processes, and include, but are not limited to: municipal infrastructure master plans; community services master plans; cultural master plans; facility needs assessments and studies.

The scope of work will vary based on the settlement area is that is being planned for. These areas include:

- a) Greenfield area;
- b) Redevelopment area; or
- c) employment area.

The work is completed during the preliminary land use assessment stage of Area-Specific Plans. The strategy will be used as supporting evidence for Area-Specific Plan related Official Plan Amendments.

Only public sector services are considered within the Community Infrastructure Strategy.

### 1.3 Public Sector: Roles / Responsibilities and Funding Sources

Both upper- and lower-tier municipalities provide services under the broad mantle of ‘community infrastructure.’ Each level of government has unique roles and responsibilities for providing the multiple community infrastructure programs and services as outlined in Table 1. Similarly, funding for public sector programs and services is sourced from tri-level government budgets, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 1: Community Infrastructure Strategy Preparation – Key Roles & Responsibilities**

Public Sector Stakeholder	Role(s)	Responsibilities
<b>Province of Ontario</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial Plan authority</li> <li>Funding Provider</li> <li>Service Provider               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health</li> <li>EMS</li> </ul> </li> <li>Building/Landowner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Places to Grow Plan – Community Infrastructure Strategy</li> <li>Generates funds for: justice, healthcare and affordable housing programs</li> <li>Builds courts and hospitals</li> <li>Delivers Local Health In Network (LHINs)</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval Authority</li> <li>Funding Liaison</li> <li>Building/Landowner</li> <li>Service Provider (health, safety, housing)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police/EMS</li> <li>Health</li> <li>Affordable Housing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approves Area-Specific Plans</li> <li>Conduit to Provincial funding for local municipal initiatives</li> <li>Produces population projections (best planning estimates (BPEs)) based on Growth Plan Schedule</li> <li>Purchases lands based on needs assessment</li> <li>Delivers programs and services</li> <li>Prepares council approved Community Housing Strategy; Police/EMS facility studies and plans</li> <li>Participates in Area Specific Plan process to identify Regional land needs for ‘security/safety, health and affordable housing’</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Governments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Burlington</li> <li>Town of Halton Hills</li> <li>Town of Milton</li> <li>Town of Oakville</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Coordinator</li> <li>Building/Landowner</li> <li>Service Provider               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks/Recreation</li> <li>Arts/Culture</li> <li>Fire</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiates Area Specific Plan process</li> <li>Coordinates Needs Assessments of all service providers as core content for Community Infrastructure Strategy</li> <li>Prepare council approved: Community Service Master Plans; City-wide community infrastructure plans; Trails/Cycling Master Plans; facilities’ studies; etc.</li> </ul>
<b>School Boards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public School</li> <li>Separate School</li> <li>Independent School</li> <li>French School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Provider (education)</li> <li>Building Owner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produces school population projections and facility studies based on BPEs</li> <li>Participates in Area Specific Plan process to identify land needs and location based on facility studies</li> </ul>
<b>Service Providers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Libraries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Provider (socio-cultural)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participates in Area Specific Plan process to identify land and building needs</li> </ul>
<b>Private Landowner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investor/Developer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Government Funding Sources for Community Infrastructure Service Providers**

Government Funding Source	Community Infrastructure Service Providers									
	Assisted / Special Needs Housing	Justice	Health	Schools	EMS	Police	Libraries	Fire	Parks/Rec/Culture	Affordable Housing
Federal / Provincial / Regional Government	■									
Province		■	■	■	■					
Province / Region					■					
Region					■	■				
Local Government							■	■	■	
Private Sector (possible Provincial/Regional Funding)										■

## 2.0 Area Specific Plan Process

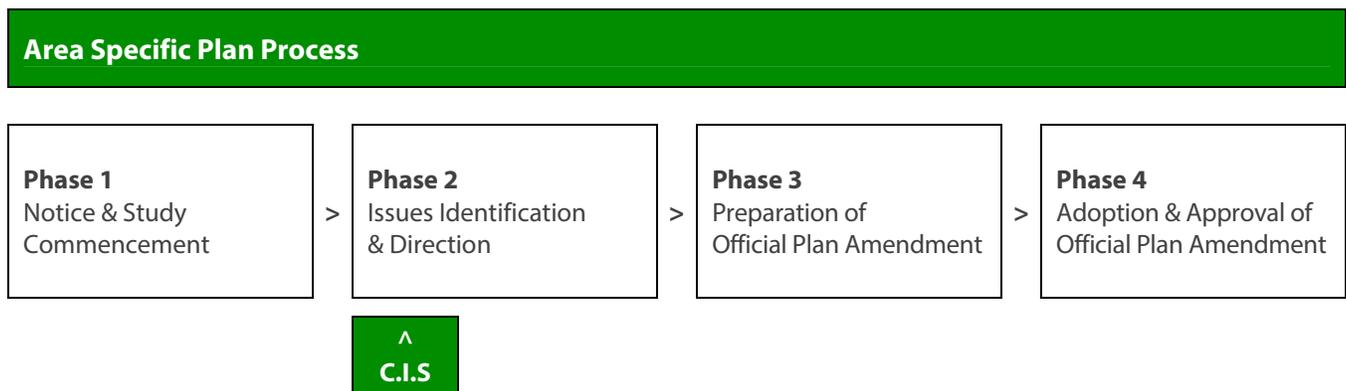
Community Infrastructure Strategies are undertaken during the initial phase of Area Specific Plan preparation. Each local municipality undertakes the preparation of an area specific plan in a similar, yet distinct, manner.

The Area Specific Plan process in Halton Region generally follows a four phased approach:

- 1) Notice and Study Commencement;
- 2) Issues Identification and Direction;
- 3) Preparation of Official Plan Amendment: and,
- 4) Final Official Plan Amendment (adoption).

The Community Infrastructure Strategy is prepared and completed during Phase 2 “Issues Identification and Direction” of the area specific plan preparation process as described further in Appendix A.

The flow chart shows a general process undertaken for Area Specific Plan preparation and where the CIS is prepared in the process:



## 3.0 Infrastructure Strategy: Format and Content

The need for a Community Infrastructure Strategy is required as input to Area Specific Plans and as the policy rationale for Official Plan Amendments to Local Official Plans.

### 3.1 Document Formatting and Contents

#### 3.1.1 Format

The Strategy may be presented in two formats, either as a separate document or as a section within an Area Specific Plan.

#### 3.2.2 Content

As the Community Infrastructure Strategy is prepared for Area Specific Planning purposes, the local governments may either decide to prepare the Strategy as a distinct and separate document as input to the Area Specific Plan, or as information that is incorporated as a chapter in the Area Specific Plan document itself. In either case, the following format provides general direction for content consideration.

##### 1) Separate Document Content

As a separate document, the typical structure of a Community Infrastructure Strategy would include the following information:

- Introduction and Background
- Purpose and Principles
- Benefits
- Assessment and Key Deliverables
- Strategies
- Performance Indicators

It is noted that a description of each one of these sections is included in Section 3.0.

##### 2) Section within Area Specific Plan

As a section within an Area Specific Plan, the following highlights the placement of “community infrastructure” within the overall content:

- Introduction
  - Purpose
  - Area Specific Plan Structure
  - Planning Period
- Community/Planning District Vision
  - Purpose
  - Vision
  - Goals/Objectives
- Community/Planning District Structure
  - Land Use Districts
  - Population/Employment/Housing Targets
- Development Strategy / Natural Features
- Community Design Strategy

- Land Use Strategy / Strategic Policies
- Community Services Strategy
- Development Review
- Growth Management Strategy
- Long Term Monitoring Plan
- Implementation and Interpretation

Appendices may include, if not contained within the main body of the plan, the following:

- Population / Employment / Housing counts for the proposed lands;
- Location and type of community infrastructure services within abutting neighbourhoods to subject lands;
- Excerpts of supporting documents (e.g. master plans; feasibility studies etc.)

## **3.2 Detailed Description of Typical Sections of a CIS**

The following provides a framework for local planners to prepare a Community Infrastructure Strategy. The Strategy is prepared at the preliminary phase of the Area Specific Plan process and provides the land use options for a development or redevelopment area. The land use options may include the following uses: residential; commercial; institutional; recreation; and industrial. Community Infrastructure, specific to 'public sector' services, are identified under 'institutional' land use designations. The Land use designations for public sector services may be categorized further: health; education; recreation; socio-cultural activities; security and safety; and affordable housing.

Because there are multiple service providers, the base assumption in the preparation of a strategy for the area specific plan process is that these service providers have completed individual needs' assessments based on population and growth projection analyses.

The content components may be based on a platform of seven sections. Each section requires the planner/consultant to answer questions which will form the content of the strategy. The following identifies general section headings and through a set of question(s), provides direction for content regarding community infrastructure (see Figure 1 for visual flow chart).

### **3.2.1 Introduction and Background**

This section should contain a brief overview of why community infrastructure is important in the subject lands and the scope of which infrastructure is required in context of the abutting and existing neighbourhoods, and in context of the direction that is provided by the tri-level growth plan policies: Places to Grow, Regional Official Plan, and Local Official Plan.

### **3.2.2 Purpose and Principles**

In context of the subject lands, describe why the provision of community infrastructure services is important and who will it serve. If there are principles to be followed, list what they are.

### **3.2.3 Benefits**

Explain what the expected outcomes will be with the provision of community infrastructure services.

### **3.2.4 Assessment/Key Deliverables**

Provide an assessment of what programs and services are currently provided within abutting neighbourhoods and what services would be beneficial not only to the subject lands, but also to the adjacent communities. Identify location options for the targeted/scoped community services that are

needed in the subject lands. Describe the phasing of development for community infrastructure and which level of government provides the service and what type of funding supports the construction of the applicable buildings.

### **3.2.5 Strategies**

Identify any strategies the government service providers will take to deliver the built form and the services. Describe the core needs for the governments to initiate construction or provide a service (e.g. funding; facility availability; base population; etc.).

Map the optimal locations for the scoped community infrastructure services in the subject lands.

### **3.2.6 Performance Measures**

There are two performance measures that may be monitored: 1) the Strategic document's identified 'actions'; and / or 2) the delivery of community infrastructure services.

In this case, it is tracking the performance of the Strategic actions rather than the performance of the services (that is the service provider's role). Identify community infrastructure services that are to be delivered, if they are operational, if not what are the obstacles, and tracking whether or not they are delivering on the targeted timelines identified in the Area Specific Plan (or separate Strategy).

**Figure 1: Community Infrastructure Strategy Content**

<p><b>Section 1</b> Background</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is community infrastructure important?</li> <li>• What direction is provided by Provincial policies (Growth Plan) or Halton Region policies?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 2</b> Purpose / Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective: What are we trying to achieve with the provision of community infrastructure?</li> <li>• Given existing land use policies, how does this CIS help achieve the policy?</li> <li>• What are the principles to be followed?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 3</b> Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the outcomes i.e. outcomes (e.g. all programs/services provided within 5 minute walking distance of all residents; access to all services; access to 'required' services; co-location of services)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 4</b> Assessment / Key Deliverables</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What public sector programs and services are currently provided?</li> <li>• What needs to happen to deliver programs/services in subject land area?</li> <li>• What programs/services do we want to have in this 'new' plan area? (needs assessments)</li> <li>• How public services will be delivered (Identify phasing of potential development (when, by whom, funding needs)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 5</b> Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will public sector service providers do to get there?</li> <li>• How do they make sure this works? (e.g. funding; facility availability; base population)</li> <li>• Map the land use options for optimal locations for public sector services</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 6</b> Performance Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judging the service delivery results</li> </ul>

# Appendix A

## Area Specific Plan Process Phased Approach

### Phase 1 – Notice and Study Commencement

- Notice of the Area Specific Plan commencement
  - Staff publish a notice on-line and/or in newspapers, that identifies the boundary areas of the subject lands and request stakeholders to identify their interest in the subject lands by contacting the local government representative.
- Preliminary Land Constraints' Assessment
  - Staff analyze existing land constraints (topographic; natural heritage features; abutting land uses; transportation systems, etc.).
- Preliminary Meeting
  - Staff organize a meeting with community infrastructure service providers who responded to the Notice of Commencement, as well as other stakeholders, to identify their land use needs and locational criteria (this is based on the service providers' Council approved Master Plans, Feasibility Studies and Needs Assessments).

### Phase 2 – Issues Identification & Direction

The second phase involves local government planners undertaking a land use analysis. This analysis includes: conducting background information review and analysis; preparing issues' specific background reports; developing alternative community structure options; identifying preferred community structure options; and consulting with the public, as needed, and local and regional government staff (e.g. meetings, workshops, public meetings, PICs).

### Phase 3 – Official Plan Amendment Preparation

Based on the input received in Phase 1 regarding land use policy direction, Phase 2 involves the development of a draft Official Plan Amendment by local government land use planners and/or planning consultants. During this phase the local government circulates the draft amendment to the Region's planning department for an opportunity to comment.

### Phase 4 – Official Plan Amendment – Adoption & Approval

Local council adopts the Official Plan Amendment to incorporate the proposed land use designations identified in the Area Specific Plan. The Official Plan's schedule maps are also amended to geographically identify the land use designations within the new, redevelopment or employment area.

Local governments are delegated the authority to approve their Official Plan Amendments. The adopted Official Plan Amendment is then forwarded to the Chief Planning Official Halton Region for approval. A Halton Region Senior Planner reviews the amendments to ensure the amended policies conform to Regional Official Plan and Provincial Plan policies. The planner will also review policies for compliance with adopted Regional Master Plans (e.g. Transportation Master Plan, Water and Wastewater Master Plan). The Local Official Plan Amendment is also circulated by the Senior Planner to all Regional departments for review and comment. Submitted comments are reviewed by the Senior Planner who determines their relevancy. If relevant, the Senior Planner interprets these as policy modifications to the Local Official Plan. These modifications are sent to the local government for incorporation into the Official Plan as policy amendments. The Regional Chief Planning Official issues the Notice of Decision of the Official Plan amendment once any modifications

provided by Halton Region are incorporated within the Local Official Plan amendment. The Notice of Decision is sent to the Local Municipality.

