Healthy Communities Guidelines

Regional Official Plan Guidelines

Halton REGION

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.

"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

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** or **halton.ca/ROPguidelines** or call 311.

Healthy Communities Guidelines

The Healthy Communities Guideline is intended to identify the attributes of healthy communities so that the Region and Local Municipalities can work together through the planning process to achieve healthy communities.

Purpose	The purpose of the **Healthy Communities Guidelines** is to identify attributes of a healthy community so that the Region and Local Municipalities can work together during Area-Specific plans and long range planning policy review processes to achieve Healthy Communities.
Application & Use	Applies to the built boundary and greenfield areas. For use during long range planning and Area-Specific Planning processes.
Supporting Documents	In addition to the policy direction provided by the Regional Official Plan, the following documents should be considered alongside this Guideline, as appropriate: • *Planning Act* • Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 • Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006 • Local Municipal Official Plans, Zoning By-laws, and Guidelines
Version	**Version 1.0 |** This version of the Healthy Communities Guidelines was brought before the Inter-Municipal Liaison Committee on June, 18 2014 through Report No. IMLC01-14.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1   Purpose

Building "healthy communities" is a key concept in Halton's vision of planning for its future. The Healthy Communities Guidelines have been prepared to identify the attributes of healthy communities so that the Region and local municipalities can work together through the planning process to achieve healthy communities.

The goals of the Region and the local municipalities are essentially the same – to preserve, enhance, and protect the natural, social, and economic environments by encouraging sustainable development. This shared goal of creating healthy and liveable communities ensures that a focus on public health, climate change, and the built environment are at the forefront of all long range policy and guideline documents.

The Healthy Communities Guidelines serves to enhance and complement local initiatives by ensuring a consistent approach among Halton municipalities with a view to achieving healthy communities as described in Section 31 of the Regional Official Plan.

1.2   Policy Context

1.2.1   Provincial Policy Statement, 2014

Municipal planning documents must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 (PPS, 2014). Section 1.0 of the PPS, 2014 is titled "Building Strong Healthy Communities". Section 1.1.1 establishes a broad set of policies that aim to sustain healthy, liveable and safe communities through:

a) *Promoting efficient development and land use patters which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;*
b) *Accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential (including second units, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;*
c) *Avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;*
d) *Avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of settlement areas in those areas which are adjacent or close to settlement areas;*
e) *Promoting cost-effective development patterns and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;*
f) *Improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society;*
g) *Ensuring that necessary infrastructure, electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs; and*
h) *Promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity and consider the impacts of a changing climate.*

The concept of "healthy communities" as described in the Regional Official Plan is consistent with the PPS, 2014.

1.2.2   Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Section 1.2.2 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe contains a set of principles that are meant to guide decisions on the development of land, the management of resources, and the investment of public money. The principles include, among other things:

- building compact, vibrant and complete communities;
- supporting a strong and competitive economy;
- optimizing the use of existing and new infrastructure to support growth and compact form; and,
- protecting the natural resources of land, air and water.

The Regional Official Plan's concept of "healthy communities" echoes many of these principles.

1.2.3   Regional Official Plan

Healthy communities are a central part of Halton's planning vision as expressed in the Regional Official Plan. Section 31 of the Plan describes a healthy community as one:

- that fosters among the residents a state of physical, mental, social and economic well-being;
- where residents take part in, and have a sense of control over, decisions that affect them;
- that is physically so designed to minimize the stress of daily living and meet the life-long need of its residents;
- where a full range of housing, employment, social, health, educational, recreational and cultural opportunities are accessible for all segments of the community;
- where mobility is provided primarily through an affordable, convenient, safe and efficient public transportation system and non-motorized travel modes; and,
- where the principles of sustainability are embraced and practised by residents, businesses and governments.

To further explain the concept of a healthy community, Section 152(1) of the Regional Official Plan calls for the preparation of Guidelines which include, among other things, a description of the general characteristics of a healthy community. The Healthy Communities Guidelines describes attributes and their elements that can be used to achieve healthy communities.

Section 152(2) of the Regional Official Plan directs the Local Municipalities to have regard for the Healthy Communities Guidelines when they are preparing an Area-Specific Plan or Official Plan policies related to intensification. Section 152(2) also directs the proponents of major development to have regard for the Guidelines when submitting their development applications.

2.0 Attributes of a Healthy Community

A healthy community is one that encourages attributes such as those listed below:

- Built Environment
- Mobility
- Natural Environment & Open Space
- Human Services
- Sustainable Design
- Economy
- Community Food Supply

These attributes, and some of the elements that they may include, are described in the following sections. This information is intended to help in planning to achieve healthy communities across Halton Region.

2.1   Built Environment

The **Built Environment** can contribute to a healthy community through:

- compact mixed use development, walkable and connected communities;
- a range of densities and housing opportunities, choices and accessibility for all income levels and needs;
- redevelopment/regeneration areas;
- welcoming pedestrian-scaled environments;
- a range of densities that will support public transit and amenities; and,
- community infrastructure.

Hawthorne Village, Town of Milton

Elements

Elements of **"Built Environment"** may include, but are not limited to:

- Compact Development
- Community Structure
- Diversity of Uses
- Walkable & Connected Communities
- Diversity of Housing
- Complete Streets
- Schools
- Redevelopment / Regeneration Areas
- Mixed Use Opportunities
- Urban Forest
- Streetscapes and the Pedestrian Environment

2.2   Mobility

Mobility can contribute to a healthy community through:

- encouraging physical activity;
- facilitating active transportation and public transit;
- providing access to services and amenities for vulnerable population groups including children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and low income individuals;
- providing safe, convenient and accessible environment for walking and cycling through Transportation Master Plans and Active Transportation Plans;
- reducing dependency on single occupant vehicles and improving access to transit;
- promoting integration within transit systems inter-regionally; and,
- providing connected street networks that are accessible to all modes of transportation.

Bicycle Parking, Georgetown GO Station, Town of Halton Hills

Elements

Elements of "**Mobility**" may include, but are not limited to:

- Universal Accessibility
- Street Network
- Active Transportation
- Transit Accessibility
- Transit-supportive Density
- Major Transit Stations
- Pedestrian & Cycling Routes
- Parking

2.3   Natural Environment and Open Space

The **Natural Environment and Open Space** can contribute to a healthy community through:

- preserving and enhancing the natural heritage system;
- supporting recreational and cultural opportunities;
- providing access to a range of open spaces, parks and recreational facilities, pathways and trails; and,
- providing interconnected green space and urban forests within the urban boundary.

Bronte Waterfront Park, Town of Oakville

Elements

Elements of "**Natural Environment and Open Space**" may include, but are not limited to:

- Natural Heritage System
- Parks & Public Spaces
- Pathways & Trails

2.4   Human Services

Human Services can contribute to a healthy community through:

- integrating and co-locating providing social infrastructure to meet the current needs of all residents;
- providing social, cultural and recreational services such as Places of Worship, Community Centers, Libraries, social housing, youth centres, long term care homes and seniors centres; and,
- providing access to health care and ensuring public safety through design (CPTED);

Human services provided by Halton Region will be based on annual Halton Health Department and Social & Community Services' policies and plans implemented to identify needs in the community.

Halton Hills Public Library – Acton Branch, Town of Halton Hills

Elements

Elements of "**Human Services**" may include, but are not limited to:

- Co-location & Integration of Services
- Social, Community, Cultural, and Recreational Services
- Health & Public Safety
- Education

2.5   Sustainable Design

Sustainable Design can contribute to a healthy community through:

- designing new buildings, communities, and neighbourhoods to reduce water, waste, and energy use;
- promoting energy conservation and alternative energy sources;
- implementing Low Impact Design Standards in both new developments and established areas;
- improving air quality through addressing the impact of climate change; and,
- encouraging the design and construction of energy efficient green buildings.

Tansley Woods Community Centre, City of Burlington (solarontario.com)

Elements

Elements of "**Sustainable Design**" may include, but are not limited to:

- Energy
- Water
- Materials and Solid Waste
- Air Quality
- Green Buildings
- Cool/Green Roof

2.6   Economy

The **Economy** can contribute to a healthy community through:

- providing a balanced community between employment and residential areas;
- promoting a diversity of employment opportunities and densities at appropriate locations where transit is available; and,
- promoting the efficient movement of goods.

Downtown Office Building, City of Burlington

Elements

Elements of "**Economy**" may include, but are not limited to:

- Population and Jobs
- Employment Lands
- Retail / Commercial / Service
- Mixed Use / Live Work Opportunities
- Neighbourhood Jobs

2.7   Community Food Supply

Community Food Supply can contribute to a healthy community through:

- encouraging accessibility to healthy food; and,
- promoting locally grown food and farmers markets.

Allotment Garden, Georgetown, Town of Halton Hills

Other elements of "**Community Food Supply**" include, but are not limited to:

- Local Food / Farmers Markets
- Retail Food Options such as Small, Medium, and Large Grocery Stores
- Urban Agriculture
- Community Food Centres
- Local Food Distribution, Process, and Warehousing Facilities