

**Attachment #2 – Policy Directions Report - Submissions and Response Chart**  
**Part 2 - Advisory Committees and Stakeholders**

Overview

This document provides summaries of written submissions and staff responses on comments related to the Regional Official Plan Review (excluding IGMS/PGC which are addressed in the Integrated Growth Management Strategy Submissions and Response Chart) from June 2020 to November 2021. The policy directions referenced in the staff response column have not been endorsed by Regional Council.

Members of the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture and Region Planning staff met over a five day period in April (8, 12, 14,16 and 22) to provide one on one virtual meetings (zoom or telephone) to review draft proposed Agricultural and Rural and Regional Natural Heritage System mapping and answer questions on any potential changes.

The full Policy Directions Report Submission and Response Chart includes the following parts:

- Part 1 - Public Authorities
- Part 2 - Advisory Committees and Stakeholders**
- Part 3 - Public Submission – June 2020 to September 2020
- Part 4 - Public Submission – October 2020
- Part 5 - Public Submission - November 2020 to November 2021
- Part 6 – Indigenous Peoples
- Part 7 – Additional Submissions

The document is organized into four columns: 'Source', 'Submission', and 'Response'.

The submissions are organized by stakeholder and chronologically.

Index of Submissions

No.	Commenter	Date Received	Page
1.	HAAC, Climate Change subcommittee	E-mail dated October 27, 2020	3
2.	HAAC, Natural Heritage subcommittee	Email dated October 27, 2020	8
3.	HAAC, Rural and Agricultural System subcommittee	Email dated October 27, 2020	12
4.	HAAC, Agriculture Area Assessment and Impact Assessment Subcommittee	Email dated January 4, 2021	18
5.	HAAC	Email dated November 25, 2021	27
6.	Peter Lambrick on behalf of the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee (NHAC)	E-mail dated October 30, 2020	34
7.	Lisa Kohler on behalf of the NHAC sub-committee	E-mail dated October 12, 2021	47
8.	Lisa Kohler on behalf of the NHAC	E-mail dated November 30, 2021	50
9.	Michael Toccalino	April 12, 2021 HRFA Meeting	56
10.	Mathew and Logan Smerek	April 12, 2021 HRFA Meeting	57
11.	Larry Campbell	April 12, 2021 HRFA Meeting	58
12.	Ammar Aljoundi	April 12, 2021 HRFA Meeting	58
13.	Scott Stewart and Holly McGaffin	April 12, 2021 HRFA Meeting	58
14.	Robert McClure	April 12, 2021 HRFA Meeting	59
15.	John Opsteen	April 14, 2021 HRFA Meeting	59
16.	Barb and Tom Parker	April 14, 2021 HRFA Meeting	60
17.	Jack Pemberton	April 14, 2021 HRFA Meeting	60
18.	Claudette Taylor	April 14, 2021 HRFA Meeting	61
19.	Paul and John Fisher	April 16, 2021 HRFA Meeting	61
20.	Eldon Williams	April 16, 2021 HRFA Meeting	61
21.	Laurent Viel	April 16, 2021 HRFA Meeting	62
22.	Brad Clements	April 16, 2021 HRFA Meeting	62
23.	Dawn Jarvis	April 16, 2021 HRFA Meeting	63

No.	Commenter	Date Received	Page
24.	Jamie Fisher	April 16, 2021 HRFA Meeting	64
25.	John Tovell	April 22, 2021 HRFA Meeting	65
26.	Dave Vickers	April 22, 2021 HRFA Meeting	65
27.	Tracy and Murray Breckon	April 22, 2021 HRFA Meeting	65
28.	Vanessa Warren	April 22, 2021 HRFA Meeting	65
29.	Jane and Hugh Hyndman	April 22, 2021 HRFA Meeting	65

**Submissions & Responses**

No.	Source	Submission	Response
1.	<p>HAAC, Climate Change subcommittee</p> <p>E-mail dated October 27, 2020</p>	<p><b>HAAC Subcommittee Comments – Climate Change</b>  <b>Subcommittee:</b> Cecil Patterson, Bert Andrews, John Opsteen, Nancy Comber, Al Ehrlick, Colin Best, Barb Parker, and Meaghan Richardson.  <b>Guests:</b> Jamie Fisher, Peter Lambrick  <b>Regional Staff:</b> Anna DeMarchi-Meyers</p> <p><b>Climate Change Discussion Paper Questions</b></p> <p><b>Question 1. Have you felt the impacts of climate change on your community? What impacts are of most concern to you in the next 20 years?</b>  Yes, weather is a top issue for farmers/agriculture.</p> <p>Weather can be unpredictable and can have devastating effects on agriculture. Drought, excessive rain fall, intense storms, growing frequency of storms, changes in when the farming seasons begin and end, and wind can be devastating. There are even variations in the amount of rain within short distances that are being reported. In the last 5 years, we have seen wind consistently 12 months of the year.</p> <p>Due to climate change we are now seeing invasive species which can bring a new set of problems for farmers. For example: opossums and invasive plants in Southern Ontario,</p> <p>We are concerned about agricultural impacts, food supply, drought and flood conditions becoming unstable. Crop insurance claims have increased over time and this would result in premiums increasing. This impacts the financial viability of farming. Another example is our hay supply, where some hay has done well in Ontario, but drought conditions out West meant that hay was shipped there to feed livestock. The past several years has been affected by the lack of animal feed (hay) in various areas, even within Halton. This is a large agricultural market for Halton.</p> <p>Tender fruit has been affected by both early and late frosts. This past summer we experienced a late planting season for vegetables which seriously impacted across Ontario the price of fresh food.</p> <p>Weather changes are happening faster than we can adapt.</p> <p><b>Opportunities:</b> Vegetable production has been good but what about other crops. This could mean opportunity such as the ability to grow other crops. This may open the door to indoor growing to control some of these variables to maintain food supply at a reasonable price to the consumer. Halton Region could provide opportunities for small greenhouse operators to locate in the natural heritage open areas due to the smaller footprint than traditional agriculture.</p> <p>Halton Region could build on the opportunity other regions have taken by helping in the cost of cover plants which aid in soil retention and assists in run-off, protecting lakes and water ways.</p> <p><b>Question 2. How do you think the Regional Official Plan can help Halton respond to climate change? What mitigation and adaptation actions would you like to see embedded in the ROP?</b>  The ROP needs to prioritize the highest capability of use on agricultural lands particularly prime agricultural lands i.e. planting trees for natural heritage. Trees on prime land is an inefficient use of quality soil when other carbon sink crops could be grown. We need to consider the highest and best possible use.</p>	<p>Regional staff acknowledges and recognize the difficulties expressed by the agricultural community due to the impacts of a changing climate. Policy Direction CC-7 has a distinct focus on agriculture and food and recommends support for urban agriculture opportunities within settlement areas and provision for agricultural uses in components of the Regional Natural Heritage System. This policy direction also recommends emphasizing the relationship between agriculture and climate change as agricultural land acts as an important carbon sink.</p> <p>In response to comments about energy (renewables, district heating, etc.), Policy Direction CC-6 supports developing policies that promote renewable energy sources, alternative energy systems, district energy systems, and/or distributed energy systems. The policy direction also recommends Community Energy Plans to be a requirement of the area-specific planning process. Community Energy Plan’s will look at the feasibility of energy generation, distribution, and storage, reduction of energy consumption and greenhouse gasses, and opportunities for district energy and renewable energy sources at a neighbourhood scale. Policy Direction CC-2 also provides an opportunity to enhance existing energy policies in the ROP (section 176) by exploring energy-from-waste technologies.</p> <p>Updating existing transportation policy in the ROP to address comments regarding north-south transit, cycling trails, and safety on rural roads, and traffic may also be considered through Policy Direction CC-1 which focuses on overall enhancements to ROP policy to create more direct connections to climate change.</p> <p>Policy Direction CC-5 encourages the local municipalities to introduce and/or enhance green development standards for new developments. Green development standards are measures made by municipalities to encourage builders and developers to create developments using adaptive and sustainable design and effectively respond to the impacts of a changing climate.</p> <p>Regional staff recognize the extreme weather events experienced in Halton and propose Policy Direction CC-9 to recommend the review and update of Emergency Management policies to ensure they plan for resiliency and identify areas where hazards lands and adverse impacts of extreme weather events intersect. This policy direction takes into account environmental planning considerations. Policy Direction CC-4 also recommends the Region and local municipalities assess infrastructure for risk and vulnerabilities and identify actions to increase infrastructure resilience.</p> <p>Furthermore, HAAC’s comments on ensuring agricultural lands are protected from development and designated are reflected in Policy Direction RAS-1 which recommends the designation of prime agricultural</p>

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		<p>Planting of tree's for nurseries or Christmas trees is viewed differently than planting trees for natural heritage. Unfortunately, the fear of natural heritage designations has deterred farmers from planting trees in recent years, therefore creating an outcome not beneficial to natural heritage or climate change.</p> <p>Encourage prime ag lands to be cropped sustainably. Prime ag lands need to be protected from residential development. Most people want to limit greenfield development and expand existing communities to preserve the agricultural sector. Could there be something that could indicate what plants might be the most helpful with regards to helping mitigate the effects of climate change. This might be more effectively placed in the Regional Climate Strategy.</p> <p>There is a lot of top soil that goes with large caliper trees. Phragmites is spreading with little action to control it and this invasive species is really causing issues. Giant hogweed is a noxious weed and has been eradicated. Invasive species management is important and should be placed in the Climate Change strategy. Why are conversation authorities (CA) not addressing the phragmites issue? Answer might be that this is not the CA's core mandate. Phragmites affects flooding which is their core mandate.</p> <p>Green energy and renewable energy sources as well as building energy standards are areas that could be explored. Regional fleets could move towards electric or hybrid cars. Milton looked at electric buses but these are too expensive at the present time. A Regional transit system would help address transportation and climate change. There is lots of movement in the west and east but little public transportation is available from north and south. North south movement is important due to health care, and other regional services located in the south. Other municipalities do have Regional transit systems which would remove traffic off of the highways.</p> <p>In the Official Plan, there is an opportunity to include goals i.e. getting rid of invasive species, regional forests should maximize planting the best variety of trees to address climate change, work towards eliminating invasive species and encourage green initiatives without the fear of future designations.</p> <p>Best Management practices regarding soil health are principle adaptation measures for primary ag/crop production. GDS may help with mitigation. This may not fit into the ROPA and may be part of a Strategy for Agriculture.</p> <p><b>Question 3. Halton's population is forecast to grow to one million people and accommodate 470,000 jobs by 2041. What do you think about policies to plan for climate change through more compact urban form and complete communities? In your opinion, are we growing in the right direction?</b></p> <p>High density does not necessarily mean high rises. It can mean a variety of housing options. Policies should include some climate change mitigation factors in new builds. For example: green roofs, thermal heating, and permeable pavement or replacement options.</p> <p>Do we need to consider a reforecast/ plan for reduced growth and intensification? As Halton intensifies it needs policies in to be established regarding compact urban form. If complete communities means integrated residential/commercial/employment, then Halton needs to look at this too.</p> <p>The job to population scenarios is a challenge due to the growth of warehousing in employment lands. Could breaks be given to those that meet the density targets? We seem to forget the need for office towers for legal, financial and health care services.</p> <p>Municipalities cannot give favours one way or another...bonusing. We do want more intensified employment areas.</p>	<p>areas, as well as rural lands and key features. Designating these areas provides added protection for agriculture in order to preserve lands with higher class soils. Policy Direction RAS-7 can also address comments pertaining to edge planning.</p> <p>Regional staff notes that comments on the Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper/Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) have been addressed in material related to Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 48 (ROPA 48), or will be addressed through the Preferred Growth Concept materials, including the Submissions Charts. More details are also available in the IGMS Policy Directions.</p> <p>Additionally, Regional staff will consider and explore opportunities to assist the agricultural community in the cost of cover plants based on committee member's concerns. Suggestions for resources indicating different plants which would be most beneficial in mitigating the impacts of climate change, as well as concerns over invasive species, may be considered in a corporate climate change response or in a Natural Heritage Strategy proposed through Policy Direction NH-10. Comments on rural internet and climate change education are not within the purview of the ROP, but may be addressed through the corporate climate change response and/or other Regional plans and programs.</p> <p>The Region is also undertaking a broader set of actions to respond to climate change in accordance with the Region's Strategic Business Plan 2019-2022 and Council's emergency declaration.</p> <p>Halton Region has also partnered with Halton Environmental Network to advance the Region's work in addressing climate change. The partnership will result in the preparation of a community greenhouse gas emissions inventory, community greenhouse gas emission reductions targets, community engagement, and outreach in collaboration with the Halton Climate Collective.</p> <p>Phragmites is an invasive species problem across southwestern Ontario. Halton Region works with the affiliated Conservation Authorities who assist in providing resources and controlling the spread within their jurisdictions. Halton Region will continue to explore partnerships with the Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities to address invasive species management within the Region, with potential opportunities to be determined as part of the development of the Natural Heritage Strategy. NH-10 refers to introducing a new policy in the Regional Official Plan that requires the Region to develop a Halton Region Natural Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>Regional Council will receive policy directions that recommend that the Regional Official Plan include a policy to develop and maintain a Halton Region Natural Heritage Strategy early next year. If endorsed by Regional Council, staff will undertake the Region's Natural Heritage</p>

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		<p>How do we get more in the way of manufacturing jobs? This is more of the Provincial policies. There is a change of environment because of automation. Where is the job market going? Unfortunately, this question has been answered with questions. The direct answer appears to be no we are not moving in the right direction.</p> <p>The Regional building and Police Station are not geothermal. The Region should lead by example with new buildings. Added insulation, energy efficiency are things that can be done with existing Regional buildings.</p> <p>From an agricultural lens, Halton does have farm operations which could benefit from farm labour housing on the property. Possibly look at policy development in this area to allow additional housing options within the farm cluster.</p> <p><b>Question 4. What do you think the Region should do to help you reduce your GHG emissions? For example, if you typically commute by car to work or school every day, what would make you consider taking transit, biking, walking?</b></p> <p>Transit that efficiently moves people in all directions North to South and East to West such as the establishment of a Regional transit system. Working from home requires better rural internet. If these internet issues can be resolved, more people can work from home. Work with providers to get this done faster.</p> <p>Encourage local food hubs for food distribution.</p> <p>Biofuels can be used, and work could be done with the Region to promote biomass usage.</p> <p>The use of solar could be encouraged. Roof top solar might be a better option to encourage.</p> <p>Perennial grass products could be encouraged as well as alternate crops.</p> <p>Biking trails need to be made safer for everyone. Possible not part of the road system in new areas. We have great concerns over everyone's safety on Halton's major and rural roads.</p> <p>The sub-committee believes this area is not applicable for most of agriculture with regards to transportation emissions, as we are only 1% and believe this is offset more than that with sequestration. The sub-committee responded earlier that a lot of Halton residents may work outside of the region and a lot of other people drive through the region to get to work. This may cause difficulties in reducing GHG regarding commuters.</p> <p><b>Question 5. Do you think the Region should encourage and support local renewable energy sources? IF so, what should be considered?</b></p> <p>District heating, geothermal can be encouraged in the Official Plan.</p> <p>We would also like to encourage biomass. Biomass can provide a variety of benefits. For example, perennial grasses tend to have a longer root base and give back to the soil, so one can assume they deter erosion, assist in soil quality and are a renewable resource. Work is also being done to digest food waste into biomass for heating. Possible Halton Region should consider running a few pilot projects in this area.</p> <p>Education can be used by the Region to encourage production of energy sources. This might fit better in a Strategy. Need to identify and explore opportunities to encourage climate change actions that will mitigate the effects of GHG with the agricultural community. WE need to have a critical mass of</p>	<p>Strategy to identify the actions and initiatives within the context of the Regional Official Plan policies that are needed to achieve a sustainable, natural environment. The proposed Strategy will also explore opportunities for programs to assist the agricultural community in climate change mitigation and stewardship efforts to protect and enhance the Natural Heritage System and identify any opportunities and tools in responding to climate change and reducing Halton's carbon footprint.</p> <p>Regional staff will continue to consult with HAAC throughout Phase 3 of the ROPR.</p>

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		<p>agriculture to ensure its viability. Programs that allow agricultural buildings to be more energy efficient (heat exchangers etc.) could be helpful. Natural gas is more cost effective. Incrementally there are many changes that can be instituted. Our current Ontario Hydro is only operating at about 75% capacity since a lot of manufacturing has left the Province.</p> <p><b>Question 6. Can you provide examples of opportunities to address climate change as it relates to agriculture that you would like to see in Halton?</b></p> <p>Halton needs to maintain a critical mass of agricultural land and with the initial review looking at increasing urban and natural heritage areas, agriculture could be squeezed out of existence. Designations should be based on agriculture and food with natural heritage and climate change as complimentary actions.</p> <p>Areas which could be explored include cover crops, bio-mass fuel, perennial grasses, solar power, greenhouse operations (location), increase opportunities for farmers to utilize regionally owned lands for agricultural applications, including maple syrup, beekeeping, foraging, perennial grasses, etc. The subcommittee questions whether ag-related and on farm diversification permissions/policies will work to address climate change for most field crop and livestock farmers. There are too many potential issues with biosecurity, trespass/ activists for some of us to open our farms up, not to mention increased GHG from customers/employees to the on-farm businesses.</p> <p>It is better to promote and implement best management practices that promote soil health and build organic matter to maximize water holding to adapt to drought periods and ability to absorb heavy rains, etc.</p> <p>Suggest anything that promotes stewardship and long-term usage and promotes grasslands on Class 5.6.7 lands. Work with agricultural organizations to develop and promote good stewardship.</p> <p>Interested has arisen in where the input or feedback came from to suggest these permissions as potential drivers to support ag profit that would then be reinvested in climate change mitigation/adaptation. The sub-committee would like opportunity to discuss this further another meeting.</p> <p><b>Question 7. According to the PPS, 2020, planning authorities are required to consider potential impacts to climate change in increasing risks associated with natural hazards (e.g. fires and floods). How can ROP policies be enhanced to address climate change impacts on natural hazards?</b></p> <p>California fires were mentioned because there are poor forest management plans in place. Dried timber has exacerbated the fires. There is a balancing act. The Region can ensure there is preventative maintenance done by Conservation Authorities (CA) to ensure that it does not result in problems such as creek flooding. Funding for CA's does come from the Region. Flood mitigation is a high priority from the Province and should filter down to the CA's. The CA's often get the towns to do this.</p> <p>Further discussion included the suggestion that Halton Region and Municipalities need to lead by example through their regional forest work and plans, to identify opportunities to update regional infrastructure, and work in collaboration with CA's to conduct measures to ensure clean ditches and water pathways.</p> <p>Bullet points on page 31/32 make sense and it is difficult to make any further suggestions, with the exception to use EIA process for residential/commercial, growth to its fullest, however, normal farm practices should be exempt as much as possible.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

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		<p><b>Question 8. Are there additional measures the ROP should include to improve air quality?</b>  HAAC hopes that intensification occurs first before expansion into agricultural lands and makes the following suggestions.</p> <p>Suggestion 1. Reduce traffic jams and idling which creates issues with air quality. The tie ups on the highways create problems for commuters. Emissions are a real issue. The Clarkson airshed reports show particulate matters. The Oakville bylaws for emissions of industries. This might be worth looking into. Traffic synchronization could be a great mechanism to explore. Identify opportunities to work with the Province to reduce exhaust from the highways.</p> <p>Suggestion 2. Identify and set standards for emission controls from manufacturing facilities. Monitor emissions from employment areas. Restrict companies that have high emissions. Encourage clean employment.</p> <p>Suggestion 3. Post Covid 19 will there be more people working from home? Edge planning can be a useful tool. Could certain build forms work there such as nursing homes, institutional, cemeteries, arena's soccer fields etc. Near urban agriculture has caused concerns on odors from Mushrooms facilities, chicken barns etc... Edge planning may be of benefit in this area.</p> <p>Suggestion 4. Warehousing is becoming automated and take up huge areas but do not have many jobs and these will likely decrease. Consider minimum employment requirements per acre.</p> <p>Suggestion 5. There was also discussion about impermeable surfaces. Could flat roofs be used for water collection, roof top gardens, use to wash cars, water gardens etc.</p> <p>Suggestion 6. Areas for designating employment zones for the most part made sense. Burlington didn't get much. There was concern about CN intermodal and the locations of some of the residential areas may not make sense. We are in the age of specialization, this brings people outside of their domicile and need to go out to facilitate that profession. This does help with the issue of climate change and the working of a complete community.</p> <p>Suggestion 7. We need to ensure the safe movement of farm vehicles. Will transit lines and CN intermodal take up agricultural lands? High speed rail would have been a great solution in terms of moving people.</p> <p>Suggestion 8. Major roads could be improved (Highway 25, Trafalgar) compared to the secondary roads. The use of bicycles in the rural areas are problematic. Shoulders developed on rural roads could be helpful to ensure that farm equipment can continue to move efficiently.</p> <p>Suggestion 9. There are lots of people walking on rural roads particularly since the COVID 19 crisis. Many cyclists seem to cycle in packs and lack road etiquette causing safety issues for all others using the road. There is no law to ensure that they are wearing illuminated vests.....dark clothes make it difficult. There could be merit in working with our Regional Police department to do educational campaigns and ensure safety with pedestrians and cyclists. HAAC was involved with the Regional Police and cyclist groups. Multi use type trails off the road are investments that can ensure the safety of the public and assist with climate change measures.</p> <p>Suggestion 10. Employment Area conversion requests (i.e. mobility hub) are happening and Halton Region needs to mitigate this problem to ensure that local businesses stay in place re-expropriation. Are there ways that the Region Economic Development can ensure that existing businesses can stay in Halton Region.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
2.	<p>HAAC, Natural Heritage Subcommittee</p> <p>Email dated October 27, 2020</p>	<p><b>HAAC Sub-Committee Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</b></p> <p><b>Present:</b> Cecil Patterson, John Opsteen, Meaghan Richardson, Nancy Comber, Colin Best, Alan Ehrlick, Bert Andrews, Barb Parker  <b>Guest:</b> Peter Lambrick  <b>Regional Staff:</b> Anna DeMarchi-Meyers</p> <p><b>Question 1. As required by the Growth Plan, the new Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan mapping and policies must be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan. Based on options outlined in Section 3.3., what is the best approach in incorporating the NHSGP into the ROP?</b></p> <p>The Sub-committee discussed consistency in applying across the Rural area. Urban NHS should be considered differently. There needs to be definitions or criteria on what is considered development since all development is not created equal. The devil is in the details. Further comments on consistency suggested it is good, but it does not include if you need to get permits. Could consistency put more restrictions in place? Could the response be tailored with precautions given on a harmonized system?</p> <p>Options will lead to different consequences. Option 2 and 3 are appealing. The committee needs to consider what the consequences are looking at decades in advance. The need to consider how the systems will work together was discussed.</p> <p>The example of Greenbelts was commented on and that they have come and gone. It is easier to build on restrictions than to take back restrictions. Option 2 might be the best as it would be a mid-road. The Parkway Belt now has several thousand homes</p> <p>As noted in other discussion papers the Sub-committee has concerns about mapping. We need to get aligned with Provincial mapping. The more we can get to proper mapping the better. It was questioned if Regional staff would be working with Conservation staff where ground truthing would be necessary. We would like to suggest utilizing the expertise in your advisory committees.</p> <p>Discussion on options highlighted the following comments.          -Option 3 likes harmonization of the 3 policies and yes, it is needed in the urban area.          -When there is no harmonization of the permits, etc. would option 1 create more restrictive policies through the amalgamation of policies. Preference is given to Option 2          -Option 2 might be the compromising option          -How will ground proofing happen? Suggest a combination of Regional staff, HAAC and NHAC involvement.</p> <p>Please consider other options, like the proposed option offered through the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture.</p> <p><b>Question 2. RNHS policies were last updated through ROPA 38. Are the current goals and objectives for the RNHS policies still relevant/appropriate? How can the ROP be revised further to address these goals and objectives?</b></p> <p>The Sub-committee expressed that we are farming the same landscape as the NHS. It does have an effect when you try to put up a building. At the Ontario Federation of Agriculture level, they have questioned why do you have to have a building 30 metres from a bush, for example a sugar shack?          There needs to be some give and take. In Halton, how many major</p>	<p>Acknowledge submission from HAAC regarding the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper.          Halton Region will need to determine how to incorporate the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan into the Regional Official Plan.</p> <p>HAAC was in support of Option 2 – Harmonizing the Provincial Natural Heritage System or Option 3 – Create an updated Regional Natural Heritage System that incorporates the Provincial Natural Heritage Systems. The policy direction is outlined and in alignment under NH-1 and NH-3. HAAC has reiterated the importance of proper mapping regarding the Natural Heritage System and this is captured in Policy Direction NH-7 where updated base data information available from the Province and conservation authorities was used in Natural Heritage System mapping in the Regional Official Plan. In addition, the Region worked with the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture and offered consultation opportunities with individual landowners and site visits where appropriate to put forth the most accurate mapping. Policy Direction NH-7 also outlines the recommendation that policy be made to recognize refinements to the Regional Natural Heritage System through a planning act approval more frequently than the Region’s statutory review of its Official Plan to reflect accurate mapping as best possible on a regional-scale. The Region recognizes HAAC’s comment that the Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System are in fact the same landscape and strives to find an appropriate balance. Efforts have been throughout Phase 2 of the Regional Official Plan Review to bring the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee together with the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee to discuss issues and gain understanding and perspective of both systems. This will continue as appropriate during Phase 3 of the Regional Official Plan Review. Policy Direction NH-7 includes direction that a guideline be prepared on the existing Regional Official Plan policy framework for linkages, buffers and enhancement areas providing greater clarity aligning with HAAC’s desire for clarity and transparency.</p> <p>Policy Direction RAS-1 proposes the creation of three new mutually exclusive land use designations in the Rural Area including Prime Agricultural Areas, Rural Lands and Key Features which aligns with the HAAC’s preference to pursue mapping option 1 or 2 as outlined in the Discussion Papers where Prime Agricultural Areas are designated. Policy Directions NH-1, NH-2, NH-3 and NH-6 also addresses mapping, planning for, and protecting natural heritage in Halton Region.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-4 reflects comments from HAAC and other stakeholders that supports providing distinct policies and mapping for the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System. Policy Direction NH-10 aligns with comments from HAAC indicating the benefits of developing a Natural Heritage Strategy that could include stewardship, cover crops and other aspects. Regional staff will engage Halton’s Advisory Committees through the development of the Natural Heritage Strategy and the programs and initiatives created to support this</p>



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		<p>buildings are we going to see? What are the pros and cons of building a large structure on prime agricultural land? There must be some flexibility for planners and the wording could/should reflect that.</p> <p>The NHS system is made up of key features which have different levels of significance, but they are all treated the same. Before investments are made, there needs to be certainty for farming operations. Farmers need to have flexibility but is it reasonable to expect no negative impacts to the entire system? Flexibility in planning was suggested through out our discussion. For example, key features are a myriad of different things and are all treated the same, and applications were required. Negative impacts could be different in each circumstance. Can farms take away and re-locate at a different area? Could there be situations when something is removed but replaced somewhere else but still have a no net negative impact?</p> <p>A suggestion came forward to prioritize the most important types of the key features.</p> <p>A comparison was vocalized on the landscape in Kent which is quite different than Halton because the wood was not clearable to make arable land. Our abilities have been somewhat curtailed. The landscape is one and the same NHS and agriculture. It was questioned if it is not feasible that additional land will be converted to agriculture.</p> <p>Protection of land is required from urban development not agricultural development.</p> <p>Consider NHS policies on agricultural lands may be subject to exemptions.</p> <p>Could there be an opportunity to conduct a study on buffers and certain activities maple syrup production, that could be undertaken?</p> <p>If you can build in the bush, you could take away less workable prime land. When we mapped with Grand River Conservation, where they suggested we could build was out in the middle of the field on top of the best lands which may be desirable from an NHS perspective but is not an advantage to the agricultural system. Lots of houses are built in the middle of woods which open into a clearing.</p> <p><b>Question 3. Based on the discussion provided above in Section 4.2, to ease the implementation of buffers and vegetative protection zones, should the Region include more detailed policies describing minimum standards?</b></p> <p>The comment concerned the not recalling the term vegetative protection zones in the last round of ROPA 38. This is concerning. Wording is a little strong and sends up warning bells. It was pointed out the language is used in the growth plans.</p> <p>It is understood that less prescribed details provide the Region more flexibility. This should be asked for agriculture but not urban areas to allow for that flexibility. We need more prescriptive in the urban area and more flexible in the rural area.</p> <p>The Sub-committee expressed concern over buffer on buffer, inhibits the growth of agriculture on narrow pieces of property. For example, good area for green house operation but not allowed.</p> <p><b>Question 4. Given the policy direction provided by the PPS and Provincial plans, how should the policy and mapping address the relationship between natural heritage protection and agriculture outside of the Urban Area or the Natural Heritage System? Options are provided in Section 5.3.</b></p>	<p>Strategy. The ROP will need to reflect policies that conform to the three source protection plans that apply in the Region as outlined in NH-9. Policy Direction NH-5 reflects the need to update and enhance existing policies in the Regional Official Plan on Natural Hazards to conform to Provincial policies and Plans. HAAC has indicated that there could be benefit in directing local municipalities to map Natural Hazards.</p> <p>While Policy Direction NH-8 refers to the updating of the Regional Plan to recognize the impacts of invasive species on the determination of the significance of woodlands, HAAC has indicated that land use policy is not the vehicle to enhance stewardship.</p> <p>It is important to recognize that the Region's role is largely to provide policy guidance based on provincial direction, interpretation, and to ensure that Regional policies and by-laws are being adhered to. Conservation Authorities specialize in providing services and programs to protect and manage ecosystems and natural resources. Given their role, Regional staff remain committed to working with the Conservation Authorities to explore opportunities for invasive species management. At a Regional level, the proposal to develop a Natural Heritage Strategy (Policy Direction NH-9) through the Regional Official Plan Review and that through its development could provide tools to enhance and promote landowner stewardship. There are also opportunities to support educational programs to increase awareness about woodland protection and invasive species management.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>After discussion, the Sub-committee preferred Option 1 or 2, felt Option 3 too complex and Option 4 taken off the table as it does not conform to Provincial direction</p> <p><b>Question 5. The Greenbelt Plan 2017 and Growth Plan 2019 require municipalities to identify a Water Resource System (WRS) in Official Plans. Based on the two (2) options provided in Section 6.3., how should the WRS be incorporated into the ROP?</b></p> <p>It was questioned if this exercise has already mapped the WRS. Farmers in Kelso Lake have already been questioned. The WRS could get muddled. It is best that these two are kept separate.</p> <p>This question is somewhat confusing and needs refinement. Therefore Option 2 should probably apply.</p> <p><b>Question 6. Preserving natural heritage remains a key component of Halton's planning vision. Should Halton Region develop a Natural Heritage Strategy and what should be included in such a strategy?</b></p> <p>We discussed payments for ecological goods and services could be built into a Natural Heritage Strategy, recognizing this could have negative effects as well. Would not like to see land purchased and turned into lumber. There could be dual purpose uses i.e. planting of fruit trees that could be gleaned and go into the food system. Could this be turned into a positive for agriculture? Lands that are farmable offered to young farmers.</p> <p>Need to promote stewardship which could mean the Region putting money into GRCA for cover crop programs that would allow farmers to be good stewards of the land. Include words to encourage stewardship and climate change initiatives. The strategy could include cover crops, farm forestry exemption (administered by MPAC) with the Region.</p> <p>NHS key features that society benefits, this should not be taxed. When prescribing and making goals, there should be urban, rural, and Regional goals. When the urban area does such a poor job of looking after the natural resources, this then falls on the rural areas. The rural area ends up picking up the slack. The OP speaks to protecting agricultural land but there has been land taken out of production and placed into trees on some of the best soils. How do we give balance on stewardship?</p> <p>The Sub-committee wishes the proposed strategy not to be detrimental to agriculture, make it positive for agriculture. Concerns were expressed over man built natural heritage systems and the potential incorrect labeling of the area.</p> <p>Halton expresses strong words of protecting agriculture and yet lands have been taken out of agriculture and put into trees. Where is the balance here? How are trees considered better stewardship?</p> <p><b>Question 7. Should the ROP incorporate objectives and policies to support/recognize the Cootes to Escarpment Eco Park System?</b></p> <p>It was noted there is an extensive natural area so this fits to be included and recognized as the Cootes to Escarpment Eco Park System with a grandfather clause to allow for existing farming operations. Deerfield Farms is in the area and should have the ability to continue farming. We are surprized this area is not already in the OP.</p> <p>However, we are not in favour of special treatment of areas. Where would that end?</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p><b>Question 8. The ROP is required to conform to applicable Source Protection Plans and must be updated through this ROP process. What is the best approach to address Drinking Water Source Protection policies and mapping?</b></p> <p>The Sub-committee does suggest there should be a fund that would compensate farmers for activities that cannot occur for example, can not fertilize near well heads, to make those operations whole since society is the beneficiary.</p> <p>If mapping is already done regarding capture zones, do we need more mapping?</p> <p>Policies should be consistent with rural and urban. For example, why can the farmer not fertilize, but the urban area across the road can fertilize their lawns and gardens.</p> <p>Information was provided that 72 farms would have restrictions</p> <p><b>Question 9. The ROP is required to conform to the updated Natural Hazards policies in the PPS. What is the best approach to incorporate Natural Hazards policies and mapping?</b></p> <p>It was suggested that fire hazards (unmanaged forests) should be brought to the Regional forester.</p> <p>There could benefit to directing the local municipalities to map Natural Hazards. The local municipalities would have a better sense of what exists compared to the Region.</p> <p><b>Question 10. How can Halton Region best support the protection and enhancement of significant woodlands, through land use policy?</b></p> <p>Land use policy is not the vehicle to enhance woodland stewardship. There are other more effective tools in our toolbox. Incentives need to be provided to do this.</p> <p>Suggested the need to be careful that policies are reasonable.</p> <p>Agriculture has a great relationship with the Regional Forester, but could policies be misinterpreted with the next person in this position?</p> <p>The Region needs to be strong and educate people that trees are a resource that need to be effectively managed. This could link into the Natural Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>It was noted, Ron Reinholt provides an annual update to Regional Council.</p> <p><b>Question 11. Are there any additional considerations or trends that Halton Region should review in terms of the Natural Heritage component of the ROP?</b></p> <p>When there are applications that affect agricultural areas or NHS, could the Advisory Committees be involved in giving opinion? Could this be introduced into the Terms of Reference?</p> <p>Hard urban boundaries should be instituted. Initiatives to develop to encourage a natural environment in the urban area should be pursued. There should be discussion about ecological functions in the urban area i.e. permeable surfaces used for parking etc.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
3.	<p>HAAC, Rural and Agricultural System subcommittee</p> <p>Email dated October 27, 2020</p>	<p><b>HAAC Subcommittee Comments - Rural and Agricultural System</b></p> <p><b>Sub-Committee:</b> Cecil Patterson, Colin Best, Al Ehrlick, Meaghan Richardson, John Opsteen, Bert Andrews, Nancy Comber, Barb Parker</p> <p><b>Guests:</b> Peter Lambrick, Geoff Maltby, Jamie Fisher,</p> <p><b>Regional Staff:</b> Anna DeMarchi-Meyers</p> <p><b>Question 1. Mapping options</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Should the updated ROP designate prime agricultural areas with a separate and unique land use designation? Yes</b></li> <li>b. <b>Are there any additional pros and cons that could be identified for any of the options?</b></li> <li>c. <b>Do you have a preferred mapping option? If so, why.</b></li> </ol> <p>The sub-committee expressed their preferred mapping option was either 1 or 2 and definitely not 4.</p> <p>Mapping should be a tool to implement and encourage the changes agriculture needs on the ground. The Sub-Committee strongly believes in ground truthing and are willing to help do this. Ground truthing is a large endeavour, but we believe at least a sampling should be done on areas in question. Mapping should be a tool to implement and encourage the changes we want on the ground.</p> <p>In fact, it was pointed out not all key features are accurately mapped which are important, therefore agree should be no key feature designation. Watercourses not shown on any of the map options, therefore should this be a consideration on all options.</p> <p>All four options are offered from the Regional planning perspective and have not looked to see how things would be implemented. We anticipate continued challenges with implementation. When the ROP is not in conformity with Provincial Policy Statement, then the municipalities cannot be in conformity and implementation is difficult. As a note of interest, Burlington passed a motion that in Burlington's next official plan, prime agricultural area is a designation. These are huge hurdles and encourage policy to create tools to strengthen agriculture. There needs to be good policies to encourage agriculture.</p> <p>Comments on Option 1 included The Sub-committee believes it is the cleanest and best option and would be in conformity with the PPS. All NHS and key features would be an overlay. The process may change which will be easier for agriculture to continue. All PPS protections and Regional protections could be achieved.</p> <p>Comments on Option 2 – This option shows Prime Ag, NHS key features would be designated and would satisfy conformity. However not all key features could be delineated, making it to interpret draft zoning. Key features defined beyond the PPS should not disrupt agriculture. Concern was expressed about unmapped key features. This makes Option 2 more challenging and can be done in a way to ensure agricultural issues can be implemented. It also satisfies what Regional Council previously passed (2018).</p> <p>Option 3 – Is more complex and may be difficult to execute and manage.</p> <p>Option 4 – The Sub-committee felt this map should not be on the table at all. This option shows existing policy and mapping, and possibly written with a bias to promote it, even though does not meet PPS 2020.</p>	<p>Submission comments align with the policy directions that the Region is proposing. Policy direction RAS-1 proposes the creation of three new mutually exclusive land use designations in the Rural Area including Prime Agricultural Areas, Rural Lands and Key Features which aligns with the HAAC's preference to pursue mapping option 1 or 2 as outlined in the Discussion Papers where Prime Agricultural Areas are designated. Policy Directions NH-1, NH-2, NH-3 and NH-6 also addresses mapping, planning for, and protecting natural heritage in Halton Region. A geo viewer tool was available on the Regional website based on previous comments from the Advisory Group that demonstrates existing and draft proposed Agricultural System and Natural Heritage mapping. Furthermore, Regional staff worked with the HRFA to schedule virtual landowners meetings to address any property inquiries along with site visits where appropriate in response to the agricultural communities concern that mapping be as accurate as possible. Any refinements based on site visits were reflective in updated mapping. Furthermore this is reflected in NH-7 where stakeholder feedback indicated the policies to recognize refinements through a planning approvals process to the Regional Natural Heritage System that is accepted by the Region on more frequent updates to the mapping than at the Region's statutory review of its Official Plan. RAS-2 aligns with the position of updating the policies of the ROP to broaden permissions and allow for opportunities for agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. The Region will continue to work on establishing policies to further define these activities using the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas along with the suggested 2 percent of farm property for OFDU to a maximum of 1 ha as a key guidance document. The Region acknowledges the position of HAAC that prime agricultural lands are a finite resource and that cemeteries should not be located on these lands but rather in the urban area or on lesser capability rural lands as per RAS-3. The Region also recognizes the need to provide greater clarity and detail in order to arrive at a higher quality Agricultural Impact Assessment reflected in RAS-4. HAAC has commented that AIA's should not apply to agricultural operations citing that it results in additional time and financial considerations. Further consultation will take place on additional requirements for AIA's through Phase 3 of the Regional Official Plan Review. HAAC has indicated that additional requirements regarding solar farms should be investigated. RAS-5 aligns with the position that there are some special needs housing that would benefit from being located in a rural setting. The Region recognizes the comments from HAAC regarding the desire for consideration of Edge Planning as a means of reducing conflicts between urban and rural usages reflected in RAS-7.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>It was further noted unmapped key features exist. Could there be specifics? Appendix 2 of the NHS paper, list of key features with check marks of those that are unmapped. Richard Clark said that unmapped features allows for key features to be identified. Clarification is required.</p> <p>The Sub-committee feels that the definition of unmapped key features has broadened which causes concern.</p> <p>A general comment suggested a preferred word would be “constraint”.</p> <p>Note: Council Motion: May 23, 2018 – Moved John Taylor, The recommendation supports the long term protection of the NHS, whereas the Region and in accordance must conform and not conflict – through OP, plan is amended by providing NHS as an overlay, agricultural land use is a designation...copy LPS 45-18 forwarded to Burlington etc.</p> <p>Councillor Colin Best stated former Council decisions cannot be considered a mandate. The sub-committee suggests this does not enhance continuity in Regional administration and question the response.</p> <p>Further, the sub-committee felt strongly that agriculture needs to continue whether prime or rural lands. It was further expressed our want to ensure there are not limitations on prime agricultural lands.</p> <p>Further discussion lead toward the suggestion that a modification be made an Option between 1 and 2. We requested the opportunity to come back and discuss this additional option with staff. The Sub-committee recommends that agricultural uses do not need to go through an AIA. These would be only for a non-agricultural use i.e. golf course, expansion of an urban area, cemeteries. The overlay requirement in its simplest form could include an AIA and an EIA. You would look at the mapped features but also unmapped features so the study could be done well. It may make sense to have an agricultural system that reflects what is happening on the ground. This would strike a balance between planning conformity and what is happening on the ground.</p> <p>Everyone agreed the maps are not useful at the scale provided. They need to be enlarged and have lot and concession identifiers.</p> <p>Our guest to the meeting Jamie Fisher commented it was nice to have HAAC and HRFA have a similar position on the mapping.</p> <p><b>Question 2. Agriculture-related uses</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Should the ROP permit the agriculture-related uses as outlined in the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas in its entirety?</b></li> <li>b. <b>What additional conditions or restrictions should be required for any agriculture-related uses?</b></li> <li>c. <b>Should some uses only be permitted in the Rural Area as opposed to Prime Agricultural Lands?</b></li> </ol> <p>The following items were noted:</p> <p>The sub-committee is in favour of the examples of permitted and not permitted uses, except exclusion of vet practices. Specifically, large animal vets. Comments refer to number 5 in the discussion paper, under 5.3 and the provision of sufficient guidelines. It was further noted these guidelines, need to be clear.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>With many farm operations have large vehicle equipment yards, the committee wanted to express the need for an objective opinion on “trucking” yards. Farms need and utilize a variety of transportation equipment to get goods to market and end users.</p> <p>The Sub-committee would like to refer to past HAAC comments:</p> <p><b>HAAC Response 2019:</b> HAAC fully supports the existing 2014 PPS definition, criteria, and examples of what is considered agricultural related uses and feels that they should be allowed to the fullest extent possible as long as the criteria in the “Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas” are met.</p> <p>The Sub-committee is asking that normal farm practice be more clearly defined. People need to clearly know what “normal farm practice” is and that it will be accepted before investing in it. Suggest not using “farm operations in the area” which allows for regional differences. Agriculture could look quite different in 20 to 25 years and so there needs to be flexibility.</p> <p>It was commented on the provincial guidelines provide a good agricultural issues table in the provincial guidelines. Provincial guidelines also have a good outline of Normal Farm Practices.</p> <p>It was suggested the ROP look at the Permitted Use Guidelines with clear limits on what is enforceable on scale. With the proper approach it can be made workable on the ground. Education is key. We may not always get a clear answer on anything before it starts.</p> <p><b>Question 3. On-farm diversified uses</b>  <b>a. Should the ROP permit on-farm diversified uses as outlined in the Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas in its entirety?</b></p> <p>Yes. The Sub-committee agreed it is good for agriculture to be able to make additional revenue. Could there be rules that could be written in zoning by laws to allow? Could there be a municipal officer that would allow to a certain size and scale, as right?</p> <p>Halton Region may wish to consider a minimum owned acreage requirement, for example, 50 acres?  <b>HAAC:</b> HAAC fully supports the 2014 definition, criteria, and examples of what is considered an on-farm diversified use and what is not considered an on-farm diversified use and feels that they should be allowed to the fullest extent possible as long as the criteria in the “Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas” are met. In order to have long-term sustainability of farming in Halton, HAAC believes that the ability to generate additional revenue streams is critical. It was expressed that tax implications (development charges, MPAC assessments) that affect farming operations need to be carefully considered to ensure that they do not become counterproductive to the enabling policies being introduced in the Official Plan. Furthermore, the definition of “normal farm practice” needs to reflect what is currently being done throughout the world on similar operations in order to keep up with changes being experienced in the agricultural sector.</p> <p><b>What additional conditions or restrictions should be required for any on-farm diversified uses?</b></p> <p>It was noted, most of the planners are urban and their understanding of agriculture is becoming less. Halton Region is truly fortunate to have the ability to have input on Advisory Councils. If through the process, we ask Advisory Committees to get involved to have input to planners on specifics. The Sub-committee would like to make clear that the Advisory Committees would be prepared to work with planners to get something workable regarding restrictions. Guidelines are an excellent starting point.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>Halton Region may wish to consider a minimum owned acreage requirement, for example, 50 acres?</p> <p><b>b. The Guidelines on Permitted Used in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas limit on-farm diversified uses to no more than 2 percent of the farm property on which the uses are located to a maximum of 1 ha. As well, the gross floor area of buildings used for on-farm diversified uses is limited (e.g. 20 percent of the 2 percent). Are these the appropriate size limitations for Halton farms?</b></p> <p>Generally, the Sub-committee felt 2 percent is adequate.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed on ground mounted solar and how they are taxed, as agriculture or commercial. We believe the Province was provided direction to allow solar mounted panels.</p> <p>An additional concern was expressed about multiple farm holdings that may want to collectively use one site to have on-farm diversified uses.</p> <p><b>Question 4. To what extent should the updated ROP permit cemeteries in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Urban areas</b></li> <li><b>b. Rural areas</b></li> <li><b>c. Prime agricultural areas</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Explain the criteria e.g. factors that are important to you, that should be considered when evaluating cemetery applications for each?</b></p> <p>The Sub-committee felt we do not need to allow cemeteries in rural or prime ag. Areas. From an agricultural perspective, these would not be needed. With urban expansions, the Region and local municipalities need to find the areas where this can be accommodated.</p> <p>Further discussion included a Regional Study on the need for more cemeteries and additional consideration on placing size restrictions. Study should include different cultures and different burial customs.</p> <p>In an effort to preserve agriculture, the Sub-Committee strongly believes cemeteries should not be allowed in rural or prime agricultural areas. It was asked if the NHS could accommodate burials and it was stated the Province supports the position of not allowing in NHS.</p> <p>Cemeteries could be utilized in proposed edge planning between urban and rural.</p> <p>We refer to previous HAAC comments; Dec 16: HAAC believes that cemeteries should not be on prime agricultural land but rather in the urban area or on lesser capability rural lands.</p> <p>Today’s cemeteries are large in scale and given that there is a finite amount of prime land, efforts need to be made to protect these lands for the future. Once these lands are converted to cemeteries, they will never go back to agriculture. The suggestion was made that there needs to be new innovative ways to deal with burials with the possible introduction of size restrictions. The approach to burial in the past does not mean that we must continue to use the same approach in the future.</p> <p><b>Question 5. Do the AIA policy requirements in the ROP sufficiently protect agricultural operations in the Prime Agricultural Area and Rural Area? If not, what additional requirements do you think are needed?</b></p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>History has shown that AIA's in the past never stopped or changed anything. It was more of a justification measure. It is important that AIA's do not apply to agriculture. The Sub-committee mentioned they knew of farmers involved in a scoped AIA. Concern was expressed about the length of time, which appears to be typically a year for approval, with costs noted between \$10,000 and a full AIA could be \$50,000.</p> <p>Sub-committee members expressed their impression of AIA's in the past as being pathetic and noted the Velodrome, and gas plant expansion. Further questioning if for the NHS expansion should it be required to determine the impact on agriculture? This is a permanent change to the landscape regarding agriculture.</p> <p>Please note HAAC's previously supplied comment: "Settlement areas, mineral resource extraction areas and any other use that could negatively impact agriculture as a whole should be subject to an Agricultural Impact Assessment. Concern was expressed about the quality of an Agricultural Impact Assessment. AIA's could be reviewed by HAAC to assist with the evaluation of these reports."</p> <p>Question: If you want to create a wetland or woodlot is an AIA done? For example, when land is taken out of production by Conservation Halton.</p> <p>Question: Could the Region provide a budget so agriculture can refute reports through another expert?</p> <p>Is there a mechanism to review AIA's? Again, we strongly suggest you utilize the expertise of the advisory committees.</p> <p><b>Question 6. Should the requirements for an AIA be included in any other new or existing ROP policies?</b></p> <p>The Sub-committee suggests Solar farms should require one. Green energy projects should be evaluated to ensure that the lands go back to agriculture. The committee felt this should be included in NHS expansions and be in the NHS. Forest plantings should be perhaps directed on less capable soils.</p> <p>The Sub-committee discussed small scale on farm renewable energy projects and that they should be exempt, similar to surplus farm dwelling severance applications.</p> <p>The requirement for Solar/wind energy, should be considered on Regional and Conservation Halton lands, instead of taking land out of agriculture use. For example, tree planting.</p> <p>The Sub-committee also stated quarry should go back to agriculture.</p> <p><b>Question 7. Should special needs housing be permitted outside of urban areas and under what conditions?</b></p> <p>The Sub-Committee was provided some knowledge on existing special need housing in rural and prime agriculture. For example, people with development disabilities with behavioural issues (i.e. may not want to wear clothes, bad language), may be better situated in a rural setting. Typically, these homes would purchase existing homes in a rural setting and not interfere with agriculture.</p> <p>It was noted that some special needs houses have been successful in the rural areas. However, some are not appropriately situated and provide safety factors. It was noted location is important. The Region should put some parameters to ensure the safety of the residents.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>



No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>We recognized most group homes can be professionally managed and beneficial to the community.</p> <p>The Sub-committee discussed the benefits to society and the relatively small impact on rural and prime agriculture areas. Differences between urban and rural is the noise quality. A mellow atmosphere may increase responses with residents. We also recognize the Province has encouraged home environments and encourage inclusion.</p> <p>With this being said, the Sub-Committee thought there should be Regional consideration on the size of lot, building cluster type of approach to evaluate different scenarios. We would encourage the development of large organizations providing multiple buildings/condos for a specific target group but see large properties lost to agriculture. Size restrictions could be a way of working with this challenge.</p> <p>Is there potentially risk in rural and agricultural areas of some specific types of special needs persons wandering from these premises and getting lost in farm fields or forests and swamps?</p> <p><b>Question 8. Are there any additional considerations or trends that Halton Region should review in terms of the Rural and Agricultural System component of the ROP?</b></p> <p>The Sub-committee would appreciate the consideration of Edge Planning as a means of reducing aggravation between urban and rural usages.</p> <p>We are also concerned about key hydrological features and the parameters around these. The farming community wants to know more as it would/could affect the agricultural system and their farms.</p> <p>We strongly believe in Ground Truthing to aid in mapping rural and agricultural areas.</p> <p>The Sub-committee wants to see permanent urban boundaries. How do we get the encouragement to get a permanent urban countryside like Waterloo? Can we define where the expect the number of people and jobs per hectare.</p> <p>Please note previous HAAC comments, Dec 16#5 "Concern was expressed by HAAC about some of the extremely large homes being built in the rural areas. It was felt that the rural areas should be protected from this type of large development. There are efforts restricting the agricultural building envelope yet no restrictions on home size. Infrastructure should be avoided to the largest extent on prime agricultural lands. The group felt that greenhouses should be encouraged on the lower capability lands. As well, the same level of protection should occur on rural lands as compared to prime since viable farm operations can still be established on these lands. Cannabis operations should be located within the industrial areas. It was also stated that normal farm practices should still be allowed to continue in the rural areas. There needs to be acknowledgement that normal farm practices are evolving and changing and that there needs to be efforts to look at what is happening in other parts of the world with similar operations."</p> <p>Question: Can the Region supply definitions of Key natural features. This could affect agricultural systems greatly.</p> <p>Question: Would edge planning go hand in hand with permanent urban boundaries?</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments for your consideration.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
4.	<p>HAAC, Agriculture Area Assessment and Impact Assessment Subcommittee</p> <p>Email dated January 4, 2021</p>	<p>HAAC Subcommittee Comments Agriculture Area Assessment and Impact Assessment Subcommittee: Cecil Patterson, Bert Andrews, John Opsteen, Nancy Comber, Al Ehrlick, Colin Best, Barb Parker, Rashad Mehmood, Meaghan Richardson. Regional Staff: Anna DeMarchi-Meyers, Dated: November 25, 2020</p> <p>General Comments. Before the committee proceeded to review and comment on the Agriculture Area Assessment and Impact Assessment, it was requested time be allowed for general comments.</p> <p>-The information was received too late to create an informed opinion. Anna provided the workbook was received late from the Consultant. However, it was too late to review for informed discussion.</p> <p>-The timeframe given in general to respond is very short especially with COVID 19. December 10th deadline is too short. The Sub-committee is of the impression there are no tight deadlines from the province and have difficulty understanding the tight timelines imposed.</p> <p>-Disappointment with the meeting in how it was presented. We were very rushed in the breakout rooms and believe joint conversations with NHAC were needed. The HAAC Sub-Committee express the wish for HAAC to be able to comment on the NHS System. If there is no wiggle room with NHS System, then all the growth would need to be accommodated by the agricultural system which is concerning.</p> <p>-It was expressed NHS are deemed important with no concerns on the affect on agriculture.</p> <p>-There is concern that the growth projections are off to begin with as we have not hit the previous growth projection targets, senior staff has been asked to adjust projections based on our current state. More accurate population projections could change the projection of agriculture lands being taken out of production.</p> <p>-Further to this the economy projections are in question as well due to COVID-19. Are agricultural operations considered to be economic drivers? Current gross farm/amount of agricultural land how much economic loss would be represented across the 4 growth scenarios. It was noted greenhouse operations have higher per person employment ratios. What is the average economic loss across the growth scenarios?</p> <p>Workbook What do you think of the current approach to measures 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3?</p> <p>When the land is developed it is removed from agricultural production. If we want people to farm, we need to focus on protecting the best land in Halton. Favour options that favour the least amount of agricultural land. However, the Sub-committee does not endorse any of the options being presented. How can we justify the permanent loss of prime agricultural land? The best is being developed.</p> <p>From an agricultural lens, when NHS is increased, it creates additional measures which impede agriculture. It is suggested staff review the proposed boundaries using current population densities as opposed to targets, high densities, and ten-year controlled boundaries of growth. It was suggested we make growth projections to 2031, 2041 and 2051 releasing land for development in an orderly fashion to encourage densification and deter speculator buying outside of the boundaries suggested due to the</p>	<p>Acknowledgement of the receipt of the submission and that HAAC favours options that take the least amount of agricultural land out of production. These comments are related to the determination of a Preferred Growth Concept and documented in the Integrated Growth Management Strategy segment of the Consultation Summary. The Region appreciates the offer of HAAC to assist with the review of any AIAs or in the identification of any agricultural operations/buildings in any given area as part of an Agricultural Impact Assessment.</p> <p>Environmental Goods and Servicing:</p> <p>HAAC comments with regards to the request for Environmental Goods and Servicing to be recognized in the Regional Official Plan have been received. The Regional Official Plan supports the development and implement programs and plans to support and sustain agriculture in Halton, which may include, financial support to promote environmental stewardship including the preparation of Environmental Farm Plans and Environmental Impact Assessments for agricultural buildings, and preservation and enhancement of natural areas and functions. Since the inception this policy, the Region has provide in-kind services for ten agricultural buildings/related uses within Halton's NHS. Furthermore, NH-10 identifies that through the Halton Region Natural Heritage Strategy, there is a need to explore opportunities to support stewardship programs and services to assist the agricultural farming community in climate change mitigation and stewardship efforts to protect and enhance the Natural Heritage System.</p> <p>Regional staff notes that comments on the Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper/Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) have been addressed in material related to Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 48 (ROPA 48), or will be addressed through the Preferred Growth Concept materials, including the Submissions Charts. More details are also available in the IGMS Policy Directions.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>prolonged potential for development. Tighter boundaries are necessary. Boundaries need to be tightened to meet the Provincial densification numbers.</p> <p>Concern was expressed on the large tracts of land on either side of the 407 which are still not developed?</p> <p>The Sub-committee implores the Region to pursue one of the Options that takes the least amount of land out of agricultural production but believe less is possible. We suggest a Concept 5 (smaller urban boundaries, using current population numbers, taking even less out of production than Concept 3.</p> <p>We cannot express enough our concern about the quality of land being taken out of production for development.</p> <p>Further discussion regarding the education of the public on normal farm practices followed, commenting on how farmers sometimes have no say and are brought into the urban area such as the Walkers and the McCann's.</p> <p>It was questioned if the proposed concepts meet PPS with regards to prime agriculture and if consideration was given in developing the concepts on the possible CN intermodal yard and its effects on the proposed development.</p> <p>Quality of life is important.</p> <p>Discussion ensued on agricultural buildings and MDS calculations. It was noted MDS does not apply in urban areas. Farm animals versus urban area growth is concerning. Anna discussed the Region's efforts to capture an inventory of agricultural value assets (barns/structures which could hold livestock). It was questioned if this should also contain any structure with change of use comes into play. Cecil has offered to help make connections to help interview active farmers. A direct approach is preferred. The value of what is coming out of these farms becomes important. Suggestion to contact associations to identify any key operations.</p> <p>Concept 3.1.1. Retains the largest amount of contiguous agricultural land possible. There will be employment, people, transit area around Milton. The best land to the west and south west of Georgetown will eventually be developed. .../3</p> <p>3.1.2 Want to know how many ha of Class 1, 2 and 3 be affected. Least Ha of land being affected is the desirable approach.</p> <p>3.1.3 Most acceptable approach, but not endorsed.</p> <p>3.1.4 No comment.</p> <p>HAAC Subcommittee Comments Growth Concept Evaluation Workbook Subcommittee: Cecil Patterson, Bert Andrews, John Opsteen, Nancy Comber, Al Ehrlick, Colin Best, Barb Parker, Rashad Mehmood, Meaghan Richardson. Regional Staff: Anna DeMarchi-Meyers, Steve Burke Dated: December 2, 2020</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>Note: Wednesday, December 9, 2020 arrangements have been made to provide the presentation presented to NHAC. It was questioned if NHAC was aware of the loss of agricultural land within these concepts? The Sub-Committee appreciates the opportunity to review this information with regards to growth.</p> <p>It was provided that HAAC is getting an early look which will enable us to review as a whole and provide additional feedback.</p> <p>Theme 1</p> <p>Measure 1.1.1 to 1.1.4 make sense. It was noted by the HAAC Sub-committee our comments in this area are opinion based and not knowledge based, therefore our opinions are based on agriculture and the affects imposed upon.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee questions if we should be looking at soil capacity. How much is prime agriculture and what percentage of land is that? When can we expect a response on this? Discussion ensued and a commitment was given to provide soon.</p> <p>From an agricultural point of view, Concept 3 is the best. Soil capacity is very important. Concept 3 which takes the least amount of land is rated as high amount the current options provided.</p> <p>The Sub-committee questioned if it is possible to meet PPS requirements in the existing areas. It was expressed Concept 3 does allow for this to happen.</p> <p>The Sub-committee expressed the need for more detailed mapping, specifically when we are being asked for comments on transit centers. For example, note major roads as reference points. Not all sub-committee members are familiar with the lands and areas that are being proposed for Growth areas. At the very least, Concept 1 should have the major roads identified on the maps to make them more user friendly. The agricultural maps should also have an overlay to see the Class 1,2 and 3 lands and their locations. The Regional documents are conceptual at this point. Concern that any future strategic employment area that is mapped, will not have any investments made into agricultural infrastructure.</p> <p>Question: How much is redevelopment of mature neighbourhoods been considered? Response: Growth Plan targets are a minimum and set by the Province.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about which Concepts have the most pie (referring to pie charts in workbook). While the measures are not ranked, it will depend on what is important to Councillors. Agriculture may or may not be top of mind. It was also noted not all sections have the same number of pies.</p> <p>Key choices will need to be made.</p> <p>It was expressed that NHS is increasing, urban areas are increasing, strategic employment areas are increasing, and agricultural areas are decreasing. Looking for agriculture to have an equal footing with NHS, urban, employment etc. If there is substantial loss to agriculture to accommodate growth, then there should be considerations given to agriculture to ensure farm viability?</p> <p>Question: How much is considered with regards to land repurposing? Response: These have been factored in. We need to look at the least amount of impact on agricultural lands. Targets in the growth plan are minimum, the Region can not plan for less.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>Question: Which concept has the most pie in all areas?  Response: It has not been totaled but beliefs it is Concept 3. The Region needs to make key choices. Please note these are not a final choice and just concepts.</p> <p>A Halton Region Federation of Agriculture representative commented their main goal is to protect agriculture.</p> <p>It was noted not all themes have the same number of measures/pies.</p> <p>Rural employment is included in the employment analysis.</p> <p>Some of the best farmland has been bought up by speculators and continues to be bought up. This puts pressure on farms. Agriculture is as important to the economy as employment areas. More people contribute to more problems! COVID-19 19 has drawn attention to how there are additional problems when people are living in increased densities.</p> <p>Question: How is the Region going to achieve the building of apartments with so much land available?  Response: Apartments are part of the mixed housing discussion. We have choices to make to meet objectives.</p> <p>Soil matters but so does farm viability. Farms are being boxed in which will affect farm viability. Development appears to be sporadic and not consistent. It was suggested to complete growth in Milton and refrain from growth in the Halton Hills area to enable agriculture systems to exist.</p> <p>NHS reduces Halton's food security by half since the Region's insistence on protecting natural heritage over food security. If farm infrastructure were allowed on NHS designated areas, it could lessen the burden on agriculture and ensure food security.</p> <p>The Sub-committee expressed concerns about road widening. The criteria seem reasonable in terms of putting growth close to transit corridors etc.</p> <p>Farms close to people is beneficial in one sense but how do we offer opportunities for farmers to have spaces where they can sell farm products in town. People want a one stop shop.</p> <p>The pies tell the story with Concept 3 have no additional residential and minimal employment. It makes the most sense. Barns can easily disintegrate and it's important that these are maintained.</p> <p>Discussion focused on what is the current capacity of agriculture and not what is happening. We need to consider what good agricultural land could be. There are clear areas of land that now have major farm operations existing today. Ten years ago, we never would of thought of a sheep dairy in Halton. Discussion ensued on various properties and infrastructure.</p> <p>Halton Region staff provided they are doing a crude assessment of what is existing to complete an analysis to create a more detailed information for the purposes of understanding the full impact.</p> <p>Discussion around whether tenure of land is important as it will indicate whether there is intent for the land to continue in agriculture.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>We then moved to the relevant weighting if any between employment lands and residential lands. Is employment based on assumptions? What type of employment does Halton want to attract? It is broken down into different employment types. What are the economic values 1 job/1 housing unit? The Regional staff respond financial impact assessments will be going to Council in the future and more of this information will be available in the discussion papers.</p> <p>The conversation returned to the comment on equal footing for NHS/Urban/Employment and Agriculture.</p> <p>Unfortunately, staff responded agriculture is the loser. The evaluation is intended to maximize the agricultural land preserved. .../6 To alleviate this impact, a request was made to reduce buffer zones which impact agriculture.</p> <p>Further discussion took place on how agriculture always seems to be on the losing side. We are always put in a position, to negotiate how much we get hurt. Can we look at NHS to see where we can gain agriculture back? An example would be if a quarry is rehabilitated and but back in agriculture.</p> <p>Not seeing considerations for ecological goods and services provided at the present time. Agriculture provides community benefits for environmental goods and services with the expectation agriculture pays. These benefits need to be public recognized and appreciated. The agricultural community is frustrated in every Regional Official Plan engagement. We need to know what mitigation from the region/society is being given for our resources. Agriculture is as important as woodlands, etc. We can make it better for agriculture to maintain a critical mass. Once it's gone, it's gone!</p> <p>Natural heritage may not be good due to the fact it is designated from air photos and not all those areas are viable natural heritage. Not all-natural heritage features are of the same importance.</p> <p>We are asking to minimize the effects on agriculture from all players.</p> <p>It was requested to look at climate change and the sequestration capacity of agricultural land in Halton. Look at what is being sequestered in Halton based on production.</p> <p>HAAC Subcommittee Comments NHS and Water Resource System Evaluation Framework Assessment Subcommittee: Cecil Patterson, Bert Andrews, John Opsteen, Nancy Comber, Colin Best, Al Ehrlick, Barb Parker, Rashad Mehmood Regional Staff: Anna DeMarchi-Meyers, Leilani Lee-Yates, Kristen Harrison (North South Environmental), Rick Reitmeier, Dated: December 9, 2020</p> <p>Leilani reviewed the slide deck that was present to NHAC during the last joint HAAC NHAC meeting in Breakout Room 2.</p> <p>Question: In Scenario 4, are you looking at development of the landfill site? Response: Other layers will be added in to provide that. Lands Need Assessment would be looked at.</p> <p>Question: In Halton Hills what were the red hatch areas? Response: NHS included in the Growth Plan to be included as an overlay.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>Question: Is the Region looking at how the Water Resource System could impact Agriculture and are they conducting AIA's? (volume, quality, mitigation to farms affected, etc.)</p> <p>Response: More detailed information would be available further in the process. There could be an opportunity for the agricultural community to share information they may have. Asking if it could affect wells that are used for drinking water, livestock supply etc. This should be considered. Rick to ask Ben if anything can be done at this point to flag this.</p> <p>HAAC – guarantee of quality and quantity of water needs to be part of the recommendations moving forward. The Region needs to ensure supply to those affected. Response: This is imbedded in the process, but later in the process.</p> <p>It was requested that maps and possibility documents could be sent to the committee who faces challenges with internet and Zoom. Could the Region make a declaration that the process is not intended to affect the quality or quantity for any rural areas. Response: This will be taken back to the IGMS team.</p> <p>Question: Will the water resource system be ground truthed? Response: Refinements will be done through the process of review. The best available data will be used. A sub watershed study component would be required at the urban boundary expansion stage that would provide the process to confirm the components of the ground water system. At this point features would be flagged for linkages etc.</p> <p>The planning and the Integrated Growth Planning are to reflect needs to 2051, has there been consideration for a phased-in approach, a controlled way so there is not piece meal growth and to ensure the studies are done correctly. This is a massive area to free up all at once and there will not necessary be connection. Is there consideration to a stepped process where certain pieces open in 10-year increments. Response: We will look at phasing that need to be looked at such as infrastructure, allocation etc. to look at the growth. We can follow up with Steve to get a more detailed answer to the group.</p> <p>Question: Is agriculture is expected to continue ...to when? Response: This commentary was specific to NHS component areas not to limit agricultural operations. HAAC: We were told at our last meeting agriculture was the loser. We are asking how is agriculture to continue? How, when, for how long, and what is it allowed to do. Response: The Province allows urban boundary expansion into agricultural areas. The addition of white belt to the Greenbelt could be one method for protection. Regional Council could decide to have a 5th option where there is no expansion. Another option would be to designate areas as Specialty Crop for long term protection. Your frustration is understandable. The ROP states agriculture need to stay.</p> <p>Farmers may be losing the best land for agriculture, but we do not look at using the worst of NHS (some which may not provide the same levels of benefits). We could keep the best level of agriculture. Is this a concept we can try to sell? Response: We are looking at the definition of significant woodlands to add a quality criterion to it i.e., black locust an invasive species is that worth keeping? Therefore, we do AIAs. The Province indicates that you need to demonstrate no negative impact. Our hands are tied by the Province with key natural features. We need to push back to save the best land in Canada for agriculture. It was noted normal farm practices are allowed in other areas. We can not build in a feature without an EIA.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>With the proposed new development agriculture could lose 2,000 ha currently in agriculture. However, we are keeping the poor natural heritage areas which are not health or good. We need to achieve a balance with the infinite resources we have. We are disappointed in the province and need to push back.  Response: Capturing comments is a starting point. Halton is trying to show our agricultural quality. We have hired natural heritage experts and feel verily assured of their work.</p> <p>Question: Does natural heritage systems rank their areas similar to agriculture. For example: Class #1 Key Features,</p> <p>Halton Region is pushing for higher densities. We are not seeing the growth projections compared to the current actuals.</p> <p>At this point in the meeting, the Sub-committee reviewed two documents supplied by members. Those documents were titled:  Terms of Reference: to be changed to Glossary of Terms  Proposal to Enhance Agriculture to Mitigate the Massive Loss of Agriculture Land Proposed in the Regional Official Plan Review.</p> <p>Regarding the Terms of Reference, it was decided to rename this document to Glossary of Terms and to cite where the definitions came from.</p> <p>Discussion on the Proposal included:</p> <p>This is a proposal on real measures to help agriculture remain viable. We look to provide more examples and have them confirmed.</p> <p>Region: It is good to have the discussion and suggest the following change:  Change paragraph to state: we strongly believe the PPS.  It was noted road salt is not always administered by the Region. It was noted alternatives are available.</p> <p>However, we need to control what we can and teach what we cannot.</p> <p>These papers are provided for discussion purposes with the intent of moving forward on the agricultural.</p> <p>Response: We can have a discussion on a wide set of options, the Region wants to save agricultural lands, and, in the guidelines, we have no choice.  -Key agricultural Features: Brilliant idea and we want to explore this further.  -Woodlands does not include plantations  -Police, excellent idea, we are in discussion with public works and Peel Region to make sure everyone is on the same page.  -Not all proposed activities would be part of the ROP but maybe in the RAS.  -Discussion on edge planning and invite new ideas</p> <p>Haac Sub-committee confirmed this is a jumping off point and more detail is needed to separate out what we are talking about or requesting.</p> <p>Discussion then proceeded on “benefits to society”.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>



No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>Response: This concept is in the RAS however it is not a top action item. Will require study and examination of what the Conservation Authorities have been doing. The NH group is looking at this as well.</p> <p>Examples of this were then discussed, highlighting England, Norfolk County. United States – Massachusetts and Illinois offer other incentives. We should continue to look at the U.S. for compensations, incentives.</p> <p>Halton residents need to recognize the great service that farmers provide and are not getting the recognition for.</p> <p>There are funding bodies available and could be applied for as joint initiatives. For example, Trees Canada program</p> <p>Attachments:  Draft Glossary of Terms  Draft Proposal to Enhance Agriculture To Mitigate the Massive Loss of Agriculture Land</p> <p>DRAFT  HAAC Sub-Committee  Glossary of Terms  December 8, 2020</p> <p>Environmental Goods:  are typically non-market goods, including clean air, clean water, landscape, green transport infrastructure (footpaths, cycleways, greenways, etc.), public parks, urban parks, rivers, mountains, forests, and beaches. Environmental goods are a sub-category of public goods. Concerns with environmental goods focus on the effects that the exploitation of ecological systems have on the economy, the well-being of humans and other species, and on the environment. Users not having to pay an upfront cost and external factors like pollution that can damage environmental goods indefinitely are some of the challenges in protecting environmental goods.</p> <p>Fees for Environmental Goods and Services: are financial benefit provided to farmers or landowners in exchange for managing their land to provide some sort of ecological service. They have been defined as "a transparent system for the additional provision of environmental services through conditional payments to voluntary providers". These programmes promote the conservation of natural resources.</p> <p>HAAC Sub-Committee conversations have suggested a fee for environmental goods and services to the local farming community. Below are a few examples:</p> <p>Incentive: a thing that motivates or encourages one to do something.</p> <p>HAAC Sub-committee conversations have suggested incentive programs with encourage an action which creates an environmental good. For example:  Cover the cost of seed for cover crops to increase soil retention, decrease erosion from run-off and help alleviate potential flooding.</p> <p>Compensation: the action or process of awarding someone money as a recompense for loss.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>HAAC Sub-committee often uses this term, however the correct term would be “fee for environmental goods and services”. We are looking at a positive action and not a loss. Examples include:</p> <p>Funding/Grants: a sum of money given by a government or other organization for a particular purpose.</p> <p>Funding and grants are often include an application form requiring background information, project information, work plan and objectives. For the purpose of the HAAC’s sub-committee conversations with regards to ROPR, we are individual grants to farmers.</p> <p>An example would be: soil enhancement by diverting top soil from development sites for deposit on farmers’ fields. This action is of benefit to the farmer and not necessarily society as a whole.</p> <p><b>DRAFT</b> Proposal to Enhance Agriculture To Mitigate the Massive Loss of Agriculture Land Proposed in the Regional Official Plan Review.</p> <p>Introduction:</p> <p>The Regional Official Plan Review proposes an increase in areas designated for Urban, Employment and Natural Heritage, with a corresponding decrease in agricultural lands.</p> <p>The HAAC Sub-Committee is looking towards the Halton Region to be progressive in mitigating the effects this loss will have on agriculture in Halton. To this end the HAAC Sub-committee wishes to work with Regional Employees and Regional Councillors for enhancements for agriculture to become more productive.</p> <p>It is the HAAC Sub-committees understanding that Provincial guidelines indicate agriculture is to be designated and natural heritage is to be an overlay. However, information provided indicates Halton Region Planning does not intend to follow these guidelines, we strongly recommend the development of policies aimed at enabling agriculture to continue to exist and be financially viable in Halton into the future. We believe agriculture and natural heritage areas are equally important and often the same land owned by the same people.</p> <p>Suggested Policies:</p> <p>To start the discussion on potential policies, we would like to offer the following to start the discussion.</p> <p>Policy: Agricultural Key Features Protection Whereas: -the farm building cluster is very integral to any farm operation -trees are often planted within the farm building cluster to provide wind breaks, shade, landscaping, and small family orchards -water is needed for farm building clusters to operate and is protected by the farmer to enable use The HAAC Sub-committee proposes the farm building cluster be designated as an Agricultural Key Feature Area and further propose a 30-meter buffer zone around the cluster to ensure continued viability.</p> <p>Policy: Agreement Forests</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response						
		<p>Whereas agreement forests are typically designed for lumber operations (a recognized agriculture occupation) and often contain trees which are not noted for climate change mitigation. Therefore, a natural heritage buffer zone should not be imposed for agricultural operations and be removed or amended from natural heritage policies.</p> <p>Policy: Development of Natural Heritage Sites Whereas; when a field is purchased or owned by the Conservation authority and/or municipality and allowed to return to natural heritage and/or planted with the intention of naturalization. Therefore, a natural heritage buffer zone should not apply to a grandfathered agricultural operation beside this newly created natural heritage area</p> <p>Policy: Enforcement of Laws Pertaining to Agriculture Whereas; -examples are readily available on the lack of knowledge of laws pertaining to agriculture by the local police force -farmers are being charged for normal farm practices -trespassers are not being charged and the cost of the trespassing is not recognized Therefore, a designated officer is to work liaison with HAAC regularly to discuss farm related law enforcement issues and said officer is to familiarize themselves with various laws regarding the same</p> <p>Policy: No Road Salt Designated Areas Whereas; farm irrigation ponds and water sources have suffered from the application of road salt and have become unusable Therefore; Halton Region review their road salt program to provide designated areas and/or farm mitigation efforts to ensure farm water sources are not contaminated by road salt.</p>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>						
5.	HAAC Emailed November 25, 2021	<p><b>Regional Official Plan Review (ROPR) Consultation Natural Heritage Advisory Committee (NHAC) and Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee (HAAC) – Policy Directions Workshop – November 3, 2021</b></p> <p>The table below includes comments from HAAC on the Woodlands policy direction theme area and the Agricultural Working Group (AWG) Summary Report as part of a joint Advisory Committee meeting held in November 2021. The AWG was formed to provide an additional layer of consultation as a part of the ROPR to emphasize the voice of the agricultural community in Halton, better understand their concerns and identify potential approaches that could be explored and developed through Policy Directions and Phase 3 of the ROPR. Regional staff prepared a summary report of the consultation with the AWG and circulated it to HAAC (and NHAC) for their consideration and comments.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="668 1417 1951 1810"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="668 1417 1134 1473">Policy Direction Theme Area</th> <th data-bbox="1134 1417 1951 1473">Notes from Breakout Room #2 (HAAC)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="668 1473 1134 1548"><b>Woodlands</b></td> <td data-bbox="1134 1473 1951 1548"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="668 1548 1134 1810">Do you feel your comments have been addressed as they relate to woodland quality?</td> <td data-bbox="1134 1548 1951 1810"> <p>Acknowledge, respect, and ensure The Farming and Food Production Protection Act (FFPPA) which states one to the two main themes of the FFPPA is; “No municipal by-law applies to restrict a normal farm practice carried on as part of an agricultural operation.”</p> <p>In its preamble, the FFPPA outlines the reasons why this legislation is important.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Policy Direction Theme Area	Notes from Breakout Room #2 (HAAC)	<b>Woodlands</b>		Do you feel your comments have been addressed as they relate to woodland quality?	<p>Acknowledge, respect, and ensure The Farming and Food Production Protection Act (FFPPA) which states one to the two main themes of the FFPPA is; “No municipal by-law applies to restrict a normal farm practice carried on as part of an agricultural operation.”</p> <p>In its preamble, the FFPPA outlines the reasons why this legislation is important.</p>	<p><b>Regional Response to HAAC’s Comments on Woodlands:</b></p> <p>The Province requires the protection of significant woodlands as outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial Policy Statement (2020) defines ‘significant woodlands’ as ecologically, functionally or economically important (i.e., Section 2.1(b)).</li> </ul> <p>The Growth Plan (2019), Section 4.2.3 and Greenbelt Plan (2017), Section 3.2.5 identifies significant woodlands as key natural heritage features. For lands within the Natural Heritage System of the Growth Plan, and Natural Heritage System of the Greenbelt Plan, new development or site alteration is not permitted in key natural heritage features (including significant woodlands) within the Natural Heritage System.</p> <p>The Regional Official Plan must be consistent with Provincial Policy Statement and conform to Provincial Plans. Therefore, in accordance with Provincial direction, woodlands must be protected for in the Regional Official Plan (ROP) and are identified as a Key Feature in the Regional Natural Heritage System. Currently, the ROP contains a definition of Woodland, as well as policy criteria that identify woodlands that should be protected as Significant Woodland.</p>
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Do you feel your comments have been addressed as they relate to woodland quality?	<p>Acknowledge, respect, and ensure The Farming and Food Production Protection Act (FFPPA) which states one to the two main themes of the FFPPA is; “No municipal by-law applies to restrict a normal farm practice carried on as part of an agricultural operation.”</p> <p>In its preamble, the FFPPA outlines the reasons why this legislation is important.</p>								

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		<p>"It is desirable to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural lands for the production of food, fibre and other agricultural or horticultural products. Agricultural activities may include intensive operations that may cause discomfort and inconveniences to those on adjacent lands. Because of the pressures exerted on the agricultural community, it is increasingly difficult for agricultural owners and operators to effectively produce food, fibre and other agricultural or horticultural products. It is in the Provincial interest that in agricultural areas, agricultural uses and normal farm practices be promoted and protected in a way that balances the needs of the agricultural community with provincial health, safety and environmental concerns."</p> <p>HAAC fully understands the need for good stewardship and encourages incentives for good stewardship. However, to place invasive species and the potential damage and harm to livestock, crops, farm operations and our family's wellbeing is disgraceful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. There is too much emphasis/value placed on the "woodland system" and not and enough on the tree quality; invasive species should not be protected just because they are a tree or plant, especially when their removal could allow for the location of an agricultural building in that area instead of agricultural land.</li> <li>• Non-native species need to be managed and removed, as per provided in the Q &amp; A. White pine plantation treatment policy needs to be clear and still feel that these should be exempted.</li> <li>• More information sought on rules and regulations, why invasive species are part of woodland system, management of invasive species. Request for further clarification and input on these topics.</li> <li>• Did the woodlands system policy come from the Province or Region?</li> <li>• Desire to understand how much leeway there is in managing invasive species and under which authorities (Region, CA's).</li> <li>• Ownership of the tree's needs to be acknowledged (landowner).</li> <li>• Concern that invasive species aspect is usually dealt with in an urban setting but it appears to be applied in a rural context in Halton. In reviewing other municipalities, the potential woodlands policy is utilized in the urban setting only. Why is the Region looking to utilize such a policy in the rural part of Halton affecting farms and rural land owners?</li> </ul>	<p>In terms of HAAC's comments regarding invasive species, invasive species and other non-native species can dominate woodlands, but also provide an important ecological function (i.e., for wildlife habitat and ecosystem services) and warrant protection as a part of the Natural Heritage System.</p> <p>Halton Region works with the affiliated Conservation Authorities who assist in providing resources and controlling the spread of invasive species within their jurisdictions. The Region will continue to explore partnerships with the Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities to address invasive species management within the Region, with potential opportunities for landowner stewardship to be determined as a part of the development of the Natural Heritage Strategy which is being considered in the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review Identified as NH-10.</p> <p>Many invasive species may also retain the potential for restoration. The local Conservation Authority and/or the Regional Forester can advise on best management practice opportunities and determining any requirements under the Conservation Authority's Regulation and/or the Region's Tree-Bylaw (121-05). There may also be landowner programs offered by the Conservation Authorities that provides environmental assistance for invasive species management.</p> <p>The Region continues to engage with the Agricultural Community on matters related to balancing the Agricultural System and Natural Heritage System. Consideration of context as it relates to opportunities for enhancement and restoration may be explored through the implementation of the ROP.</p> <p>The intent of the woodland policy review is to consider different policy approaches to address woodland quality and woodland degradation, including factors like anthropogenic and/or ecological disturbances (i.e., invasive species). The Region's Tree-Bylaw (121-05) speaks to woodland management and harvesting. There are no anticipated changes to the Tree By-Law through the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review. The Tree-Bylaw continues to remain an important tool for regulation and Regional Official Plan policy implementation.</p> <p>The Regional Official Plan policies, including those related to woodlands and significant woodlands, are applicable to agencies, stakeholder groups, and landowners, with development or other interests in Halton. The specific application of natural heritage policies may also depend on the context / site or proposal under consideration.</p> <p>It is important to note that compensation is not accepted as an approach to demonstrate no negative impacts to the Natural Heritage System. It is not the intent of the policy directions to consider compensation, however opportunities for enhancement and restoration may be considered</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If CA's can eradicate invasive species, then this activity should also be allowed on private or public land so that there is a consistent approach. More clarity is required around invasive species where they are the predominant species and the delineation of a key feature. If parks belonging to CA's and the province do not permit invasive species then why is Halton Region considering this plan?</li> <li>• Areas of naturalization when fields are left fallow, can we go back to where the original woodlot is located to be properly represented in order to provide balance to both the Agricultural System and the Natural Heritage System?</li> <li>• Degradation of native species is occurring and causing degradation of woodlots due to invasive species and is expected to increase because of climate change.</li> <li>• This aspect needs to be recognized and the responsibility should not be placed on individual landowners. It requires a concerted effort and is a shared societal responsibility.</li> <li>• This potential policy does not look at the health aspect to landowners and animals that invasive species can cause. An example poison ivy and poison sumac could result in emergency room visits. If a woodlot has harmful health aspects to landowners and animals, then that corresponding section of the woodlot should be able to be removed.</li> <li>• What is the intent of policy? Is it to change the ROP or tree bylaw and if so how? For the rural area, woodland policy is more appropriate as encouraging the essential landowner co-operation and a variety of perspectives rather than adding additional layers of regulation.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional staff acknowledge the important role of woodlands in climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as the effects of climate change (i.e., extreme weather events) on woodlands. These matters are being addressed through Stage 3, Phase 3 of the ROPR.</p> <p><b>Regional Response to HAAC's Comments on the AWG Summary Report:</b></p> <p>The Region acknowledges the concerns and comments brought forward by the Agricultural Working Group (AWG).</p> <p>Policy Direction RAS-6 recommends streamlining the development review process with the goal of encouraging coordination of regulation, municipalities the NEC, and agencies, decreasing costs, as well as providing clarity and certainty for the applicant. RAS-6 provides the opportunity to consider and explore HAAC's support for streamlining the site plan process (Recommendation 3), the Region to work with the NEC to simplify the application process (Recommendation 5), developing a concierge service for agricultural-related development applications (Recommendation 8), and waiving fees (Recommendation 9).</p> <p>Through the ROPR, letters were addressed by mail to landowners where there was additional lands being included in Halton's Natural Heritage System. In addition to the engagement process on the Phase 2 Discussion Papers, consultation with individual stakeholders on the Regional Natural Heritage System mapping continued into 2021 and included 41 individual landowner meetings and 19 site visits to analyze and delineate boundaries of key features of the Regional Natural Heritage System. Regional staff will continue to engage and encourage landowners to reach out if there are any questions/concerns in the next stage of the ROPR.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much farmland is the Region going to remove from perfectly clear farmland in order to protect vegetation?</li> <li>• Will these same rules apply to the municipality as well as private landowners if the Region decided to follow through with these directions?</li> <li>• Presentation and answers to questions were unclear. This topic area requires its own separate meeting and additional time for consideration.</li> <li>• Belief that the Region is being blamed for restrictive policies that are actually stemming from different levels of government, therefore clarification is needed.</li> <li>• Need for compensation for environmental goods and services.</li> <li>• Need to consider the effect climate change has on invasive species and woodland policy so it deals with upcoming issues in a proactive manner</li> </ul>	<p>Invasive species and other non-native species can dominate woodlands, but also provide an important ecological function (i.e., for wildlife habitat and ecosystem services) and warrant protection as a part of the Natural Heritage System.</p> <p>Policy Directions RAS-2, RAS-6, and/or NH-11 refer to agriculture uses and on farm diversified uses. Natural heritage and agriculture are not mutually exclusive in terms of where they are located in the rural area. In many instances farming is occurring within the Natural Heritage System and in some cases buildings already exist within key natural heritage features. The Regional Official Plan currently permits certain agriculture buildings and farm operation uses within the Regional Natural Heritage System but outside of the Niagara Escarpment Natural Area or the key features other than those areas where the only key feature is a</p>

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		<p><b><u>AWG Summary Report</u></b></p>		<p>significant earth science area of natural and scientific interest. The Regional Official Plan also sets the criteria for the requirements of an Environmental Impact Assessment for proposed development and site alterations and identified opportunities for when an agricultural building would not trigger a study.</p> <p>These policy directions recommend that the Region explore additional opportunities for clarification on permissions for agricultural buildings and uses within the Regional Natural Heritage System within the existing policy framework and that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and conforms to Provincial Plans. This permission would be considered based on a set criteria (i.e. size threshold) and would demonstrate no negative impact to the Regional Natural Heritage System. Outside of key features, there will continue to be permissions specifically for agriculture, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses. Regional staff will continue to engage with the Advisory Committees with regards to agricultural permitted uses within Halton's Natural Heritage System.</p>
		<p>Do you agree with the following recommendations? Do you have any questions or concerns? Is there anything that Regional staff should be aware of or consider further?</p>	<p>General Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create ROP policies that do not require potentially onerous levels of red tape for farmers</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> The Region will continue working with the agricultural community on the development of updated key feature mapping to ensure that the mapping is as accurate as possible in the next iteration of the ROP. <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.1 (p. 13-15) and 6.2 (p. 15-16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important that all landowners hear back from Regional staff following site visits</li> <li>• Only mapping that is proved accurate should go in the Official Plan. Staff explained that there is a policy direction that provides the ability to refine the NHS so that mapping is updated more frequently than the statutory requirement and is more accurate.</li> <li>• Concern expressed about invasive species that are automatically considered part of a natural heritage feature and the desire that the types of tree's (invasive species vs. native) be considered when assessing an agricultural building application or expansion of an agricultural building into a key feature. Need to recognize the need to optimize agricultural land available for production. Exemptions needed to continue to allow building in the existing farm cluster.</li> <li>• Farmers should be paid for providing ecological goods and services and would like to see the Region put forward this recommendation.</li> <li>• Concern expressed that the term "consider" is used throughout the AWG Summary report and some of the recommendations as it can be perceived that there is a lack of commitment on behalf of the Region towards agriculture.</li> <li>• HAAC should be involved as an active participant in any policy development regarding the NHS as the land is owned by farmers and carry out stewardship activities.</li> <li>• A double standard appears to exist. If a no negative impact test is applied, and a hydrological or ecological impact is determined, by default then a new building must be positioned on agricultural land. There is no corresponding application the other way and yet agricultural land and in particular, prime agricultural land is a finite and valuable resource.</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> The Region will continue to directly contact those that may be affected by updated mapping.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A personalized letter is preferred as a means of informing landowners of any changes to the NHS designation to their property. Some landowners did not receive any notice regarding changes as well as a concern that a postcard could be inadvertently thrown away.</li> </ul>	

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		<p><b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.2 (p. 15-16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ROPA 38 did not see landowners receiving individual notification of any changes to the designations on their property. The Region has the responsibility to inform landowners.</li> <li>• HAAC felt that the geo viewer is a very useful tool however; it is hard to locate on the Regional website. Efforts should be made to make it more visible on the website. As well, would like to see property designations pre-ROPA 38 before the natural heritage system was introduced to be able to see the progression on any given property as part of the layers.</li> <li>• Education on the Natural Heritage System should be provided to the real estate industry as well as informing agents on how to use the geo viewer.</li> <li>• Information on invasive species management programs should be provided to rural landowners.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> The Region will explore opportunities that would allow municipalities to streamline the site plan process, if they determine that it is appropriate to do so. <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.3 (p. 16-17)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage modified site plan process to be incorporated at a local level as less expensive process, more manageable for the proponent, less onerous and does not require the same extent of technical drawings. Also noted to be an NEC recommendation.</li> <li>• Encourage the Region to work with the local municipalities as agricultural tourism is an up and coming trend while recognizing site plan is a tool that can be employed at the local level. Information from the Region can be used to help inform local approaches to OFDU's</li> <li>• Low and medium impact OFDU activities should be permitted as-of-right.</li> <li>• Want to ensure minimum impact to road traffic.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> The Region will update its EIA guidelines to provide greater clarity on triggers, scoping and the waiving of EIAs, with these guidelines based on an updated ROP policy framework. <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.3 (p. 16-17) and 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive of updating EIA for greater clarity.</li> <li>• Would like to see the Region's AIA's updated in advance of the Growth Concept being put forward.</li> <li>• Continuous review and improvement of EIAs (dynamic process) recognizing there is constant change</li> <li>• The best policy is to have ROP policy for normal rural and agricultural uses that eliminates the need for EIAs. If EIAs were required, HAAC would encourage continued scoping and waiving of EIAs to the greatest extent possible.</li> <li>• When ground-truthing has occurred, ensure mapping is updated accordingly and reflected in ROP mapping. It is recommended that mapping is updated more frequency than legislatively mandated by the Province.</li> </ul>			

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> The Region will work with the Niagara Escarpment Commission and develop an operational guide that outlines the Region's role in the processing of Development Permit applications.  <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.3 (p. 16-17) and 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a simple checklist to ensure that all necessary information has been assembled when submitting a Development Permit application. An outline of the process would be helpful. It should be “user-friendly” and easy to use with all agencies should use the same terminology.</li> <li>• Concern expressed about the length of time required to process some applications. The Region could work with other municipalities to raise this concern with the Minister. NEC appears to be under resourced resulting in delays in application approval. Any efforts that can streamline the process would be helpful. Could the Region consider supplying part-time assistance such as an employee on secondment? Regional employee to work with the proponent to move an application forward at the NEC at a faster speed.</li> <li>• Move towards a one-window approach. Move towards encouraging best management practices rather than over-regulating. Can we work towards this type of approach?</li> <li>• Region should write encouragement policies (assumed permissions or extended/long-term permits) to simplify processes.</li> <li>• Region to approach the NEC about these suggestions to make the business case for implementation</li> <li>• Change could occur by having groups collectively approach the Province about the NEC.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
		<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> The Region will consider opportunities that allow for as-of-right permissions for agricultural uses and buildings to locate within key features and vegetation protection zones, where possible while remaining in conformity with provincial policies and plans, and in consultation with all stakeholders.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.4 (p. 17-21)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agricultural community would support any initiatives that would improve the functionality of agricultural operations being able to construct buildings. Ideally, would prefer to have no restrictions but any improvements in processes would be welcome including allowing for specific exemptions for minor development with agricultural buildings.</li> <li>• Support specific exemptions for ag uses and buildings, with size thresholds to be determined in consultation with HAAC ; provide for pre exemptions as of right on a certain square footage, new or expansion, only requiring a building permit</li> <li>• Concern about when buildings have been destroyed in a fire and are rebuilt or when farmers increase standards (i.e. septic) and the associated fees that are charged. Want to see a grandfathered clause that exempts further charges to deflect costs to farmers (i.e. DC's) on their reconstruction. Not just charges but fast track the process to enable rebuilding</li> <li>• Where applicable, would support in kind services that could be provided to deflect costs to the agricultural community.</li> </ul>	



No.	Source	Submission		Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wording in the OP should direct locals to be also be open to these principles and be more directive.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
		<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> The Region will prepare updated ROP policies, and through the Rural and Agricultural Strategy and the Natural Heritage Strategy, to further recognize the importance of agriculture, recognize farmers as good stewards and which remove barriers to agricultural investment wherever possible.  <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.4 (p. 17-21) and 6.5 (21-22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HAAC strongly supports any policies that improves/enables the functionality of agricultural operations; stewardship initiatives i.e. tree plantings should not be punished by those areas then becoming designated</li> <li>Farmers are the largest landowner of natural heritage areas and HAAC should be considered as a key stakeholder in consultations regarding a Natural Heritage Strategy in order to enable the Agricultural System and Natural Heritage System to work together.</li> <li>Biosecurity, liability issues must be considered as policies or programs are developed.</li> <li>Acknowledgement of ownership needs to be clarified and respect given to private landowners for their role in stewardship.</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> The Region will consider developing a concierge service to provide direct assistance in navigating planning processes when applications to develop agricultural uses are submitted.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A concierge service is useful when we can get a yes or no answer, but not a “maybe”. Need a collective decision with all levels and agencies on-board.</li> <li>Service needs to include information that the applicant understands the legislative body they are dealing with.</li> <li>There also needs to be recognition that sometimes the Region may be blamed when carrying out the requirements from the Province or other plans.</li> <li>Decision tree or check list would be useful</li> <li>Avoid people spending lots of money to satisfy policy if it is likely that the answer is “no”</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> The Region will determine if there is an ability to allow for the waiving of fees related to the Regional role in the review of applications.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HAAC strongly supports</li> <li>FBR # would be required to have waiving of fee's otherwise review and confirmation that the proponent is a farmer by HAAC</li> <li>There are instances where a starting farmer cannot get an FBR right away as they are establishing their farming operation and may not yet have generated \$7,000 of gross farm receipts.</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> The Region commits to further consultation with the agricultural community as the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HAAC strongly supports</li> <li>Consultation should occur as it is proposed and developed as part of the process</li> <li>HAAC input coming from an expert Regional Advisory Committee should be given higher consideration than</li> </ul>	

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		<p>policies in the ROP are updated.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 5 (p. 11-12)</p>	<p>general public comments when it comes to agricultural and rural matters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General public comments may not be altruistic with respect to agriculture or come from a knowledgeable position. HAAC has a number of experts and represent broad sectors and memberships in the agricultural sector.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
6.	<p>Peter Lambrick on behalf of the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee (NHAC)</p> <p>E-mail dated October 30, 2020</p>	<p>[ATTACHED LETTER]</p> <p><b>TO: Halton Region Planning Policy Staff</b></p> <p><b>FROM: Chair of the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee</b></p> <p><b>RE: NHAC's Comments on the ROPR Discussion Papers – Natural Heritage System + Climate Change</b></p> <p><b>DATE: October 30, 2020</b></p> <p>Please find below, NHAC's responses to both the General and Technical Questionnaires pertaining to Natural Heritage and Climate Change Discussion Papers. NHAC thanks Regional staff for the opportunity to review and provide comments, and for assistance with the commenting process. NHAC will be please to clarify any comments, respond to questions, and provide further input.</p> <p><b>General Questionnaire:</b>  <b>Natural Heritage</b></p> <p><b>1. The current Regional Official Plan aims to protect approximately 50% of the total area of Halton for Natural Heritage. Is this an appropriate goal to maintain? Are there other ways to measure how effective we are at protecting the environment?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement that 50% should be maintained at a minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of publicly accessible open/natural space</li> <li>○ One challenge is that Conservation Authorities (CAs) have large ownership, so much of the land is not publicly accessible – consider having discussions with CAs to alleviate these access restrictions. However, not all CA lands should be available for recreation given environmental and ecological sensitivity.</li> <li>○ Could be good to consider more prescriptive policies or regulatory process (if need be) to maintain the 50%</li> <li>○ Important to consider the implications of maintaining 50% for vertical (building up) versus horizontal growth (building out) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to be conscious of architectural design, architectural quality personal safety, and affordability.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Point was raised that the question is misleading and seems to imply that 50% is aspirational. The question suggests that 50% is a moving target rather than a fixed target. The 50% should not be considered a moving target.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p>Thank you, for the comments from NHAC on the ROPR Natural Heritage and Climate Change Discussion Papers. This submission will form part of our documentation and will be considered by staff as we proceed with the ROPR.</p> <p>If you have any questions or wish to discuss NHAC's comments further with staff, please feel free to contact Regional Staff.</p> <p><u>General Questionnaire:</u></p> <p><b>Natural Heritage</b></p> <p>Policy Direction NH-7 recommends updating the policies and mapping that will build on the existing comprehensive Regional Natural Heritage System (RNHS) policy framework and is reflective of NHAC's comments on maintaining approximately 50% of Halton's natural heritage at a minimum. Policy Direction NH-10 recommends the creation of a Halton Region Natural Heritage Strategy which provides an opportunity to consider programs and services relating to stewardship, restoration and climate change mitigation.</p> <p>Additionally, Policy Direction RAS-7 reflects concerns regarding edge planning. This policy direction identifies that new policies need to be introduced to reduce potential conflicts between urban areas and agricultural uses in the rural area through edge planning policies. It recommends that policies encourage the consideration of edge planning in the context of secondary plans where greenfield development is adjacent to agriculture and when considering urban area boundary expansions.</p> <p>Regional staff notes that comments on the Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper/Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) have been addressed in material related to Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 48 (ROPA 48), or will be addressed through the Preferred Growth Concept materials, including the Submissions Charts. More details are also available in the IGMS Policy Directions.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration must be given to areas targeted for intensification (i.e. new Greenfield areas versus NHS and Agricultural lands). One benefit of intensification could be smart cities.</li> <li>• Important to implement hard urban boundaries and intensify urban areas. Concern about Greenfields, as well as the impact of intensification on agricultural lands, biodiversity, infrastructure, etc.</li> <li>• Discussed golf courses as an example of a land use that has been requested by developers to be brought into the urban area in regard to settlement boundary expansions</li> <li>• Important to consider whether there is anything wrong with what we have and how to improve the process/how the ROPR can lead to a more efficient and effective process</li> <li>• Important to consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ways to maintain and improve stewardship</li> <li>○ Ways to deal with land uses in private versus public development contexts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Question was posed about whether there can be push back on the Province's Growth Plan in light of COVID-19</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Are there other policies or actions Halton can include in the Regional Official Plan Review to protect and enhance the Natural Heritage System?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain hard urban boundaries and do not “blur” the lines between rural and urban, especially in regard to edge planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p><b>3. What do you think is the biggest climate change challenge for Halton to address through land-use planning in the next 20 years?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much of the focus is on urban design and urban development strategies. The required action must come from both municipal and provincial governments. The integration of the UN's Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) should be considered. (<a href="https://sdgs.un.org/goals">https://sdgs.un.org/goals</a>)</li> <li>• Difficult to predict the future, but important challenges to consider are those related to water, air, and food – in terms of quality, quantity, stewardship, production etc.</li> <li>• Province and other levels of government must take leadership in advancing climate change action (i.e. leveraging solar energy; addressing lack of centralized heating systems; jurisdictional scans of best practices in other areas like Europe)</li> <li>• Transportation and transit is another challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Transit system is not operating the way it was designed to, as there are more people driving than taking public transit</li> <li>○ Sprawl is also a challenge and encourages people to drive</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Important to consider challenges posed by allocation and implication of growth (i.e. concerns about too many people in one place can perpetuate notions to sprawl, which can erode the NHS)</li> <li>• Water management issues are important as well, including how to provide water to residents</li> <li>• Important to raise awareness about and assess Halton's vulnerability to climate change (i.e. beyond changes in day-to-day climate, make known the implications for infrastructure etc.)</li> <li>• Resiliency should be the goal - creating communities that have the capacity to manage and adapt. Green Development Standards and guidelines are an important tool to achieve this.</li> <li>• Halton has the resources and capacity to be leaders/champions in climate change resiliency (i.e. through improved regulations and planning approaches)</li> <li>• We need to explore natural assets with land-use planning and to understand the true value of sequestration within the land, soil, crops, plants, and trees.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>The climate change policy directions are influenced by the direction outlined in Provincial policies and plans. Policy Directions will be used to create new policies and update existing policies in the Regional Official Plan (ROP) and enhance the existing sustainability vision of ROPA 38. The direction and encouragement of adopted and approved policy in the ROP will further guide planning and climate action at the local municipal level. The UN's Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) are reflected in the climate change policy directions, including but not limited to SDG #2, #7, and #13.</p> <p>The current in-force and effect ROP contains policies related to water (ROP section 145), air (ROP section 143), and food (ROP sections 101(4)h), 101(5)c) and 152(1)g)). Policy Direction CC-2 supports a culture of conservation including water conservation and air quality, and CC-7 supports local food and food security within Halton and the stewardship role farmers have in mitigating and adapting to climate change.</p> <p>Regional staff recognize that the transportation sector contributes significantly to the greenhouse gas emission levels in Halton and strive to continue improving transportation in the region through Policy Direction CC-1 which sets out to strengthen existing ROP vision, goals, objectives, policies, and definitions. This includes policies pertaining to public transit as well as those supporting active transportation (ROP sections 171, 172, and 173). Policy exploration and research could also be conducted on electric vehicles.</p> <p>The policy directions also address the relationship between climate change and infrastructure. CC-3 recommends the incorporation of appropriate low impact development and green infrastructure solutions into stormwater management planning, CC-4 recommends the Region and local municipalities to assess infrastructure risk and vulnerabilities, and CC-5 recommends the encouragement of introducing or enhancing of local municipal green development standards. Regional staff are exploring the development of a best practices resource for green development standards which local municipalities may consider as they enhance their own standards. Additionally, staff will provide Local Municipalities with guidance on Community Energy Plans for secondary plan areas in accordance with Policy Direction CC-6 for consistent implementation across the region. Policy Direction CC-2 provides an opportunity to enhance existing energy policies in the ROP (section 176) by exploring energy-from-waste technologies.</p> <p>Comments regarding carbon sequestration potential of urban gardens and parks are acknowledged by staff, but parks and gardens would be best planned at the local municipal level rather than the Regional level. The climate change lens applied to certain Policy Directions of the Natural Heritage and Rural and Agriculture theme areas recognize the</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p><b>4. What do you think the Region should do to help you reduce your carbon emissions? For example, if you typically commute by car to work or school every day, what would make you consider taking transit, biking or walking?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban gardens and parks have the potential to offer a large area of land for soil carbon dioxide sequestration. Commercial interest (landscape companies Greenhouses), must be given incentives and guided to contribute to the solution by promoting the sale and support for the public to convert to alternative gardening practices. Municipal regulations will have to be also in tune with this effort.</li> <li>• Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Green Development Standards</li> <li>○ Green infrastructure</li> <li>○ Hard urban boundaries</li> <li>○ Proper land use planning can increase sequestration value</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Discussed the opportunity for Region to complement or support the work of local area municipalities on guidelines for new development and to perhaps ensure consistent implementation</li> <li>• Region is poised and has great opportunity to reduce emissions. The true value of <b>sequestration would align well with implementing hard urban boundaries – this is needed in order to build community resiliency. Studying and understanding the value of soil will help elevate the value of having hard urban boundaries.</b></li> <li>• Important to consider the sequestration value of what we put on top of and in soil (i.e. resilient grass species)</li> <li>• Must learn from <i>effects</i> and <i>affects</i> of different soil management practices (i.e. no till) that have been pivotal in erosion prevention.</li> <li>• Regional waste facilities are a great asset and opportunity exists to use waste as fuel (i.e. bio digesters, methane etc.)</li> <li>• Assets are the genesis of central heating and methane gas production. Region has ability to be a leader in energy efficiency/harnessing energy from waste.</li> <li>• Regional Roads are also an asset, as this infrastructure provides an opportunity to lower emissions through mobility approaches like active transportation, multi-modal streets, dedicated bus lanes (i.e. for north-south Regional mobility between rural and urban areas), electric vehicle lanes, electric vehicles, Metrolinx GO electrification paired with innovative first-last mile options to get to and from stations</li> <li>• Retrofitting buildings and facilities (e.g. long term care homes) provides an opportunity for climate neutrality through GHG mitigation, green roofs, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Such an approach would have long lasting effects, however, it requires financial incentives to convert from existing facilities that are not just to more efficient but are at the same time cleaner energy alternatives.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Seek opportunities to manage and store water (i.e. some municipalities like Oakville and Burlington are downstream and may experience more damage from heavy water flows) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Restoration would be one such strategy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Technical Questionnaire:</b>  <b>Natural Heritage</b>  <b>1. As required by the Growth Plan, the new Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan mapping and policies must be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan. Based on options outlined in</b></p>	<p>importance of land as a carbon sink and the sequestration potential available in the Rural Area.</p> <p>Regional staff notes that comments on the Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper/Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) have been addressed in material related to Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 48 (ROPA 48), or will be addressed through the Preferred Growth Concept materials, including the Submissions Charts. More details are also available in the IGMS Policy Directions.</p> <p><b>Soil Management Practices</b></p> <p>The Halton Soil and Crop Improvement Association and the Halton Federation of Agriculture is very actively involved in promoting good soil management practices such as no-till practices. The Region hosted an annual Agricultural Forum and soil health has been featured as a key theme area. Topics related to soil health can continue to be introduced to the agricultural community as large. As well, the Region hosts regular Environmental Farm Plan workshops. An updated plan is mandatory in order to be able to apply for Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding which can include cost sharing on certain stewardship activities. These will continue to be hosted by Halton Region. The new reiteration of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding will be announced in early 2023.</p> <p><u>Technical Questionnaire:</u></p> <p><b>Natural Heritage</b></p> <p>Regional staff acknowledge NHAC's comments about overall consistency for the NHS, and Policy Direction NH-3 may assist with this as it recommends harmonizing mapping and policies for the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System and the Growth Plan Natural Heritage System to create a Provincial Natural Heritage System in the ROP and avoid potential policy duplications between these systems. Policy Directions NH-1 and NH-3 outline the recommended mapping approach for the incorporation of the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan in the ROP and reflect comments regarding mapping and policy complexity. Additional clarity on NHS designations and overlays are outlined in Policy Direction NH-6 (also see RAS-1), where the Natural Heritage System overlay with Key Features designated in rural areas and maintain the Natural Heritage System designation in Settlement Areas. The policy direction also recommends that the current approach to designate the Regional Natural Heritage System remains within settlement areas. Furthermore, the Region's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines (2020) provide direction to landowners considering development or site alteration in or near Halton's NHS and provides tools and clarity on the process and when and where development can occur and when an EIA is triggered or can be waived.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p><b>the Natural Heritage Discussion paper, what is the best approach in incorporating the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan into the Regional Official Plan?</b></p> <p><b>For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">13-20 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a> (options appear in <a href="#">Section 3.3</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the complexity variable (i.e. which one is least costly take less time to implement, and is easiest to change later?). Complexity lies in how the policies are explained and applied.</li> <li>• Most preferred are Options 1 then 2; least preferred is Option 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussed that a designation is needed, and is worth considering instead of an overlay</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adding a climate change lens may help as well</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Regional Natural Heritage System policies were last updated through Regional Official Plan Amendment 38. Are the current goals and objectives for the Regional Natural Heritage System policies still relevant/appropriate? How the can Regional Official Plan be revised further to address these goals and objectives? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">21-23 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffers need to be clear, bigger, restrictive</li> <li>• A buffer framework is a good starting point, but need to consider embedding tests or metrics</li> <li>• A question was posed as to whether consideration has been given to differentiating buffers for urban versus rural development (i.e. for wildlife passages or in the context of development on agricultural land). Regional staff noted that in current context Agriculture and NHS are compatible land uses, there is a desire to allow normal farm practices and operations to continue moving forward.</li> <li>• Important to determine when the notions of balance between Agriculture and NHS will be applicable in regard to site specific applications</li> <li>• Differentiation should be considered in the determination for location of buffers (i.e. rationale for a buffer being placed directly in an agricultural field versus elsewhere without infringing on farm operations/practices)</li> <li>• There is a lot of difference between farm and development operations. Have to be more restrictive with operations on developable land and more flexible with operations on prime agricultural land.</li> <li>• Exemptions for Agricultural uses (i.e. outside of key features) are not communicated well – should be put in layman’s terms</li> <li>• Consider adding a land resource element or lens as a distinction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Applies a “whole” or resource land management approach onto the land sector to create a sustainability use.</li> <li>○ This adds value to the land and allows for a holistic approach to climate change, food security, etc.</li> <li>○ Agricultural land is within this value as a distinction from green development, which can help with buffers and other components.</li> <li>○ Consider ways to add value to or increase the land resource element of Prime Agricultural lands that would then compliment NHS (i.e. co-benefits).</li> <li>○ Reference was made to the EU model.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consider use of educational tools like guidelines to communicate the coexistence and interface between uses. Look at other experiences, but have to consider Province direction as well.</li> <li>• Mentioned that an individual (Helma Geerts) who works for OMAFRA now could be a resource when Phase 3 (Policy Development) begins</li> </ul>	<p>Policy Direction NH-7 recommends updating policies and mapping that will build on the current comprehensive Regional Natural Heritage System policy framework. Regional staff are looking to provide clarification on how linkages, enhancements to key features areas and buffers are established. It is recommended that a guideline is prepared that builds on the existing Regional Official Plan policy framework and the definitions for linkages, buffers and enhancements areas to key features. It will provide further direction on the identification of these components, outline approaches that can be used to satisfy the relevant policies and used to support restoration and enhancement within the Regional Natural Heritage System that can be achieved through development proposals.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-5 recommends a new “Natural Hazards” section of the Regional Official Plan to introduce natural hazards policies that are consistent with the PPS, 2020 and conform to Provincial plans. This Policy Direction reflects NHAC’s comments on mapping, policy, the role of local municipalities’ official plans and zoning by-laws, and connections to climate change. Additionally, from a climate change perspective, Regional staff recognize the extreme weather events experienced in Halton and propose Policy Direction CC-9 to recommend the review and update of Emergency Management policies to ensure they plan for resiliency and identify areas where hazards lands and adverse impacts of extreme weather events intersect.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-8 recommends identifying opportunities to address woodland quality and further explore opportunities for woodland enhancement and restoration. NH-8 provides the opportunity to consider and explore comments regarding woodland quality and invasive species, the definition of degraded woodlot, a threshold for determining significance and protection, sequestration value of a woodlot, potential of degraded woodlot, woodland quality criteria, and woodland quality evaluation targets.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-10 recommends the creation of a Natural Heritage Strategy and reflects comments regarding providing an “umbrella framework” for other programs and initiatives to support stewardship, monitoring and education, complementing the Rural and Agricultural Strategy, and carbon sequestration (and other strategies for climate change mitigation). There may also be opportunities for Halton’s Advisory Committees and Conservation Authorities to provide feedback throughout the development of the Natural Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>Policy Directions NH-4 and NH-9 provide direction on a Water Resource System and source water portion policies, respectively. Policy Direction NH-4 addresses the Provincial requirement of identifying a Water Resource System (WRS) by incorporating new policies and mapping in the Regional Official Plan that implements a WRS. Although NHAC</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p><b>3. To ease the implementation of buffers and vegetation protection zones, should the Region include more detailed policies describing minimum standards? For more information on this topic, please see page <a href="#">23-27 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Question was posed as to whether Committee prefers strong policies or flexible reference to a framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Important to distinguish between a framework and a OP policy, both have different implications for surety</li> <li>○ A solid buffer framework is needed</li> <li>○ Be very prescriptive. If people want to seek variances they will, and if need separate category for agriculture then go ahead</li> <li>○ Questions: Would a framework recommend different widths than the ROP? Or is a framework more of reference to OP? What's the difference between explicitly stating a number in the ROP versus a framework? Regional Staff noted that a framework is not prescriptive, it is just a guideline. Consideration is being given to creating a more definitive framework that can be brought forward to Council to give more strength and consistency in its application (i.e. embedding tests and criteria, risk-based assessment of impacts, sensitivity of features, etc.)</li> <li>○ Discussed prescribing a single buffer width versus varying above and beyond a prescribed buffer width</li> </ul> </li> <li>● There are many policies and plans by different agencies for buffers. Councilors should push the Province to provide more consistent wording across natural heritage plans – the Region falls within one of the most over planned areas in Ontario.</li> <li>● Must recognize implementation of a buffer in context of differences between farmland and developable land. Regional staff noted that there are exemptions for expansions to existing Agricultural buildings; an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) may be triggered if a large scale agricultural building is proposed - e.g. in these cases consideration would be given to whether a buffer is needed to protect the integrity of the NHS.</li> <li>● Concerns that if a buffer means agricultural land is taken out of production, then this is a problem. Must give thought to qualifying land as a resource. Regional staff noted that policies allow for farming to continue in a buffer.</li> <li>● Buffers should be discussed within the context of the ecological functions that are intended to be safeguarded. Buffers are not just passive transects on the landscape, they are the interphase determining how energy, matter and biotic components flow in and out of an ecosystem. They will affect both sides of the boundary.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Given the policy direction provided by the Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial plans, how should policy and mapping address the relationship between natural heritage protection and agriculture outside of the Urban Area or the Natural Heritage System? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">38-45 and of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a> (options appear in <a href="#">Section 5.3</a>) and/or pages <a href="#">17-27 of the Rural and Agricultural System Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Omitted – to be addressed in future meeting for Rural and Agricultural System Discussion Paper</li> </ul> <p><b>5. The Greenbelt Plan 2017 and Growth Plan 2019 require municipalities to identify Water Resource Systems in Official Plans. Based on the two (2) options provided in the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper, how should the Water Resource System be incorporated into the</b></p>	<p>expressed a preference for a combined WRS and NHS, there was broader support for distinct policies and mapping with recognition of the relationship between the two systems. A climate change lens has also been applied to NH-4 to recognize the relationship with the Climate Change ROPR theme. Policy Direction NH-9 recommends the inclusion of general source water protection policies that apply across the three plans with specific policies as needed. NH-9 provides the opportunity to consider and explore NHAC's comments regarding mapping, frequency of policy updates, consultation with source water project managers, and section location in the ROP.</p> <p>The approach to Wetland evaluation through the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES) is administered by the Ministry of Northern Development, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNR) as per the Provincial Policy Statement (2020).</p> <p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Regional staff recognize the extreme weather events experienced in Halton and propose Policy Direction CC-9 to recommend the review and update of Emergency Management policies to ensure they plan for resiliency and identify areas where hazards lands and adverse impacts of extreme weather events intersect. Regional staff acknowledges the implications of additional salt usage in winter months, however, addressing this concern does not fall within the purview of the ROP.</p> <p>Regional staff recognizes the impacts buildings have on greenhouse gas emission levels. Policy Direction CC-5 recommends the introduction of new policies in the ROP that encourage the local municipalities to introduce and enhance green development standards for new developments. This could include standards for building retrofits, permeable surfaces, and electric vehicles and their infrastructure. Regional staff is also exploring the development of a best practices resource for green development standards which local municipalities may consider when updating their standards. Regional staff recognizes the work the local municipalities have undergone in the development of their green development standards and will continue to support local work on green development standards where appropriate, rather than embedding these standards into ROP policy.</p> <p>Policy Direction CC-6 recommends Community Energy Plans to be a requirement of the area-specific planning process and that Regional staff provide guidance for the local municipalities to assist with implementation. Community Energy Plans will look at the feasibility of energy generation, distribution, and storage, reduction of energy consumption and greenhouse gasses, and opportunities for district energy and renewable energy sources at a neighbourhood scale.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p><b>ROP? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">46-48 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a> (options appear in <a href="#">Section 6.3</a>).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option 1 (combining WRS and NHS) is preferred. Important to view both as integrated systems.</li> <li>• There can be value added in terms of flood resilience, natural filtration, etc. There are so many co-benefits from having WRS incorporated with NHS. We should re-engage with Ben on this work.</li> <li>• Question was posed as to whether this implies that we must give Water Resource Systems (WRS) more priority, and how this would fit into the climate change scheme (i.e. first consider hydrologic issues before soil?). It was noted that WRS must be looked at comprehensively through a systems based approach.</li> <li>• Knowing the location of groundwater systems is important for climate change resilience (i.e. important to know functions and assess mitigation and impacts of development on WRS).</li> <li>• Regional staff noted that wellhead protection areas work is separate, but complementary (i.e. overlap in the use of data).</li> <li>• Phase 3 policy writing must be explicit and recognize the likelihood of water related impacts on agricultural operations.</li> <li>• Protection and rewetting can reduce emissions.</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Preserving natural heritage remains a key component of Halton’s planning vision. Should Halton Region develop a Natural Heritage Strategy and what should be included in such a strategy? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">49-50 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Staff noted that the goal of the strategy is to provide an “umbrella framework” for other programs, initiatives, such as restoration and stewardship, community education and awareness, greenlands securement, forestry strategy, climate change, partnerships with Conservation Authorities etc.</li> <li>• It was expressed that the Rural Agricultural Strategy and Natural Heritage Strategy need to be complementary (or even combined) rather than separate, as both come from the same land base.</li> <li>• Concerns about the perception of white belt as lands for development or “urban lands in waiting”. Discussed renaming the white belt to the food belt given the agricultural capacity of this area.</li> <li>• Question posed about whether the NHS designation will remain. More clarity is needed on whether overlay or designations are treated the same. Staff noted that the Natural Heritage Strategy is not just for NHS designation, but intended to be an overarching framework.</li> <li>• Natural Heritage Strategy should consider sequestration value of NHS (e.g. soil, afforestation, etc.).</li> <li>• Important to collaborate with Conservation Authorities on the Natural Heritage Strategy because they already have initiatives and staff expertise.</li> </ul> <p><b>7. Should the Regional Official Plan incorporate objectives and policies to support/recognize the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">53-54 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes - ROP should incorporate objectives and policies to support the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System.</li> <li>• Question posed as to whether the policies and objectives would apply to just publicly owned lands and not private lands within the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System. Private landowners should be notified if anything affects their land.</li> </ul>	<p>Policy Direction CC-6 will also direct Regional staff to develop policies that promote net-zero communities, renewable energy systems, alternative energy systems, and district energy systems.</p> <p>Policy Direction CC-2 will provide an opportunity to enhance existing energy policies in the ROP (section 176) by exploring energy-from-waste technologies.</p> <p>Suggestions to incorporate green infrastructure into the ROP are reflected in Policy Direction CC-3 which recommends the incorporation of green infrastructure and low impact development with stormwater management planning.</p> <p>Addressing climate change in the context of agriculture is proposed through Policy Direction CC-7 which focuses on agriculture, urban agriculture, local food supply, food security and farmers as stewards in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Climate change lenses applied to Policy Directions in the Rural and Agricultural and Natural Heritage theme areas (RAS-1 and NH-7) speak to the importance of lands in the rural area for their carbon sequestration potential.</p> <p>The ROP includes sections and policies which support public transit, active transportation, travel demand management and reducing single occupancy vehicle usage (sections 172 and 173). Through Policy Direction CC-1, which supports enhancing the ROP’s current vision, goals, objectives, policies and definitions, there are opportunities to consider strengthening public transit policies to support electrification, as well as enhance active transportation policies.</p> <p>NHAC also provided comments on air quality and include active transportation master plans with locals, monitoring or reporting, and the proposed CN rail yard. The current ROP includes policies on air (section 143) and Policy Direction CC-2 provides the opportunity to enhance ROP policies to support a culture of conservation which includes air quality. Regional staff will consider the resources NHAC has suggested during the policy formulation stage.</p> <p>The CN Truck-Rail Hub in Milton is subject to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012. Halton Region and the local municipalities continue to be engaged with this project. Additional information can be found on Halton Region’s webpage: <a href="https://www.halton.ca/The-Region/Projects-and-Initiatives/CN-Milton-Logistics-Hub-Project">https://www.halton.ca/The-Region/Projects-and-Initiatives/CN-Milton-Logistics-Hub-Project</a></p> <p>Regional staff notes that comments on the Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper/Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS) have been addressed in material related to Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 48 (ROPA 48), or will be addressed through the Preferred Growth Concept materials, including the Submissions Charts. More details are also available in the IGMS Policy Directions.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff noted that the intention is to support and recognize the partnership, specifically the implementation of management plans for publicly owned lands.</li> <li>○ Discussed that private landowners need to understand that Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System is not a policy or regulation (e.g. not a ROP designation).</li> <li>○ Land operates on a voluntary or “willing seller, willing buyer” basis.</li> <li>○ Conservation Halton has a stewardship technician who liaises with private landowners to keep them involved. Liaison has been successful.</li> <li>● Since there is no policy, there should be a note within the ROP stating that certain conditions apply to this area, so that there is a clear understanding of the boundaries and objectives of the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System.</li> <li>● This is an important opportunity to recognize the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System as an outstanding example of a collaborative initiative to expand the Province’s parks and open space system.</li> </ul> <p><b>8. The Regional Official Plan is required to conform to applicable Source Protection Plans and must be updated through this Regional Official Plan Review process. What is the best approach to address Drinking Water Source Protection policies and mapping? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">54-55 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Important to consider including wording in the ROP that would recognize and allow for updates to Source Protection Plans to still come into effect.</li> <li>● Clarification was sought about whether Steve Holysh’s groundwater mapping will be included in this work. Staff noted that his modelling is more of a documentation framework - a database.</li> <li>● The mapping must be present and permanent as an underlying base map for all other mapping. There are precious lands that cannot be negotiated for the sake of mapping water resources and quality.</li> <li>● Need coordination between Government and agencies to ensure that any changes in mapping are consistent.</li> <li>● Farmers are finding the current Regional approach challenging and unfeasible (i.e. forecasting in advance of production practices). If Source Water Protection Plans are frequently updated, then it may be better to consider ROP wording that indicates that policies must conform to existing source water protection policies rather than to include mapping and policies directly in the ROP.</li> <li>● Since Source Water Protection affects different land uses, there should be a separate section just about this. Could consider merging common policies among the three Source Water Protection Areas, and have a separate section for the Conservation Authorities.</li> <li>● Question was posed as to whether any source water managers have been contacted to see their preference. Staff noted that this is ongoing, but that the feedback to date has included concerns about the ROP implications that would arise from the frequent mandated updates for Source Water Protection Plans.</li> <li>● Clarification sought about whether SWP Plans would have precedence over other Provincial Plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff noted that Provincial Plans and SWP Plans are complementary. Pursuant to the <i>Clean Water Act</i> (CWA), municipalities must recognize and implement SWP Plans through the ROP.</li> <li>○ The NEP requires that the implementing authority shall consider source protection plans developed under the CWA.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Policy Direction NH-10 recommends the creation of a Halton Region Natural Heritage Strategy which provides an opportunity to explore opportunities through programming include monitoring and development of guidelines/strategies to manage and conserve the natural environment, biodiversity, migratory species, and tree canopy cover targets.</p> <p>Additional comments provided by NHAC but are outside of the Region’s jurisdiction or the purview of the ROP include suggestions to revise the Building Code, acknowledgement of the emissions produced by household appliances, climate change education materials. NHAC also provided comments which may be addressed in other Regional plans such as the corporate climate change response and/or economic development plans.</p> <p>The Region is also undertaking a broader set of actions to respond to climate change in accordance with the Region’s Strategic Business Plan 2019-2022 and Council’s emergency declaration.</p> <p>Halton Region has also partnered with Halton Environmental Network to advance the Region’s work in addressing climate change. The partnership will result in the preparation of a community greenhouse gas emissions inventory, community greenhouse gas emission reductions targets, community engagement, and outreach in collaboration with the Halton Climate Collective.</p>



No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p><b>9. The Regional Official Plan is required to conform to the updated Natural Hazard policies in the PPS. What is the best approach to incorporate Natural Hazard policies and mapping? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">55-56 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question was posed as to whether the PPS allows the Region to be more restrictive. Staff noted that Region can be more restrictive with certain policies than the Growth Plan, except for mineral aggregates and agriculture.</li> <li>• The NHS system was intended to already include these hazards as sensitive areas in the mapping, not sure that yet another overlay is needed. As part of the strategy we need to identify natural hazard lands to prevent further degradation (e.g. erosion).</li> <li>• A few expressed that it would be helpful for Natural Hazards to be an overlay.</li> <li>• Discussed that development within natural hazard lands are subject to Conservation Authority regulations. Staff noted that the PPS states that development/site alteration should not be permitted in floodplains, so there is some ROP direction that would prohibit development in floodplain areas.</li> <li>• Given impacts of climate change, must be prudent and prepared - having something concrete in plan is beneficial for everyone in the community and will ensure we are resilient and prepared for the impacts of climate change on our community.</li> <li>• The way hazards are defined seems that the term is being used with various connotations.</li> <li>• Question was posed as to whether buffer lands are included as natural hazard lands? (in reference to both buffers to RNHS and buffers to floodplain) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff noted that the proposed draft RNHS only included regulated floodplain limits from the three Conservation Authorities and did not include their buffers. The buffers to RNHS were included for rural and urban areas all in one map layer: buffers, linkages, and enhancements. There is opportunity to refine buffers at the time of a development application (NEC or Planning Act, not building permit).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Question was posed as to whether the local Official Plans should show natural hazard lands, as sometimes there is an impression that local OP is more capable of showing more detailed mapping. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussed that Regional mapping is preferred, but there may be an opportunity to indicate what needs to be refined or verified at the local level.</li> <li>○ Option 3 is best - "do not map Natural Hazard in the ROP but rather include additional policies to direct the Local Municipalities to map Natural Hazards in their Official Plans."</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>10. How can Halton Region best support the protection and enhancement of significant woodlands through land use policy? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">57-58 of the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff noted that the current definition of significant woodlands in s.277 of ROP approved through ROPA 38. The intention is not to change the four criteria (as these were approved through OMB Minutes of Settlement), but rather to determine how the quality of woodlands should be considered from a scientific approach (e.g. impact of invasive species on character and integrity of woodland, etc.).</li> <li>• Clarification was sought about whether the current policy regime prohibits development in significant woodlands. Staff noted that development is permitted if consistent with PPS, ROP policies, and demonstration of no negative impacts.</li> <li>• Concerns about the definition of a degraded woodlot - a determination of major degradation could result in the conclusion that an area is no longer of value and therefore open for more</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>development. Important to ensure preemptive removal is not contributing to degradation of woodlands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Should consider a threshold above which a woodland is considered significant and protected versus not, as well as woodlands degraded by human activity versus invasive species. Would be a shame if it turns into a question of protection versus restoration opportunities.</li> <li>● Size might be another factor to consider for significance.</li> <li>● Ideally don't want invasive species to dominate, but they still have a valuable ecological function (e.g. provide wildlife habitat). There shouldn't be an automatic conclusion for removal because of a high presence of invasive species.</li> <li>● Should look at woodland quality comprehensively as it relates to broader studies, such as an Environment Impact Study. Important to consider relationship between the degradation of woodland and NHS.</li> <li>● Adding a sequestration lens would enhance the conversation around the value within a woodlot (e.g. studying how the soil within the woodlot supports the ecosystem).</li> <li>● Another fact that also needs to be considered within the scope of the woodlot potential (if degraded) is contribution to habitat linking and rehabilitation.</li> <li>● In support of this 100% as a mechanism for conversation not development. Woodlots are living ecosystems and significance will change and shift over the next 50 years, as trees have life cycles and if fairly monoculture will see a decrease over time. Perhaps it also provides a mechanism for grants etc. to help rehabilitate woodlands who are losing "significance."</li> <li>● Question was posed: Is it possible to use positive quality criteria such as amount of carbon sequestration, Green Infrastructure role, presence of or support for Species at Risk, Forest Quality Index and/or some other criteria rather than assessing quality based on degree of impact, especially the presence of invasive species?</li> <li>● Consider policy which enables the setting of targets so that the system, which includes significant woodlands, can be effectively evaluated with respect to ecological function and contribution to biodiversity.</li> </ul> <p><b>11. Are there any additional considerations or trends that Halton Region should review in terms of the Natural Heritage component of the Regional Official Plan Review?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Question was posed as to whether any analysis has been done since inception of NHS to see whether it has increased or decreased in size. Staff noted that this has been monitored in the past, and is definitely an exercise to undertake in the future. Currently at NHS is 50.6%, but with proposed draft NHS mapping amount is about 52% - increase largely due to adding in Greenbelt Plan NHS.</li> <li>● Might be too aspirational, but what about taking the concept of linkages further to include connections with adjoining municipalities and watersheds. Natural features and systems don't follow jurisdictional boundaries so this is something to consider.</li> <li>● There has been recent interest in the role of Natural Assets as part of the built infrastructure (e.g. storm water management). Is there an opportunity to add a natural asset role to the NHS, which may provide additional support for protecting it?</li> <li>● Should consider other factors such as sequestration value, green infrastructure and cost savings and mitigation.</li> <li>● Discussed concerns with wetland evaluation approach</li> <li>● : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is responsible for final determination of PSWs, but they don't conduct site assessments - neither does the Region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wetland assessment is happening at local and developer level, which means that blocks are being cut up at smaller scale rather than watershed or sub watershed scale. Ministry has noted that this approach is not ecologically acceptable.</li> <li>○ Several agencies have a vested interest in knowing the status of wetlands, but OWES is the only method so there is uncertainty about what to do. It was suggested that perhaps the Conservation Authorities and/or Region should create a program to assess wetlands at local and/or regional level. If assessment happens at too small a scale, then value of the wetlands can be perceived as mediocre. The OWES / PSW level looks at landscape scale and considers other factors (e.g. presence of a complex etc.)</li> <li>○ Loss of wetlands is an issue. Wetlands provide valuable ecological functions, such as source water protection, water purification, and climate change mitigation against floods/hazards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p><b>1. Have you felt the impacts of climate change on your community? What impacts are of most concern to you in the next 20 years? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">12-15 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Climate change impacts and associated costs are substantial, especially along the waterfront in Oakville and Burlington.</li> <li>● Region is starting to experience extreme weather events.</li> <li>● Some examples of impacts include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ice storms in Northern areas of the Region</li> <li>○ Vector borne diseases (e.g. West Nile Virus and Lyme disease)</li> <li>○ Wind impacts and vulnerability to power outages is substantial</li> <li>○ Economic</li> <li>○ Insurance</li> <li>○ Health</li> <li>○ Mental well-being</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Concerns about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Water and amount of impermeable surfaces. Consideration must be given to mitigation measures to address these issues.</li> <li>○ The observed shift away from grassland type agriculture, which has caused challenges.</li> <li>○ Energy and hydro usage</li> <li>○ Additional salt usage for roads and surfaces during the winter (mentioned below in a more explicit manner)</li> <li>○ Impacts of extreme weather patterns on food security and impacts on thriving agricultural community (e.g. livestock production, greenhouse production)</li> <li>○ Continuous financial impacts given the increased frequency of climate change events. Should factor in economic considerations (e.g. economic resiliency to recover).</li> <li>○ Micro bursts must also be considered</li> <li>○ Ecological impacts including: increased salt use due to more freeze/thaw through the winter, increased invasive survival, low, warm streamflows in the summer which impacts coldwater species, increased number of and amplitude of flooding events and change in timing of the spring melt, etc.</li> <li>○ Impacts on NHS, specifically on migratory species (e.g. observing earlier salamander emergence times, bird species coming earlier, new species arrivals, temperature thresholds impact turtle reproduction, etc.). Important to recognize the link between the NHS and species and take active measures to preserve North-South migration corridors for plant and wildlife species.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Important to recognize that species adaptation and resilience to migrate with changing climate may be a challenge and must consider the implications of this for ecosystem and humans.</li> <li>○ Biodiversity crisis is also important to consider, as it is being exacerbated by climate change.</li> <li>○ insect diversity variations and locations should be undertaken to monitor and map changes at a smaller scale though out the region.</li> <li>○ Integrate regional monitoring needs with Naturalist group work and activities.</li> <li>● Should consider reviewing best policy/practice and refer to in reporting (i.e. reference was made to LANCET, ICLEI, Canadian Institute of catastrophic loss, and Insurance Bureau of Canada).</li> </ul> <p><b>2. How do you think the Regional Official Plan can help Halton respond to climate change? What mitigation and adaptation actions would you like to see embedded in the Regional Official Plan? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">16-21 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Green development standards (GDS) or green development protocols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Concerns about increase in impermeable surfaces as Region grows</li> <li>○ Region has great opportunity to mitigate and adapt to changing climate, but need cohesion and succinct regulatory approach that would support lower tier municipalities</li> <li>○ Consider reviewing best practices and replicating advantageous programs to improve efficiency and effectiveness to have successful outcomes. Reference was made to the City of Burlington, the Town of Oakville (Energy Task Force), and Halton Hills as examples.</li> <li>○ Embedding green standards in ROP could create consistency, efficiency, and equity</li> <li>○ GDS as policy tool would respond to climate change and address challenges and opportunities</li> <li>○ GDS would have a great benefit to community</li> <li>○ There must be a comprehensive and guiding policy for design and innovative thinking</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Sequestration value of soils etc. is undervalued</li> <li>● Tree canopy cover targets</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Halton’s population is forecast to grow to one million people and accommodate 470,000 jobs by 2041. What do you think about policies to plan for climate change through more compact urban form and complete communities?</b></p> <p><b>In your opinion, are we growing in the right direction? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">21-25 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarification was sought on the population growth targets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Proposed Amendment No. 1 extends the planning horizon of the Growth Plan from 2041 to 2051, maintains the approved 2041 population and employment targets in the Growth Plan, 2019, and identifies new population and employment targets to the 2051 planning horizon” (see Regional Urban Structure Discussion Paper).</li> <li>○ Discussed significance of projections that population will increase to 1 million by 2051.</li> <li>○ Province should be required to show validation of growth numbers suggested.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● COVID-19 has caused people to reevaluate living typologies (e.g. high density, condos etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proper epidemiological data should guide this statement not just fear-based perceptions</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Could consider residential uses on employment lands as an approach to maximize warehouse roofs. This could limit the need for more "development" and encourage hard urban boundaries with appropriate transition areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hard boundaries between urban and rural areas are needed.</li> <li>● Compact urban form and complete communities are at the core of land use planning policies that support addressing climate change. Although intensification is critical to creating efficient, resilient and sustainable communities, this needs to be balanced by ensuring there is appropriate greenspace not only outside of the built environment but within it. The introduction of green infrastructure policies into the ROP would acknowledge the importance of healthy natural systems that function at multiple levels within the community that support climate resiliency including services such as stormwater management, carbon sinks, soil stabilization, management of air pollution management and mitigating urban heat island effects.</li> <li>● Would like to see a push for more permeable paving options, also environmental methods of "salting" using wood chips if appropriate etc.</li> <li>● Important to take efforts to glean the urban spaces. There is an enormous amount of natural space and function within urban areas (e.g. even Toronto has green space all throughout the city). It's crucial to have compact and well defined urban form that won't bleed into the countryside because sprawl is destructive and costly. Whatever can be done to avoid this is good (e.g. livable urban space with mixed densities, non-traditional greenspaces along streets and urban corridors etc.).</li> <li>● Consider design and changes in building codes. A great deal of change inertia would be achieved by revising these codes.</li> <li>● Green roofs - Bosco Verticale is a good example of possibility: <a href="https://www.stefanoeriarchitetti.net/en/project/vertical-forest/">https://www.stefanoeriarchitetti.net/en/project/vertical-forest/</a></li> </ul> <p><b>4. What do you think the Region should do to help you reduce your greenhouse gas emissions? For example, if you typically commute by car to work or school every day, what would make you consider taking transit, biking or walking? For more information on this topic, please see page 21-27 of the <a href="#">Climate Change Discussion Paper</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Important considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enabling and supportive policies for electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and encouraging EV stations in new developments.</li> <li>○ Support the electrification of public transportation systems.</li> <li>○ Support the development of comprehensive cycling infrastructure and pedestrian pathways for safe and accessible active transportation.</li> <li>○ Support retrofitting and enhancements to existing building stock to enhance energy efficiency.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Improve traffic flow so as to mitigate air pollution (e.g. idling on major highways contributes to local roads).</li> <li>● Region should consider programs or policies in the ROP to encourage a switch from gas/diesel to electric vehicles. This is important because driving is unavoidable for some people.</li> <li>● Discussed that consideration should be given to inventory of Regional facilities that can provide this capacity (i.e. electric charging stations).</li> <li>● Region needs a good economic development plan. Reference was made to Milton's efforts to attract jobs that will provide opportunities locally so that residents don't have to commute for employment.</li> <li>● Need to also work on a "regionalized" (as opposed to Regional) transit system/network and connectivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reference was made to efforts to introduce bus connectivity to the Toronto Premium Outlets in Halton Hills.</li> <li>○ Discussed that a regional transit system could result in chaos and uneven cost burdens for certain municipalities, but looking for opportunities to improve connectivity are still important.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A Regional Transit system could be helpful to address the misalignment of the municipal systems which so few people use. But, an appropriate funding mechanism would be needed.</li> <li>○ Amalgamate all bus transit agencies – no more ‘borders’, no more ‘transit empires’</li> <li>● Stopping the CN logistics hub from proceeding in Milton would be good.</li> <li>● Region should consider programs to encourage or support modernizing building (i.e. energy efficiency). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Buildings are a major and often overlooked source of GHGs.</li> <li>○ Reference was made to Toronto’s incentive programs.</li> <li>○ Encourage green roofs, especially for GHG reduction and stormwater management. Reference was made to France legislation for solar panels or green roofs.</li> <li>○ Consider using land use planning as tool to encourage sustainable development (i.e. solar orientation of buildings to harvest solar energy, community heating systems, etc.)</li> <li>○ Local community micro-grids with community heating/cooling systems is an opportunity, and could be more efficient than having air conditioning.</li> <li>○ Heat exchangers should be considered too.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Support and encourage green development standards (GDS) and encourage municipalities to include GDS in local level plans. There would be value in having a harmonized, though not one-size-fits-all, approach to green standards across the Region and the local municipalities. There is an opportunity for some coordination at a Regional level through its ROP policies.</li> <li>● Gas burning furnaces and stoves are also a significant source of CO2.</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Do you think the Region should encourage and support local renewable energy sources? If so, what should be considered? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">28-29 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Region should encourage and support a local effort for renewable energy sources. The Region should maximize the use of landfill and waste management operations in terms of renewable energy. Regional assets (i.e. Regional Landfill) could be a great source of renewable energy.</li> <li>● Developing greater efficiency in delivering energy. Policies should be included that are enabling and supportive of small-scale energy infrastructure (such as district energy systems), particularly in urban growth areas.</li> <li>● The Region could consider encouraging the mapping/identification of land use areas that would support district energy systems.</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Can you provide examples of opportunities to address climate change as it relates to agriculture that you would like to see in Halton? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">29-30 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage working with soil and crops. Keeping soil covered at all times helps with sequestration indicating the true value of agricultural lands and their value for carbon offsets.</li> <li>● Farmers will make environmental goods and service argument. If a farm contributes to climate change mitigation then perhaps this can be complemented by Regional efforts too.</li> <li>● Educational component is important to provide information and promote opportunities through the climate change plan (i.e. improving manure storage systems). Reference was made to initiatives by the Ontario Biomass Producers Cooperative. There are great opportunities for innovative initiatives and pilots models on farms.</li> <li>● Notion of backyard agriculture and gardens is great, but shouldn’t be at expense of agricultural land. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Important to promote agricultural food sector for food security</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Support farm management plans and encourage and educate about low carbon and sustainable farming practices.</li> <li>○ Ensure opportunities for expiration of sequestration of GHG on farms, and study offsets to enhance and support fair value.</li> <li>● The white belt has been perceived as being “frozen land.” The removal of long term species like perennial grasslands was hard for soil in this area. Need to be clear with land use planning and land use permissions.</li> </ul> <p><b>7. According to the Provincial Policy Statement, planning authorities are required to consider the potential impacts of climate change in increasing risks associated with natural hazards (e.g., fires and floods). How can Regional Official Plan policies be enhanced to address climate change impacts on natural hazards? For more information on this topic, please see pages <a href="#">30-32 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Refer to earlier discussion on natural hazard mapping (Question 9 of NHS Technical Questionnaire)</li> <li>● Re-naturalization is important for combatting climate change</li> <li>● Encourage and support the use of sustainable development guidelines/standards to promote sustainable development and building practices including objectives and metrics related to extreme weather and climate change adaptation.</li> <li>● Encourage and support the use of new Municipal Act and Planning Act tools for climate change (e.g. Climate Change By-laws requiring green roofs and/or alternative building standards).</li> <li>● Staff noted that the recent report from the Minister’s office addressing flooding is good to review <a href="https://www.ontario.ca/document/independent-review-2019-flood-events-ontario">https://www.ontario.ca/document/independent-review-2019-flood-events-ontario</a></li> </ul> <p><b>8. Are there additional measures the Regional Official Plan should include to improve air quality? For more information on this topic, please see page <a href="#">32 of the Climate Change Discussion Paper</a>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Air quality is since transboundary, so it’s hard to comment on this one. However, major local sources are really through transit and buildings, so policies to encourage compact and transit supportive communities, energy efficient buildings, etc. would be beneficial.</li> <li>● Active transportation master plans with locals.</li> <li>● More monitoring or reporting. Reference was made to Peel Region’s air quality discussion paper, and Simcoe County as well.</li> <li>● Anything like the proposed CN yard will have very negative effects on air quality.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
7.	<p>Lisa Kohler on behalf of the NHAC sub-committee</p> <p>E-mail dated October 12, 2021</p>	<p>[ATTACHED MEETING NOTES: Item 4 includes NHAC comments on the Policy Directions. Item 8 includes other general comments received related to the Regional Official Plan Review.]</p> <p>NHAC Subcommittee notes Notes modified by Vice Chair- October 9, 2021. October 5, 2021 7pm- 9pm</p> <p>All notes in blue font</p>	<p>Regional Staff acknowledge NHAC’s comments and concerns and provided real-time responses during the discussion. Staff also note that comments were considered and addressed with the following policy directions.</p> <p>Policy Directions NH-7 provides direction that updates to the policies and mapping will build on the existing comprehensive RNHS policy framework.</p> <p>Policy Directions NH-4 and NH-9 provide direction on a Water Resource System and source water portion policies, respectively. NH-9 indicates</p>

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		Action Items	Follow-up Action	
		<p>4 Circulated discussion question and information from the September 8 meeting on the Regional Natural Heritage System Preliminary Policy Directions. To be reviewed by Committee and comments to be provided by October 13, 2021</p>	<p>September 2021 information is included in the Halton Region Dropbox.</p> <p>Referring to slides from previous NHAC meetings:          -number 1 is that in regards to long term mapping? Regional staff: This is about maintaining a systemic approach to key features, buffers and linkages and that they are stand-alone key features but are part of the continuous system.          -how does that work within the urban area? Regional staff: In the settlement areas we can be more restrictive and we will continue to designate the NHS and key features, linkages, buffers, and enhancements. The linkages will remain as a component to the system and still be conditions to the test that there will be no negative impact on these lands. Linkages are not highlighted in the PPS, but in the greenbelt and growth plan they are. Designations in the policy are still in play with no negative impact.          -can the linkage itself have a negative impact- say if there is development? Regional staff: Yes, distributions of linkages in development could be disruptive within a large-scale urban setting.          -Question about updating source water protection policy: Are we updating since there are new policies that have come into play since 2016 and since they were not in the last OP. Regional staff: Yes, that is correct these are now a requirement under the source water protection act.</p> <p>- still have major concerns around the adoption of climate change into the plan. We would have to wait another 10 years, to make changes - that is very concerning.          - we need to implement climate change policies now. Needs to be seriously implemented          -natural hazard and development between natural spaces and the development itself are very dangerous without buffers and lines of division between forest and neighboring houses. Concerns with forest fires. We need to have a natural barrier to prevent fires and the path of destruction. A lot more needs to be done in this area.          - there is very little space between the buffers (10-15 meters) there is not a lot of room to develop a proper ectotherm. Developers need to be part of the solutions for climate change adaptation and to mitigate potential risks.          - is it possible to ask to extend the buffers, can we ask for certain area to expand to 20 meters.          Yes, you can but there needs to be strong justification for this. Greenbelt and growth plan require 30 meters, but one thing with the regional NHS is that 30 meters is a starting point. Developers can ask for a reduction but the region can provide the guidance to support the 30 meters for the NHS.          -we would like a larger buffer</p>	<p>that the ROP should include policies that conform to the three source protection plans that apply in the Region.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-10 recommends the creation of a Natural Heritage Strategy and reflects comments regarding providing an “umbrella framework” for other programs and initiatives, complementing the Rural and Agricultural Strategy, and carbon sequestration (and other strategies for climate change mitigation), stewardship initiatives, greenlands securement, etc. There may also be opportunities for Halton’s Advisory Committees and Conservation Authorities to provide feedback throughout the development of the Natural Heritage Strategy.</p> <p>Regional Council has formally declared a climate emergency and Regional staff have been developing policy directions that take direction from Provincial policy and plans to ensure the updated ROP includes climate change mitigation and adaption policies to foster resilience in Halton.</p>



No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 100 of meters is an accepted distance for buffers that has scientific value added and there is evidence that this distance has natural benefits.</li> <li>- ecological engineering (green infrastructure) needs to be converted into barriers for fires and other supports for restructuring the land, that needs to be considered within the design of buffers, linkages etc.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
		<p>8 Resend Policy Directions Presentations and NHAC Breakout Room Responses from June, July and August 2021 workshops</p> <p>Policy Directions Presentations and NHAC Breakout Room Responses from June, July, August and September 2021 workshops included in the Halton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-any additional comments for previous NHAC meetings:</li> <li>-June: NHS</li> <li>-July: Climate change and water resources and source protection</li> <li>-August: Mapping options and hazard, NEC</li> <li>-September: Regional NHS and water resources and source protection</li> <li>-water resources and hydrological considerations :is possible to speak with the Hydrologist? How is the data maintained and what modeling is used? It would be helpful to know so we can understand the conclusions. Also, to support our understanding of the mapping of the features. Regional staff: data comes from the Conservation authority and we can see if we can engage the conservation authority on their methodology and how the monitoring and mapping goes into the formulas.</li> <li>-a lot of the mapping is aerial interpretation, mapping and ground truthing with on-site verification is needed.</li> <li>- Question about Steve Hoylish? (Oak Ridges Moraine) and mapping of water systems. Regional staff: Steve is expanding the database and geological areas, water wells and supply wells; he is working with them on this now and groundwater history and chemistry.</li> <li>-is restorative habitat needed?</li> <li>-Increasing forest cover with a climate change lens and within the forestry group. I think like, Ag forestry sits on both sides of the fence, we are part of the problem but we can be a bigger part of the solutions in regards to the changing climate, there are opportunities within Ag and forestry that needs to be explored and implemented.</li> <li>-is there any thought around tree stewardship on public and private lands? what programs can be put in place for better forest management, to ensure initiatives for more native planting and to ensure healthy forests are maintained and to ensure underbrush is maintained - this could support fire prevention, and mitigate GHGs.</li> <li>- we need to ensure healthy biodiversity and prevent and eradicate invasive species that are challenging our ecological health</li> </ul>	

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-green land securement/procurement as a regional policy.</li> <li>-Keep as much Ag as possible - not in support of the green land securement/procurement at the expense of Ag land.</li> <li>- Could there be a program that the region could secure the greenland securement and it be leased to farmers for Ag - concerns with Ag being taken out of production for greenland procurement.</li> <li>- ALUS program works with farmers to do ecological restoration on marginal land which is not working well for Ag (primarily wetlands, grasslands/meadow and prairie lands) ALUS has very positive results thus far. Spinoff benefits and may be a consideration for the NHS. There is modest compensation but this is working just with marginal lands.</li> <li>-ALUS has great deal of merit</li> <li>- regenerative practices for less than prime land- this could be implemented for forestry too.</li> <li>- how do we tie this into climate change? We still don't think climate change is elevated enough, and it needs to be.</li> <li>- we need to frame climate into the plans and ensure that there is a climate lens on the NHS and the systems that support the NHS. Since climate is interconnected and so is the NHS, we need to ensure we are taking a broad and wide lens on climate adaptation, and mitigation efforts into the NHS. We need to look at the ecological benefits of these systems and their true value with both sequestration and prevention of climate challenges.</li> <li>- we need to network all the ideas and how they connect and bring them as an underlay into the official document. Look at the sections and then make sure that they are incorporating and using the climate to expand the concepts and drive change.</li> <li>- we need to lay down the climate connections and where they fit with ROP and NHS to ensure there is alignment with the climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.</li> <li>- the base of the network can be rooted in climate mitigation and adaptation</li> <li>- building into the NHS strategy broad scale wetland assessment program so we can get the wetlands assessed at the ground level with the SME of the conservation authorities and region, it would be a collaboration to ensure protection.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
8.	<p>Lisa Kohler on behalf of the NHAC</p> <p>E-mail dated November 30, 2021</p>	<p><b>Regional Official Plan Review (ROPR) Consultation Natural Heritage Advisory Committee (NHAC) and Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee (HAAC) – Policy Directions Workshop – November 3, 2021</b></p> <p>The table below includes comments from NHAC on the Woodlands policy direction theme area and the Agricultural Working Group (AWG) Summary Report as part of a joint Advisory Committee meeting held in November 2021. The AWG was formed to provide an additional layer of consultation as a part of the ROPR to emphasize the voice of the agricultural community in Halton, better understand their concerns an identify potential approaches that could be explored and developed through Policy Directions and</p>	<p><b>Regional Response to NHAC's Comments on Woodlands:</b></p> <p>Invasive species and other non-native species can dominate woodlands, but also provide an important ecological function (i.e., for wildlife habitat and ecosystem services) and warrant protection as a part of the Natural Heritage System.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response						
		<p>Phase 3 of the ROPR. Regional staff prepared a summary report of the consultation with the AWG and circulated it to NHAC (and HAAC) for their consideration and comments.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="671 314 1942 1818"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="671 314 1050 379">Policy Direction Theme Area</th> <th data-bbox="1050 314 1942 379">Notes from Breakout Room #1 (NHAC)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="671 379 1050 1387"> <p><b>Woodlands</b></p> <p>Do you feel your comments have been addressed as they relate to woodland quality?</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1050 379 1942 1387"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invasive species perspective is not being addressed. Quality of woodlands (structure and community) with a focus on invasive species should be evaluated.</li> <li>• Implications of current definitions on page 14 of the presentation from October 20<sup>th</sup> Joint meeting. Invasive species are not factored into what is in a significant woodland, perceived lower ecological value than native species. There is a desire to recognize invasive species in the definition and if they should be included as part of a significant woodland feature. There needs to be something put in policy that encourages better management of invasive spaces if you want to encourage movement back to native species. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Response: There is a lack of flexibility in land use planning. With invasive species there are concerns that invasive are included in woodlands and there are perceptions that this shouldn't be the case. There is a desire to see more flexibility with regards to woodlands with invasive species, whereas currently there is no flexibility to acknowledge this.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ELC process is a careful process and can serve as a guide in assessing a woodlot vs the perceived value of it. 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Recommend that Halton Region lists the criteria used to determine Significant Woodlands and have the public vote on their top five of importance or at a minimum expand the number of criteria</li> </ul>	<p>Halton Region works with the affiliated Conservation Authorities who assist in providing resources and controlling the spread of invasive species within their jurisdictions. The Region will continue to explore partnerships with the Conservation Authorities and Local Municipalities to address invasive species management within the Region, with potential opportunities for landowner stewardship to be determined as a part of the development of the Natural Heritage Strategy which is being considered in the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review.</p> <p>Many invasive species may also retain the potential for restoration. The local Conservation Authority and/or the Regional Forester can advise on best management practice opportunities and determining any requirements under the Conservation Authority's Regulation and/or the Region's Tree-Bylaw (121-05). There may also be landowner programs offered by the Conservation Authorities that provides environmental assistance for invasive species management.</p> <p>Regional staff acknowledge the value of the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) System and through the woodland policy direction (i.e., NH-8) staff are considering ways to bolster its recognition through policy updates. Halton Region's system-based approach to natural heritage protection continues to remain. This includes the protection and assessment of woodlands on a features basis rather than a piecemeal approach (i.e., woodlands are a continuous feature on the landscape).</p> <p>It is acknowledged that woodlands can play a valuable role in carbon sequestration. Opportunities to explore ways of measuring the environmental and climate change benefits of natural features can be addressed through the Natural Heritage Strategy which is being considered as a part of the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review.</p> <p>As a part of the woodland policy direction, North-South Environmental conducted a comprehensive jurisdictional review of comparable policy approaches for woodlands in other municipalities, including York Region. Contextual differences were taken into consideration in the analysis. Staff anticipate that additional clarification will be provided through Stage 3 of Phase 3 of the Regional Official Plan Review</p> <p>The Region's Tree-Bylaw (121-05) speaks to woodland management and harvesting. There are no anticipated changes to the Tree By-Law through the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review. The Tree-Bylaw continues to remain an important tool for regulation and Regional Official Plan policy implementation. Opportunities for data collection and monitoring can be considered through the Natural Heritage Strategy which is being recommended as a part of the ongoing Regional Official Plan Review.</p> <p>Landscape permanence and stewardship continue to be important elements of Natural Heritage System planning in Halton. Staff anticipate</p>
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			<p>used to determine significant woodlands in Halton Region. Feel like we may have missed capturing some Significant Woodlands in the Region. (Suggest to look at additional criteria used on page 38 of the following report: <a href="https://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/fb3e688f-00f3-41fe-ba5d-c41a29b6780d/YORK+REGION+SIGNIFICANT+WOODLANDS+STUDY.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&amp;CVID=mu9bA0s">https://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/fb3e688f-00f3-41fe-ba5d-c41a29b6780d/YORK+REGION+SIGNIFICANT+WOODLANDS+STUDY.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&amp;CVID=mu9bA0s</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodland management on a farm situation is of interest as most farmers think of 20 year cutting as woodlands is a crop for good wood. Will this still be a common policy and accepted through the Regional Official Plan (ROP).</li> <li>• Would suggest gathering baseline information and doing some <b>monitoring</b> of diverse NHS elements such as woodlands, significant bird populations and where are they are nesting, insect monitoring etc.. Data is extremely valuable. (Queen's University has good information on this and direction for next steps)</li> <li>• A clear description of ecological functionality must be developed explaining and describing the ecological concepts behind that perspective to ensure understanding of the concept and increase awareness and appreciation of the importance of woodlot conservation. Such appreciation and conservation must become a tangible objective of the OPR.</li> <li>• At the same time, there must be a clear plan to address invasive species in woodlots and in fields that are of immediate concern to agriculture (Fragmites seems to be on such species). Such a plan must also be part of the OPR, eventually to be addressed through ecosystem restoration and biodiversity enhancement – linking back to the first point.)</li> </ul>	<p>that more opportunities for education and awareness – in partnership with other agencies like the Conservation Authorities – can be explored through the Natural Heritage Strategy component of the Regional Official Plan Review.</p> <p>Regarding the last bullet point, please refer to the response provided earlier on invasive species and non-native species.</p> <p><b>Regional Response to NHAC's Comments on the AWG Summary Report:</b></p> <p>Policy Direction RAS-1 reflects NHAC's general AWG Summary Report comments regarding the balance between the Agricultural and Natural Heritage Systems within the Region. RAS-1 recommends a land use designation and mapping approach whereby prime agricultural areas, rural lands and key features are designated and the remainder of the NHS is an overlay. Policy Direction NH-6 provides additional direction on mapping and designations. When there is a mapping update for a property, landowners will continue to be notified by the Region.</p> <p>Policy Direction RAS-6 recommends streamlining the development review process with the goal of encouraging coordination of regulation, municipalities the NEC, and agencies, decreasing costs, as well as providing clarity and certainty for the applicant. RAS-6 provides opportunity to consider and explore NHAC's support for streamlining the site plan process (Recommendation 3), the Region to work with the NEC to identify its role in the application process (Recommendation 5), developing a concierge service for agricultural-related development applications (Recommendation 8), and waiving fees (Recommendation 9). Furthermore, for comments provided for Recommendation 3, the Region does not control what form of agriculture a farmer chooses to pursue. With the updated of agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses, there are additional opportunities with respect to processing. Additionally, broadened permissions are expected to assist with farm viability.</p> <p>The ability to ground truth mapping occurs on a site by site basis when applications or higher level studies such as subwatershed studies that are completed by the applicant and submitted to the Region as part of a planning approvals process. Any refinements to Halton's Natural Heritage System mapping must be accepted by the Region through a planning approvals process. The Natural Heritage System mapping will be updated at the time of a municipal statutory review.</p> <p>Preserving the natural heritage system both during and beyond the planning period is a key component of Halton's planning vision in the Regional Official Plan. In keeping with this vision, Regional staff will be proposing policy directions for Council's consideration that are in keeping with this vision and will serve to strengthen the long-term viability of</p>
		<p><b>AWG Summary Report</b></p> <p>Do you agree with the following recommendations? Do you have any questions or concerns? Is there anything that Regional staff should be aware of or consider further?</p>	<p>General Question/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the balance between the Agriculture and Natural Heritage System within the Region. Moving away from the focus that development is encroaching on both the NHS and Ag system</li> <li>• The idea of a mosaic of landscapes, we should have the freedom to have land not for development but for repurposing.</li> </ul>	

No.	Source	Submission		Response
			<p>Ex. Land to re-grow to forest rather than limiting things on specific lots. The forest is not a uniform landscape.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring the Ecological footprint of the Region back and benchmark where we were before and where we are now. State of NHS report etc.. Can we tie this back through the ROPR.</li> <li>Could a Key Feature be the ecological benefit concept? (biodiversity, sequestration, water quality, validate the function of the land etc..) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response: Could be considered as Natural Asset. (FCM project) possibly something moving towards for next ROPR, include that as direction in this ROPR.</li> </ul> </li> <li>LIDs to be included when supporting some of the recommendations.</li> <li>Looking at the application of Green development standards to some of these recommendations</li> </ul>	<p>Halton's natural heritage and water resources. Policy Direction NH-7 provides direction that updates to the policies and mapping will build on the existing comprehensive systems approach to protecting and enhancing natural features and functions of Halton's NHS.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-11 updates and enhances current policies in the ROP to recognize agriculture in components of the NHS. This policy direction recommends that the Region explore additional opportunities (ex. NHAC references as-of-right permissions) for clarification on permissions for agricultural buildings and uses within the RNHS within the existing policy framework.</p> <p>Policy Direction NH-10 recommends the creation of a Natural Heritage Strategy and reflects comments regarding providing an "umbrella framework" for other programs and initiatives, complementing the Rural and Agricultural Strategy, and carbon sequestration, stewardship initiatives, greenlands securement, monitoring. etc.</p> <p>NHAC's comments on Recommendation 1 regarding the incorporation of a carbon sequestration lens to illustrate the value of farming and the NHS is reflected in the climate change lenses applied to Policy Directions in the Rural and Agricultural and Natural Heritage theme areas (RAS-1 and NH-7) which recognize the importance of lands in the rural area for their carbon sequestration potential.</p> <p>Concerns were also expressed about agriculture moving out of the Region (Recommendation 3) and Policy Direction CC-7 recommends introducing new policies and enhance existing policies in the ROP to promote urban agricultural opportunities and locally-sourced food production.</p> <p>Additionally, general comments on low impact development and green development standards are not within the scope of the Rural and Agricultural policy directions, but information on how the Region will support the use of these tools can be found within the climate change policy directions.</p> <p>Lastly, Regional staff acknowledge NHAC's acclaim of the on-going consultation efforts throughout the ROPR and will continue to work with members of NHAC to explore opportunities to support and assist in preserving and enhancing Halton's NHS for future generations.</p>
		<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> The Region will continue working with the agricultural community on the development of updated key feature mapping to ensure that the mapping is as accurate as possible in the next iteration of the ROP. <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.1 (p. 13-15) and 6.2 (p. 15-16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to ground truth, the mapping is not as good as it should be. HRFA would be promoting the ability to ground truth when an application goes forward. Verification of mapping lines at that time and community scientists can be called upon.</li> <li>Immediately refine the Region's mapping after ground truthing has taken place. The mapping and monitoring are incredibly important. Outcomes of complete studies are very valuable.</li> <li>Worried we have lost the "Systems based approach" as much of the conversation is based on "Features". Worried about the links and losing the systems based approach. So much pressure for a farmers to sell, Class 1, 2,3 farmland seems to be leaving. What can we do to make sure the farms exist and the features exist to make a better and linked system?</li> <li>Incorporate a carbon sequestration lens to help show the values of both the farming community and natural heritage system. Natural function, water, soil retention and the idea of compensation other than buildings (alternative land use system). How can we create capacity within the system in Halton Region (smart prosperity institute out of u Ottawa). There is an economy in trees more than cutting them down, beyond carbon etc..</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> The Region will continue to directly contact those that may be affected by updated mapping.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very important, landowners should know what to expect when a designation is changing.</li> </ul>	

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		<p><b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.2 (p. 15-16)</p>		<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> The Region will explore opportunities that would allow municipalities to streamline the site plan process, if they determine that it is appropriate to do so. <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.3 (p. 16-17)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• argument, good to streamline but not compromise. What mechanism is going to be used to streamline? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Response: Region has no control over Site Plan Approval, we can provide advice to the locals. We can streamline in a way that minimized impacts on the agricultural community but at what point does this become a challenge with regards to other Regional interests?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Hope that the Region will still be involve when it comes to moving agricultural systems ahead. We are lucky that we have an Agriculture advocate on Regional staff. How can her position help Halton Hills and Milton with helping agriculture to continue to improve and move forward to service the south. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This could be enhanced by a proposed Regional concierge services as noted in the Report.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Agriculture processing is moving further outside of the Region, we should streamline Site Plan process to keep full system of agricultural operations within the Region. More permissive consideration should be given if for a local food system. Should look for the new and big opportunities here.</li> <li>• Don't think the Region should/could control what is planted within the Region and the farmer should be within their rights to do so. Lots of opportunities in the Region for Agriculture processing and that means farmers are able to stay here. Ex. Biomass, hay and forages, etc. don't want to lose those opportunities.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> The Region will update its EIA guidelines to provide greater clarity on triggers, scoping and the waiving of EIAs, with these guidelines based on an updated ROP policy framework. <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.3 (p. 16-17) and 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I agree, but unclear how it could be hurtful. Clarity for EIAs within ANSIs for example would be helpful.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> The Region will work with the Niagara Escarpment Commission and develop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hope the Region can work with NEC. If they want to keep Agriculture in the north end of the Region, it will be important</li> </ul>			

No.	Source	Submission		Response
		<p>an operational guide that outlines the Region's role in the processing of Development Permit applications.  <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.3 (p. 16-17) and 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<p>for the Region to be involved (in next NEP Review in 2025) to help implement Ag systems within the NEC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being mindful of the NEC/Region relationship. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Response: Region is circulated on a number of applications, the idea of this Recommendation was to help determine how to move forward without Regional support via a scoping exercise. Possibly provide more of an advocacy role ex. Concierge service.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If going to NEC, would like the Region to get involved in the next Hemson report now. Be more proactive than reactive.</li> <li>• One window/contact approach is preferred as many people do not what to go through the NEC.</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> The Region will consider opportunities that allow for as-of-right permissions for agricultural uses and buildings to locate within key features and vegetation protection zones, where possible while remaining in conformity with provincial policies and plans, and in consultation with all stakeholders.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.4 (p. 17-21)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dislike the term "as-of-right", good planning has to be good planning, we have to play by the rules. We can only hope this recommendation goes forward but with not as of right language included. If we are to get acceptance for Agricultural permissions, then it has to be done correctly</li> <li>• Don't have an opinion as the language is circular for 6</li> <li>• This should be further expanded upon and clarity provided in this Recommendation</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> The Region will prepare updated ROP policies, and through the Rural and Agricultural Strategy and the Natural Heritage Strategy, to further recognize the importance of agriculture, recognize farmers as good stewards and which remove barriers to agricultural investment wherever possible.  <b>Reference:</b> Report sections 6.4 (p. 17-21) and 6.5 (21-22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would like to see an expanded policies to also recognize the multiple values of the Natural Heritage System and ecological function</li> <li>• Ecological lens with regard to carbon sequestration would be helpful</li> </ul>			

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		<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> The Region will consider developing a concierge service to provide direct assistance in navigating planning processes when applications to develop agricultural uses are submitted.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would like concierge service for civil society to enable support and help for Natural Heritage System (NHS)</li> <li>• Would like to see concierge service for the NHS and Planning and Agriculture and collective action/process so everyone understands their roles/responsibilities within this system. Bringing it all together.</li> <li>• Would like concierge service for civil society to enable support and help for NHS.</li> <li>• NHS has ability as civil society actors (community groups, schools etc.) to be able to help and assist in the NHS – started dabbling in biodiversity strategy in NHS. There is so much opportunity.</li> <li>• Would like to see a concierge service for NHS.</li> <li>• Support concierge service for agriculture too.</li> <li>• Collective action and process needed too – for citizen science and action from organizations to support concierge service.</li> <li>• Would be helpful if it's digestible and consumable</li> </ul>	<p>Comments are acknowledged. Please see above for a detailed response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> The Region will determine if there is an ability to allow for the waiving of fees related to the Regional role in the review of applications.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 6.6 (p. 22)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree with waiving fees</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> The Region commits to further consultation with the agricultural community as the policies in the ROP are updated.  <b>Reference:</b> Report section 5 (p. 11-12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commend the Region for what they have already done, do believe there has been good consultation. Now need to see the details to see if the things we are looking for are there.</li> </ul>			
9.	<p>Michael Toccalino  HRFA Meeting dated April 12, 2021</p>	<p>Good morning and thank you for this morning's opportunity to discuss the ROPR as it impacts our property.  I thought that I'd follow-up on our discussion with the following record of some relevant points.  Please let me know if I've misunderstood, misinterpreted or simply missed anything.</p> <p><b>NHS:</b></p>		<p>Regional Staff have identified the spruce grow as candidate significant woodland and has been captured in the Draft Regional Natural Heritage System. Staff recommend that a site visit be conducted to examine the feature and delineate the woodland to refine the limits of the RNHS.</p> <p>A site visit was conducted with Regional Staff. The Region recommends based on field observations and analysis that the woodland feature is not</p>



No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<p>1 As property owners, we are concerned with a “Proposed Draft NHS Key Feature” illustrated on the ROPR mapping on our Lot 12.</p> <p>2 Specifically, a crop of spruce trees at the north east limit of Lot 12 planted by my father ±25 years ago has been identified by small scale (ground features are at a smaller, less detailed size) air photo interpretation.</p> <p>3 We understand that the ROPR mapping is based on Provincial air photo interpretation from 2009 which has never been “Ground-Truthed” to verify status.</p> <p>4 We believe that this plantation is incorrectly identified on the ROPR mapping as a “Proposed Draft NHS Key Feature”</p> <p>5 All plantings in this area are the same species (monoculture), age (±25 years) and size (DBH).</p> <p>6 The ROPR team has committed to schedule an on-site review of the area in question with the land-owners and a forestry consultant to correct the Proposed Draft NHS Key Feature designation.</p> <p>7 Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, this site meeting will not be scheduled until sometime in May 2021, conditions permitting.</p> <p>8 Currently a maximum limit of 5 people has been established for outdoor meetings such as this.</p> <p>9 The ROPR team will coordinate the meeting with Michael Toccalino via email (<a href="mailto:mtoccalino@sympatico.ca">mtoccalino@sympatico.ca</a>).</p> <p>10 Crop production is considered a compatible agricultural use within the 30M buffer associated with Proposed Draft NHS Key features.</p> <p>11 The current practice of crop production to the edge of all other Proposed Draft NHS Key Features on Lot 12 can be maintained as currently farmed.</p> <p><u>Permitted Uses in Prime Agricultural Areas:</u></p> <p>12 The Provincial Policy Statement 2020 (PPS2020) permits a wider range of Agricultural Uses, Agriculture-Related Uses and On-Farm Diversified Uses in prime agricultural areas.</p> <p>13 The “Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas” (Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs - Publication 851) also permits a wider range of Agricultural Uses, Agriculture-Related Uses and On-Farm Diversified Uses in prime agricultural areas.</p> <p>14 We would like the ROPR to adopt, add and permit the wider range of Agricultural Uses, Agriculture-Related Uses and On-Farm Diversified Uses in the updated Regional Official Plan.</p> <p>Thank you again for this opportunity to be a part of the ROPR process.</p>	<p>significant and can be removed from the draft RNHS mapping. However, the lands will remain in the draft RNHS mapping as a component as the lands are within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Protection and Natural Areas Designations.</p> <p>Comments regarding the request to permit the wider range of Agricultural Uses, Agriculture-Related Uses and On-Farm Diversified Uses is reflected in Policy Direction RAS-2 and is consistent with the majority of comments received through the consultation process.</p>
10.	Mathew and Logan Smerek HRFA Meeting dated April 12, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RNHS – concern with the candidate significant woodlands layer at the North-West corner where the old barn foundation is located and the hedgerow along the neighbour’s driveway. Would like the Region to look at that wooded area in more detail and shouldn’t be part of the RNHS.</li> <li>• ROPA 38 – Agricultural System outside of Prime Agricultural Area</li> <li>• Draft Proposed – Prime Agricultural Area. Picked up by the Province as Prime.</li> <li>• 2009 Region did LEAR study to id what should be part of Prime Agricultural Area – soil capability and other factors weighed to define Prime Ag. Area.</li> <li>• Couple years ago, the Province went through same process and slightly difference in weighing factors and smaller units. We used larger evaluation unit. Other Prime Areas that the Province picked up.</li> <li>• Concern that the neighbours to the south are “Rural Land Area” and that subdivision may be built.</li> <li>• Regional Staff advised, they wouldn’t be able to build a subdivision there.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff have identified the wooded/vegetated area around the existing barn foundation as candidate significant woodland and has been captured in the draft RNHS mapping. Staff recommend that a site visit be conducted to examine the feature and delineate the woodland to refine the limits of the RNHS.</p> <p>A site visit was conducted with Regional Staff. The Region recommends based on field observations and analysis that this portion of the woodland feature is not significant and can be removed from the draft RNHS mapping.</p>

No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future growth areas are being identified through the Region's Growth Concepts work.</li> <li>Province identifies new non-agricultural uses such as cemeteries, which may be steered to Rural Lands vs. Prime Agricultural Areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Confirmed that Regional and Provincial LEAR studies were used to identify and propose designation of prime agricultural areas and rural lands, as reflected in RAS-1. Concerns about subdivisions have been addressed and it is not a permitted use being pursued for rural lands. Cemeteries are being recommended as a permitted use for rural lands, as reflected in RAS-3, subject to criteria that will be further developed in phase 3. Cemeteries will be restricted from being permitted in prime agricultural areas.</p>
11.	<p>Larry Campbell</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 12, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are several properties in question</li> <li>Mentioned that there is 1 acre that was sold off of 40 acres and it appears that 2 lots are being developed on the one parcel.</li> <li>There are some issues with the Geo Warehouse and that the full extent of the property was not adequately reflected in the viewer.</li> <li>There were no changes to the NHS on subject property</li> <li>An existing tree nursery appears in the NHS system in the area identified as a component to the system (NEC Protection Area).</li> <li>Reference was made to the EIA Guidelines</li> <li>There were some small changes made to the Agricultural system mapping. There were candidate areas that were changed to Prime Ag given that the majority of land in and around the area where already identified as prime compared to ROPA 38</li> <li>Subject land owner asked if Halton's Tree By-law still allow for cutting trees to allow for firewood. The By-law does permit a certain amount for this purpose. Subject land owner has a copy of the by-law already.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff reviewed all of the NHS key features on the property as well as the implications if landowner chose to expand his existing barn or put up a new structure and when studies might be triggered. Normal farm practices can continue including the existing horticultural operation as per the Region's permitted uses (ROP 117.1).</p>
12.	<p>Ammar Aljoundi</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 12, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:</b> Subject landowner's property consists of Prime Ag (1/3) and Agricultural Area (1/2) with the remainder in NHS including key features and components. Soils are predominantly Class 2 and 3. The property is within the NEP Area (Esc.Protection). The Province (Growth Plan mapping) shows that the Agricultural Area is a Candidate Prime Ag Area.</li> <li><b>AGRICULTURE:</b> Subject landowner asked why his property (Candidate Area) was included in the Prime Ag Designation. It was explained</li> <li>Subject landowner then asked what the differences in policy meant for his development and operational rights.</li> <li><b>NEP AREA:</b> It was explained to subject landowner that the ROPR process was going to add permissions to the PA Area, including on-farm diversified uses and ag-related uses and that these uses were also recognized in the NEP.</li> <li><b>NHS:</b> It was explained in detail that the NHS was not being changed on subject landowner's property. He was given a full description of the features and components on his property and the associated permissions and restrictions for each component.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff explained that the Growth Plan Mapping Implementation Procedures provided guidance as to how the Candidate areas were to be assessed – soil class, slope, adjacency to other PA etc. The property met all the relevant criteria and was thus included. explained that there are no material differences in policies between the Prime Ag Area and Agricultural Area in the current OP, save and except for policies for urban expansions into the PA Area (and that these would not affect him). It was further explained that the Agricultural Area may be re-named as Rural Lands and that the Region was currently consulting on whether additional policies/permissions would be available in the Rural Lands designation. We encouraged subject land owner to participate in the ROPR process and to provide feedback regarding the Rural Lands Designation.</p>
13.	<p>Scott Stewart and Holly McGaffin</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 12, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the properties were in the Prime Ag designation with some NHS key features. Soils were predominantly Class 1 and 2. Provincial Growth Plan mapping shows the properties are within their Prime Ag area. The various properties are within the NEP Area, including Esc. Rural, Esc. Protection and Esc. Natural.</li> <li><b>AGRICULTURE:</b> Subject property owners had questions regarding severances for two of the properties. The first was a possible candidate severance for a surplus farm dwelling. A second proposal to merge two "non-conforming" ½ acre lots and then sever a portion of their large acreage as compensation was discussed. It was again offered to the owners that they get in touch with someone from Community Planning to review the proposal thoroughly.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff had previously provided a response to subject landowners written submission. Staff confirmed that the next version of the mapping would include that update. However, the 30m buffer from the woodlands across the street would still be shown on the property. Staff further confirmed that subject to NEC permission, from a Regional NHS perspective that the road would likely act as a barrier to the woodlands and any SWH and would likely not trigger the requirement of an EIA for future single family dwelling but is subject to the Region's EIA Guidelines. Without having done a thorough review of the property and</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines and the ability to waive and scope an EIA if it was triggers through Regional policies.</li> </ul>	severance proposal, Regional staff offered to put subject landowners in touch with Community Planning section to discuss the proposal.
14.	Robert McClure  HRFA Meeting dated April 12, 2021	<p>Submitted Question: "What notice was given to affected land owners in the brand new study area we just found out about regarding submissions by Halton Region to the Environmental Registry of Ontario that proposes adding additional lands of white belt to the Greenbelt? How does it affect or tie into ROPR because this was not part of any mapping shared with us last fall?"</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject property is all Prime Ag in the current OP. The Provincial Growth Plan mapping also shows the property as Prime Ag. Soils are all Class 1. Does contain NHS buffer to the woodlands on the adjacent property to the south. Other subject property is mostly Prime Ag with NHS key features. The property is also within the Greenbelt Plan Natural Heritage System.</li> <li>AGRICULTURE: As an overall comment, subject landowners believe that conversion of lands to the Greenbelt Plan (or an Ag Preserve) is a bad idea. They fear that it will discourage successional plans. Land taxes are also a problem e.g. if you rent land and the taxes increase, so will the rent for that property. The subject property owners strongly encourage the Region to push the Province for full consultation on Greenbelt expansion. Regional staff spoke about the inclusion of added permissions such as on-farm diversified uses and ag-related uses, which the subject landowners were in agreement with.</li> <li>Subject landowners stated that the woodland in the south-western corner of subject property contains majority of Ash and would like to harvest that out. Explained the difference between the Tree-By-law and the ROP in terms of mapping a woodland. Will provide him with Ron's contact information as a follow-up.</li> </ul>	Regional Staff confirmed that there were no changes to the NHS mapping for the property. Property is located within the Greenbelt NHS. Regional Staff further explained the difference between the Tree-By-law and the ROP in terms of mapping a woodland and recommended following up with the Regional Forester (contact information provided). Staff further clarified the 30m buffer on the woodlands and in the event that the landowner would like to expand any structures into this area, an EIA may be triggers. Regional staff also discussed the Region's EIA Guidelines and the potential use of the EIA Waiving Tool from the Guidelines for the subject properties.
15.	John Opsteen  HRFA Meeting dated April 14, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Half of the house is in the key feature. Subject property owner has been trying to keep back the trees as much as possible. Any hazardous trees that could fall on the house will need to come down. Ex. Ash may need to be cut down. Front lawn, few trees on the front lawn. His whole pool is covered in the Key Feature. He's been trying to keep back the woodlot from the buildings. Down by the barns, some trees close to the barn, some are Ash that are dead. He's had an arborist come look at the trees and wood pecker affecting.</li> <li>Driveway and hydro corridor, there are some trees and grass – driveway needs to be at least 50 ft wide for equipment and storage of snow.</li> <li>Around the chicken barn, wild birds are an issue and nesting in trees, so he's cleared an area and is grass.</li> <li>Refine the woodland layer around the house. Min 30 m around the buildings shouldn't be in sig. woodlands.</li> <li>We don't have a system of environmental goods and services yet. Need to work with our landowners. Person with larger area, when come forward with permits, incentive to help them with the process – percentage of property is feature on the property – waive the EIA because they are doing the right thing already. The NHS is for all the people in Halton. The people who have it on their property have more restrictions than the people who don't. The commitment needs to be the same from all people.</li> <li>Effects on property value.</li> <li>Currently RNHS is a land use designation. Halton is a system, not just features. More advanced than other municipalities who are just designating the features and now other system components. Should we be more in line with the other municipalities?</li> </ul>	Email Response Summary sent June 25, 2020. Based on Regional staff review of the draft proposed NHS mapping, we have determined that although the candidate significant woodlands meets the size criteria of 0.5ha or larger, it would not meet one or more of the subsequent four criteria as outlined in Section 277 of the Regional Official Plan. Therefore, Region staff will be removing the candidate significant woodlands that is 0.76ha in size that has been mapped at the front of the property from the draft proposed Natural Heritage System mapping (please see attached map). Please note that the draft proposed Halton's Natural Heritage System mapping will continue to map this area as part of the system (light green) as the property is located within the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System as mapped in the Greenbelt Plan (2017). Halton Region is required to identify the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System within its Official Plan. In the current Regional Official Plan, the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System is shown as an overlay.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We want to look at rural stewardship opportunities – look at other examples in municipalities and conservation authorities. John – need to be aware of when neighbours and landowners plant an area</li> <li>Farm cluster – 30 m buffer around the farm cluster to allow the management of vegetation – would avoid that conflict</li> <li>Farmers don't want to plant trees on their property because they would lose control of their operations. But we want them to replant for example EAB.</li> </ul>	
16.	Barb and Tom Parker  HRFA Meeting dated April 14, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raised issue of the white pine plantations on the farm in the forest management plan 7 acres</li> <li>Talk about how those are mapped and to raise this on a high level when look at stewardship practices that they have done along the creek</li> <li>Want to know if the buffer is considered a buffer or key feature. Would there be a buffer on a buffer.</li> <li>Definition of significant woodlands under ROPA and the Regions bylaw that speaks to an exemption for plantings.</li> <li>Would a forest management plan that identifies the plantation area and signed off by the Regional forester be placed into policy in the upcoming ROP?</li> <li>A plantation with respect to woodland definition has been flagged. Subject landowner comments would be welcome on this matter as policy direction has not yet been established. Feels that the definitions should be better aligned.</li> <li>Under the tree cutting bylaw, under the definition, measurements by trees but does not include an activated tree plantation, plantation maintained for the purposes of harvesting.</li> <li>The Parkers would like the definition of the woodland to be consistent between the ROP and the Tree By-law.</li> <li>Discussed the definition in the forestry bylaw vs the Plan because it comes from the Forestry Act definition.</li> <li>Questions about where buffers start with respect to additional plantings that were added. Would like a better understanding about any impacts to stewardship projects. A 30 m buffer from the edge of the wetlands was picked up. The watercourse uses a 30 m buffer on either side.</li> <li>The draft RNHS map, referring to the step down, there is a clearing where there is a house that is severed off and there is a hook shaped clearing. That is a NHS component (buffer) but before it was all a key feature. The layer was updated to recognize the edge of the woodland.</li> <li>No issues with the ag system mapping.</li> <li>Some GBNHS appears on subject landowner's property (which is not on the neighbours property).</li> </ul>	Regional Staff conducted a site visit to the subject properties and minor refinement to the draft proposed RNHS occurred based on field observations. . Staff confirmed that plantations, other than Christmas tree, fruit and nut and tree nurseries, are considered Woodlands if the minimum size, tree densities and species are met. It is not the intent of the Region to classify these plantations as non-Woodlands through certification of a plantation specifically planted and maintained for the purpose of harvesting as certified in writing by an Officer. Harvesting of most Woodlands and Significant Woodlands is permitted using Good Forestry practices (GFP). The subject landowners were encouraged to submit additional comments to <a href="http://www.halton.ca/ROPR">www.halton.ca/ROPR</a> . Regional Staff further explained the difference between the GBNHS and the Regional NHS.
17.	Jack Pemberton  HRFA Meeting dated April 14, 2021	<p>Submitted Question: "Are there any changes proposed for my property? if so what are those changes ? Does the property adjacent to me on the north side have same or different classifications? "</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wanted to see if there were any changes.</li> <li>There has been a small reduction in the amount of key features to more accurately reflect the wooded areas on the property</li> <li>The remaining property is rural and was previously designated as Agricultural Area</li> <li>Inquired about the property to the north</li> <li>Again there were small changes as the wetlands were updated following a 2011 evaluation.</li> <li>ROPA 38 identified the rest of the property as Agricultural Area which would now be reflected as rural lands</li> </ul>	Regional Staff acknowledge the feedback provided. No further action or response is required.

No.	Source	Submission	Response
18.	<p>Claudette Taylor</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 14, 2021</p>	<p>Submitted Question:            "How old are the google maps that you are using for these maps? On attachment #2 what is the yellow grid markings representing that cover our property and property across and behind us? Would like to discuss key features on our property. Is there a notion that our property will be greenbelted or natural heritage or agriculture perseverance on top of being designated as agriculture?"</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions were raised about what version of Google maps is being used for aerial. It was explained that Google maps is not used but rather Provincial mapping and the aerial photos were from 2019.</li> <li>• Yellow markings on maps – These indicate the GP NHS. The arm is being removed.</li> <li>• Questions around the key features and components on the property. There is a water course that used to flood which is essentially a drain ditch that holds water in the spring. A potential meeting with a consultant was trying to be arranged to discuss the water course.</li> <li>• A wooded area and wetlands are picked up as NHS key feature.</li> <li>• A CH site visit was requested to evaluate the water course. There are a couple of arms branching off of the south of the property as key features which are picked up as wetlands. The owners indicated that while most of the area is mapped correctly, the extended arms are currently farmed and dry.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>Conservation Halton (CH) staff conducted a site visit in July 2021. Features were examined and any refinements to the proposed draft RNHS mapping were based on field observations made by CH staff.</p>
19.	<p>Paul and John Fisher</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 16, 2021</p>	<p>Submitted Question:            "Several questions: Do these new proposed mappings increase the Greenbelt area on my property? Why was the ditch which has some winter run off when the snow melts but is dry for 50 weeks of the year shown as a creek? Did anyone walk these fields before drawing lines on the map? If the purpose of the maps is to protect the swamp lands to the north west of my property why is my land included as my lands do not drain to the swamp in the north west? There is no creek on my property although the map shows a creek. How can a natural heritage area be under a 600 volt hydro line? Hydro Ontario took away all the trees and bushes. Do these proposed mappings affect my farming operations in the future? "</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wanted to know if there was any mapping difference from the current Regional Official Plan mapping to the proposed</li> <li>• NHS: On one of the subject properties, there is a new linkage mapped on the property. No changes to the other subject property (Greenbelt NHS)</li> <li>• Owner stated that the winter run off drains through this area but there is no water for the rest of the year.</li> <li>• Subject landowner wanted to confirm that he could continue to farm in these areas, specifically the linkage.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff confirmed that the only changes to the mapping included a new linkage mapped on one of the subject landowner's property. Regional Staff further offered to conduct a site visit if the owner wishes to further evaluate any potential features on the subject property. To date, a site visit has not been requested. Staff also confirmed that the normal farm practices including farming is permitted within this linkage.</p>
20.	<p>Eldon Williams</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 16, 2021</p>	<p>Submitted Question:            "My concern is that a portion of my property has been identified as wet land. It is not, and is unusually dry because it abuts the cut made to lower the CN tracts that run along our orchard. I ran into this issue with Conservation when we put an addition onto our house. They showed no interest in correcting their mistake; in fact, they told me that I would have pay for a proper assessment and correction. I gave up even though I was raised to believe that if a job was worth doing at all, it was worth doing right."</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject landowner does not agree with the mapped wetland on his property.</li> <li>• The wetland is mapped by CH and includes a 30m buffer.</li> <li>• Subject landowner stated that it is a small piece that is mostly walnut and pine trees. There are many dead trees within the area as well. It is wetland there due to the CN rail line to the North.</li> </ul>	<p>Conservation Halton (CH) staff conducted a site visit in July 2021. Features were examined and any refinements to the proposed draft RNHS mapping were based on field observations made by CH staff.</p>

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21.	<p>Laurent Viel</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 16, 2021</p>	<p>Submitted Question:            "The main reason for requiring a session with you is to clarify and understand our land designation as per Halton ROPR draft proposal. We find it confusing and conflicting as per the various documents (ROPR and ROPA 38-RNHS) which would put us as proposed buffer and enhancement linkage versus OMAFRA Prime Agriculture Candidate. "</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wanted to know the difference between the existing and proposed mapping.</li> <li>• Has farmed these lands for 37 years</li> <li>• NHS: Minor changes in the key feature mapping to better reflect the woodlands boundary</li> <li>• Subject Landowner asked about harvesting for firewood. Regional staff explained that the Region has a Tree By-law that is administered by the Regional Forester.</li> <li>• Subject landowner asked if there was guidance on what can be done in areas that are NHS.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff explained that normal farm practices are permitted under the Regional Official Plan. Noting that there is a large Provincially Significant Wetland that cannot be altered and is Regulated by the GRCA. In the event that they wish to put up a building that requires an NEC permit or planning act applications, and depending on the location, an EIA may be triggered. Further, the Region has EIA Guidelines that allow waiving and scoping of these studies. As well, there are Regional Official Plan policies that direct staff to offer in-kind assistance for agricultural buildings when an EIA is triggered. The first step is always for staff to attend an on-site visit. A copy of the Region's Tree By-law to be provided.</p>
22.	<p>Brad Clements</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 16, 2021</p>	<p>Submitted Question:            "My understanding of the map is that agricultural land is surrounding my property on roughly three sides, but my Christmas tree farm is not included in the agricultural designation. I would ask that this be changed."</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ROPA 38 – Prime Agricultural Land</li> <li>• Proposed Draft Prime Agricultural Land – Prime Ag still applies.</li> <li>• Provincial Prime Agricultural mapping – Class 1-2 soils, other factors such as fragmentation. Outside of Prime Agricultural Lands, "Rural Lands".</li> <li>• NHS – concern with small woodland at the south-east corner – willow trees around the watercourse have been removed.</li> <li>• NHS – "L" shape woodland to the north-west, more of a hedgerow and some trees on the watercourse bank.</li> <li>• Will the land use designation change overtime? Through this OP review, the Province has changed definition of "agricultural related" operations. Had to service your farm. Now can provide services for other neighbouring farms. On-farm diversified uses – 2% of land holdings. To help with farm viability to have a strong agricultural system. Provide additional revenue streams and incubator for additional businesses that will help our farms in moving forward.</li> <li>• Right now farm is in Christmas trees. Small building on north side of parking lot. NEC approved use of non-grown items – snack bar, some vending and retails sales. Your coming more in-line with the Niagara Escarpment, example grape and wine growing.</li> <li>• The ROP allowed for retail spaces as long as majority products are locally grown. On-farm diversified piece really broadens what can be done on the farm – creative ideas that may or may not be linked with the farm. Some criteria that needs to be met. Farming still needs to be main farming activity as long as criteria be met can explore those ideas for the farm.</li> <li>• He brings some trees that he can't grow on his farm – that would be on-farm diversified use. Examples wreaths from somewhere else and not grown on farm would be classified as on-farm diversified uses. We are broadening those permissions for a wider variety to explore.</li> <li>• Guidelines on permitted uses – OMAFRA. Anna can send link. Criteria and examples of what would fall under on-farm diversified uses. Example, on-farm cideries and meateries, cafes.</li> <li>• He's concerned with it being more restricted. NEC is generally supportive of expansion of agricultural uses.</li> <li>• We do want to protect agricultural land from non-agricultural uses and strengthen the system. Broaden uses would allow for other revenue streams and hopefully strengthen the agricultural system.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff, conducted a site visit in May 2021. Based on our field investigations, the candidate significant woodlands as shown in Halton's Natural Heritage System mapping is connected to the wider patch to the west, is wider than the required minimum width of 20 metres and contains a watercourse and seepage that is visible within this area. However, a small patch of candidate significant woodlands in the south-east corner of the property that is 0.22ha in size that has been mapped from the draft proposed RNHS does not meet the definition of significant woodlands and it has been removed from the mapping. The Region is to provide the OMAFARA guidelines for permitted uses. A link is to be provided to register for ongoing ROPR updates and notices.</p> <p>Comments advocating for broader uses are reflected in Policy Direction RAS-2 where Regional staff are recommending permitted the full range of agricultural uses, agricultural-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses as outlined by the Provincial Guidelines on Permitted Uses on Prime Agricultural Areas to address the need for other revenue streams.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for him to register online for ROPR for updates. Right now we are looking at growth concepts. But additional opportunities to provide input on policy directions and write the policies. We typically identify these opportunities to HRFA to send out to members through the newsletter.</li> <li>• Is there a list of what is going to be allowed or not allowed? Provincial guideline has a list. Region cannot be more permissive, but more restrictive. One of the questions is do we adopt what the Province has proposed in the guidelines?</li> <li>• There isn't zoning in Milton plan because of the NEP.</li> <li>• The NEP policies for Niagara Protection Area allow for agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. Policies are aligning to support unique agricultural opportunities.</li> </ul>	
23.	Dawn Jarvis HRFA Meeting dated April 16, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two linear wooded area planted as shelter beds are now identified as part of the NHS.</li> <li>• They would like to keep these wooded areas as agricultural land, because they are starting the process to revert the areas back into agriculture and need the area to build new agricultural buildings to storage.</li> <li>• The Region has a copy of the arborist report owner has completed for the wooded area behind the house and shed.</li> <li>• There are invasive species and Pine Beetle affecting the trees.</li> <li>• They would maintain the larger woodland as part of their Forest Management Plan. It is only the two shelter beds that they would like designated agriculture not NHS.</li> <li>• Proposed Draft Ag. System – Prime Ag.</li> <li>• ROPA 38 – Agricultural Area</li> <li>• Outside of the Halton Prime Agricultural Study Area. They don't qualify the grading system based on soil.</li> <li>• The property to the north was picked up as Prime Agriculture. The Province has identified this for us to look and why it is picked up as proposed Prime Agricultural Area right now. Province tries to have large contiguous properties. Where there is large Prime Agricultural land, the Province has flagged adjacent areas for the Region to look at to include as Prime. Permissions between Agricultural and Prime are the same.</li> <li>• Subject landowner feels the supporting rationale isn't fair. If the Provincial identifies as potential Prime, it is up to the municipalities to decide if it is.</li> <li>• There is some Rural Lands located to the south and the east.</li> <li>• She would like it to stay Agricultural Land. Not sure the difference with the new category of Prime.</li> <li>• With the new Provincial mapping, either Prime or Rural. The existing Agricultural Land would have the same permissions as the draft proposed Prime Agricultural Area. Rural Land would have similar permissions as well.</li> <li>• Because a lot of Prime to the north and in the corridor, likely why her property was picked up as Prime.</li> <li>• She is looking for more information around the logic for why one area picked as Prime over another, other than due to size.</li> <li>• There were discrepancies between the Provincial LEAR and Region's study. There were areas that we must include, and areas we can look at to determine whether designate as Prime or Rural. We looked at if there was Prime around those property, slope, infrastructure. At a Regional scale. If she would like the Region to look at Rural we can look at that.</li> <li>• There isn't much policy differences between the layers.</li> <li>• Halton Region approach, we recognize all agricultural land is important and we are looking to protect all agricultural land. So there isn't much difference between the Prime and Rural Land designation uses. Cemeteries may be a particular non-agricultural use directed to the Rural Lands vs. Prime Agricultural Lands.</li> </ul>	Regional Staff conducted a site visit to examine the wooded area that was planted as shelter beds and now within the proposed draft RNHS mapping. Refinements were made and portions of the features mapped were removed. Staff confirmed that plantations, other than Christmas tree, fruit and nut and tree nurseries, are considered Woodlands if the minimum size, tree densities and species are met. It is not the intent of the Region to classify these plantations as non-Woodlands through certification of a plantation specifically planted and maintained for the purpose of harvesting as certified in writing by an Officer. Harvesting of most Woodlands and Significant Woodlands is permitted using Good Forestry practices (GFP).

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently we have Prime Agricultural Lands as an overlay. Now the Province says we need to designated Prime Agricultural Lands, and if outside, then Rural Lands.</li> <li>• We are developing policy direction and there will more opportunity for further input. We encourage them to stay involved in ROPR process and see what is being written for policies. We always saw rural lands as being important part of the agricultural system.</li> <li>• Dawn is looking at the difference between policy.</li> <li>• Prime and Rural are both the Agricultural System. Permissions are identical.</li> <li>• HRFA will let members know as policy directions come forward and as we draft policies there will opportunities with weigh in.</li> <li>• When do the maps and policies get approved?</li> <li>• Mapping and policies</li> <li>• She heard the mapping would be finalized in spring</li> <li>• Ideal but the new building behind her house in the wooded area to keep off the productive agricultural land.</li> <li>• OFA encouraging members to become involved in the municipal processes. There may be some education tools. Each county needs is different and OFA is working with them.</li> <li>• Comes down to the details and those would be in the policies.</li> <li>• Need to look at mapping and policies together.</li> <li>• Permitted uses and restrictions – comes out in the next steps in planning policies.</li> <li>• Region is looking at broadening permission – on-farm diversified uses. Looking to be more entrepreneurial to do more on your farm, there would additional permissions – both Prime Agricultural and Rural Lands. We are sorting out what that looks like.</li> <li>• What is the dream wish list for the property and feed into the discussion and see if those uses would be permitted.</li> </ul>	
24.	<p>Jamie Fisher</p> <p>HRFA Meeting dated April 16, 2021</p>	<p>Submitted Question: "For the Key features which type or types are they and where do they apply if not all of mapped key feature?"</p> <p>Meeting Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed the NHS existing and proposed mapping, and the Key Features vs. Enhancement Area</li> <li>• NSE reviewed the Regional Linkages and the property falls within the Medad Valley Regional Linkage using the Sustainable Halton 3.02 Report. Appears to be some refinements to include small sliver on the east portion of the property within the Regional Linkage Area. We currently don't include the Regional Linkages in our NHS mapping. Still determining if we will include them as a component in the system mapping. Offered a follow up meeting with Jamie and NSE to review the methodology for including that small portion.</li> <li>• What can you do in Enhancement Area. This is the area where agricultural uses are promoted and encourage while protecting and enhancing the Key Features.</li> <li>• For example, opportunities for improvement wildlife movement, and seed dispersal.</li> <li>• Key Features on the property: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Significant woodlands</li> <li>○ Small portion of a CH regulated wetland</li> <li>○ Potential significant valleyland (Bronte Creek) – this feature is not mapped and would be confirmed on-site through top of bank staking and geotechnical work for long-term stable top of slope if needed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Part of the candidate significant woodland along southern boundary is used for cattle pasture and quite sparse. They will look at definition of woodland.</li> </ul>	<p>Regional Staff can confirm that Enhancement Areas are confirmed and refined at the time of a development application through an EIA. The larger Regional Linkage Areas aim to enhance connections between larger core areas such as PSW complexes and the Bronte Creek Life Science ANSI and Valley to the south.</p>



No.	Source	Submission	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft refined NHS proposes to include small pond as identified by CH. This is a dug irrigation pond that collects surface run off. Doesn't appear to be a watercourse running in or out of the pond. Leilani to raise with mapping team to check methodology and may need to follow up with CH.</li> <li>• Significant woodlands have been refined in some areas. NEC Natural Area follows the woodlands limits.</li> <li>• NEC Natural and Protection Areas designations are captured as components of the NHS. CH watercourses – other component of the NHS. If fish habitat, would be Key Feature.</li> </ul>	
25.	John Tovell HRFA Meeting dated April 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the mapping of significant woodlands and the inclusion of plantations</li> <li>• Identification of the pond as part of the Regional Natural Heritage System that is regulated by the Conservation Authority</li> </ul>	Regional Staff conducted a site visit of the subject property to examine key features identified. Refinements to the Draft RNHS to remove certain significant woodlands were identified as they did not meet the criteria in the ROP.
26.	Dave Vickers HRFA Meeting dated April 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Went over the existing and proposed NHS mapping with subject landowner for the requested properties.</li> <li>• Subject landowner did not agree with the wetland that is mapped at the front of the property. It is identified as a Provincially Significant Wetland. He wants to ensure he can continue to farm this area.</li> <li>• Subject landowner did agree with the rest of the NHS that was mapped.</li> <li>• Subject landowner stated that the wants these properties to remain as farms, not another type of use.</li> </ul>	Regional Staff advised that the MNRF is responsible for mapping provincially significant wetlands and will need to speak to MNRF about having the mapping reviewed. Contact information for MNRF to be provided to subject landowner. Staff further advised that the ROP permits normal farm practices within the NHS. However, there are other agencies that may not permit alteration within the wetlands outside of a Planning Act application and to follow up with MNRF.
27.	Tracy and Murray Breckon HRFA Meeting dated April 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Went over the mapping for the existing and proposed RNHS.</li> <li>• There are no changes to the mapping.</li> <li>• Subject landowners are concerned that these requirements are in place on their property.</li> <li>• We also discussed a previous NEC development application on the property.</li> <li>• We went over areas that we will examine on our site visit scheduled May 20<sup>th</sup>.</li> </ul>	Regional Staff clarified the definition of a significant woodland in the ROP and discussed the opportunities to refine the woodland boundary through an NEC development application. The ROP permits normal farm practices within the NHS. However, other agencies may have additional requirements or policies. A site visit was conducted to evaluate certain features that were mapped in the Draft RNHS. Refinements were suggested to be made to the mapping in certain areas of the property.
28.	Vanessa Warren HRFA Meeting dated April 22, 2021	Submitted Question: "My primary question is: How can an area of my property be both Prime Ag and NHS and which takes precedence in the case of permitted agricultural uses?"	Discussion on if there is the ability to grow agricultural crops as per the Regional Official Plan and the Region's Tree By-law. There was also question about timelines required for EIAs as well as the designations on her particular property which were provided and discussed.
29.	Jane and Hugh Hyndman HRFA Meeting dated April 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Went over the mapping for the existing and proposed RNHS.</li> <li>• There are minor changes where a site visit had taken place as part of a NEC development application.</li> <li>• Subject landowner asked what the size of the buffer is.</li> <li>• We also discussed a previous NEC development application on the property and the EIA Guidelines.</li> <li>• Subject landowners agreed with majority of the RNHS mapping, however identified two areas that they have asked Staff to review.</li> </ul>	Regional staff confirmed that the buffer is 30 m but permits development and site alteration as per section 117.1 of the Regional Official Plan as long as it doesn't have an impact to the NHS. The owners were satisfied with the mapping and declined on a site visit for further refinements.