



**RURAL POLICY
AND
ZONING REVIEW**



Consultation Strategy

September 2016



**MERIDIAN
PLANNING**

Halton Hills - Consultation Strategy

A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the consultation strategy is to identify how stakeholders will be consulted throughout the life of the Rural Policy and Zoning Review, how input will be considered and who will be responsible for each component.

Given that this project is essentially focused on implementing an already approved policy framework in the Region of Halton Official Plan, the main focus of all messaging will be that the Town is implementing policies as required by the Region of Halton. There will be no ability as part of this process to modify policies within the Region of Halton Official Plan. Instead, it is anticipated that a significant focus of the consultation work will be on communicating what is on the table (and not) as well as educating of stakeholders on the implications of the new policy framework.



It is recognized that with so much going on in most people's lives, spending time talking about policy implementation will not be top of mind for most people. In fact, we expect that essentially the same core group of interested stakeholders who have participated in past planning processes will be the main outside contributors to this process as well — this is why there is a need to make the effort to reach beyond this core group and involve those that may be directly impacted.

B. CONSULTATION OBJECTIVES

Listed in no particular order, the following represent the Town's consultation objectives:

1. To meaningfully engage residents and stakeholders in order to gather input which will be used through all stages of the project;
2. To manage expectations on consultation by clearly and consistently communicating what decisions have already been made through the Regional Official Plan policy framework and where there are opportunities to tailor policies Halton Hills;
3. To secure local municipal official (Council/staff) understanding, input

- and support;
4. To ensure that residents, landowners, the business community and other stakeholders are made aware of the vital importance of the initiative and see value in it — and to promote/encourage participation in the process;
 5. To generate community support for (or at least acceptance of) the process and product;
 6. To foster an environment that is conducive to substantive dialogue: a respectful, informed and productive discussion of the salient issues (ensuring a common understanding of the initiative and that people have the right information); and
 7. To inspire confidence in the project implementation and management.

C. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders include the following:

- Members of Council
- Town Staff
- Region of Halton Staff
- Conservation Authorities
- Niagara Escarpment Commission
- Halton Federation of Agriculture
- Ontario Sand Stone and Gravel Association
- Licensees pursuant to the Aggregate Resources Act
- The farming community

Two committees will be established for this project. The Project Liaison Committee (PLC) will be made up of the Mayor, two members of Council, Town staff, Region of Halton staff, a representative from the Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association, a representative from the Halton Federation of Agriculture, and two members of the public that own land in the study area.

The Project Technical Committee (PTC) will include Town staff, Region of Halton Staff and representatives for the area Conservation Authorities and the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

D. METHODS OF COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION

D1. List of Proposed Meetings Included in Work Program

Below are the proposed meetings set out in the approved Work Program:

- Five meetings with staff (Meetings #1, #2, #6, #11 and #15);
- Three meetings with PTC (Meetings #3, #7 and #13);
- Three meetings with PLC (Meetings #4, #8 and #14);
- One Community Consultation Event after the Discussion Paper is prepared (Meeting #E1);
- One open house (Meeting #9)
- Three meetings with Council (Meetings #5, #10 and #16)
- One statutory public meeting (Meeting #12)

D2. List of Additional Meetings not Included in Work Program

Additional meetings may be necessary as the Work Program advances. In this regard, there may be a need to meet with the following:

- **Quarry owners and operators as a distinct group** - there are a limited number of licensees in the Town and there will be interest on the part of this group on new application requirements that may be established through policy and potential changes in the zoning by-law. Holding a separate meeting(s) with this group would allow for the sharing of ideas and the challenges and opportunities inherent in implementing ROPA 38. ***It is suggested that one meeting be held with this group after the draft OPA has been prepared.***
- **The farming community as a distinct group** - there will be interest on the part of resident farmers on the impacts of the new policy framework on farming and on what kinds of additional uses may be possible on their lands with the new PPS in particular now in place. ***It is suggested that one meeting be held with this group at the initiation of the process which we anticipate introducing through the annual farmer meeting hosted by the Town of Halton Hills.***

D3. Format of Meetings

One **Community Consultation Event** after the Discussion Paper is prepared (Meeting #E1) is proposed. The purpose of this meeting will be to present the initial discussion papers.

One **Open House** after the draft OPA's have been prepared (Meeting #9) is proposed. The purpose of this meeting will be to present the initial draft of the OPA and ZBA.

A key component of this process will be the establishment of meaningful lines of communication with all members of the PLC in particular. This means that the process has to be designed to be transparent, fair, inclusive and meaningful.

The role of PLC will include providing input into draft documents, reviewing consultation materials in advance of public meetings and being project ambassadors.

The **three meetings with the PLC** will be key components of the process and involve people that are generally informed and have a significant interest in the outcome. It is imperative that these be designed, structured and undertaken in a manner to maximize their value.

To this end, we would suggest that the following are critical to getting the most out of the all meetings:

- Using the 'right language' to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter, but without being overly technical or abstract — essentially, making the meeting more of a structured conversation.
- Structuring the discussions to get at the essential things the Town needs to cover while leaving latitude to explore related and relevant issues of the participant's choosing.
- Using clearly defined and articulated questions and ordering the questions and discussion topics logically to ensure good flow and using a mix of unaided and aided questions to ensure coverage of key topics.
- Providing participants with advance notice of key discussion topics to allow for considered thought and detail (in particular, for questions for which top-of-mind responses would be a challenge).
- Clearly conveying the 'rules of engagement' (e.g. assurance of confidentiality; no attribution of input to specific individuals; etc.).
- Respectfully asking for and using examples to illustrate points — and doing so in a manner that does not betray confidences.
- Taking comprehensive notes and being unafraid to ask questions of fact or clarification.
- Effectively synthesizing the information and teasing-out key themes/points — and their implications.
- Using an inclusive approach that ensures that all PLC participants are part of the process.

- Being respectful of all input and appreciative of time given by participants.
- Thanking all participants for their contributions and informing them of next steps in the process and how the input will be used.

D4. Meeting Success Indicators

At the end of the process, the following should be meeting key success indicators:

- All participants feel that they have been listened to — and that they have been given the opportunity to provide input into the full range of issues important to the initiative.
- Essential information has been generated to both aid in the understanding of the current situation/process and to inform future refinements/enhancements and strengthen the Town's planning policies.
- Information is actionable — that is, it helps drive real changes that are both strategic and practical.
- There is a firm and clear understanding of collective goals and success measures — that is, tangible ways of gauging progress and improvement.

D5. Project Webpage

The Town will establish a project webpage to be posted on the Town's website. It would be used to share information, by providing links to reports, newsletters, event information and other project communication. An example of a dedicated project webpage is Vision Georgetown.

D6. Social Media

Town staff will use the Town's twitter account to advise the public of upcoming meetings and the release of reports.

D7. Electronic Newsletters

Meridian will prepare three newsletters at key points in the process. These would be emailed by the Town as required to those who have signed up for the project. Much of the wording in the newsletter will be similar to the project website wording.

D8. Mailing List

Town staff will collect and update an email mailing list as required.

E. MONITORING AND REPORTING

At the conclusion of each event, Meridian will review the success of the initiative and make recommendations on whether any changes are required to any future consultation initiative.