

INTEGRATED GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
GROWTH SCENARIOS:
Halton Region to 2041



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
A. Halton Will Continue to Experience Strong Growth.....	2
B. Planning Policy, Together With Demographic and Housing Market Conditions, Will Shape Residential Land Needs And Built Form.....	3
C. Halton Plays An Important Role In The GTAH Economy	3
D. Growth to 2041: Accommodated Future Growth Post-2031.....	4
E. A Range of Growth Scenarios Has Been Developed	5
F. Growth Scenarios Test Different Development Patterns for Post-2031 Growth.	7
G. Servicing and Financing Growth Will Be Similar Under All Scenarios.....	13
H. Next Steps.....	14

FIGURES

Figure 1. Share of Regional Residential Growth by Planning Areas based on the Existing Planned Pattern Lens (Growth Scenarios 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)	8
Figure 2. Burlington's Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)	8
Figure 3. Halton Hills' Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)	9
Figure 4. Milton's Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A).....	9
Figure 5. Oakville's Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A).....	10
Figure 6. Share of Regional Residential Growth by Planning Areas based on Growth Scenario "B" (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B)	11
Figure 7. Burlington's Share of Regional Residential Growth Scenario "B" (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B).....	11
Figure 8. Halton Hills' Share of Regional Residential Growth Scenario "B" (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B).....	12
Figure 9. Milton's Share of Regional Residential Growth Scenario "B" (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B).....	12
Figure 10. Oakville's Share of Regional Growth Scenario "B" (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B).....	13

Executive Summary

This is the first in a series of reports prepared as part of Halton Region's Integrated Growth Management Strategy (IGMS). The IGMS is a critical component of the Region's ongoing Official Plan Review.

The IGMS will guide growth and development in the Region to 2041. While building on previous plans that largely focused on designating new lands for development, the IGMS places greater emphasis on accommodating growth in existing urban areas. This approach is consistent with current Provincial, Regional and local land use planning principles and policies.

By way of illustration, the *Halton Urban Structure Plan* of the 1990s designated about 5,200 ha of greenfield land for urban use, much of which is still being developed. The *Sustainable Halton Plan* of the 2000s designated a further 2,800 ha of greenfield land for urban use, including about 1,700 ha of greenfield land for community urban use, which will begin to be developed in the 2020s, and about 1,100 ha of greenfield land for employment activities. However, the range of growth scenarios discussed in this report would result in anywhere between 0 and 1,000 ha of additional residential greenfield land to accommodate growth to 2041.

This report establishes the framework for the IGMS and serves as an information resource for policy makers and stakeholders. It discusses demographics, housing, and economic trends in Halton and sets out growth scenarios for consideration.

The scenarios were prepared prior to the recently announced changes to planning policy, land use appeals and infrastructure financing, including the adoption of A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 (Growth Plan) to replace the Growth Plan, 2017. However, all eight of the scenarios conform to targets in Provincial land use plans, including the new Growth Plan. The Growth Plan provides the population and employment forecasts that the Region must use as a basis for planning as well as policies that, among other matters, regulate minimum targets for residential intensification and population and employment densities. The Growth Plan policies play a central role in where new development is to be located in Halton and what form it takes. Six of the scenarios consider and demonstrate the potential impacts on growth in Halton Region of intensification rates higher than the minimum intensification rate of

50% in the Build Up Areas (BUA), while two of the scenarios are based on the 50% minimum, now in the Growth Plan.

The IGMS is an important initiative as it will help shape the future of Halton Region to 2041. While this report makes no specific recommendations on the preferred form and location of growth and development, it does provide background information, options for decision makers, and proposed evaluation criteria to be used in the next stages of the IGMS process, working towards a Preferred Growth Concept to guide growth in Halton to 2041.

A. Halton Will Continue to Experience Strong Growth

- a. Rapid growth in Halton, a longstanding feature of the Region, is anticipated to continue: the Region's population is forecast to grow from nearly 600,000 today to 1,000,000 by 2041. Population growth will be fueled by a combination of natural increase of the existing population and net in-migration from other parts of the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton (GTAH).
- b. The demand for housing in Halton will remain high over the long term. To date, the predominant form of housing has been "ground-related". Local and provincial planning policies seek to broaden the current range and mix of housing by encouraging more high-density built forms.
- c. Halton's strong economic growth—particularly in trade-oriented and high skilled service industries—is anticipated to continue: the Region is forecast to grow from about 264,000 jobs today to 470,000 jobs by 2041.
- d. The Region's current urban structure and land designations are well positioned to accommodate all types of employment. The demand for urban lands designated specifically for employment uses ("Employment Areas") will remain high over the long term.
- e. Halton's strategic location at the west of the GTAH, together with its rail, road, and major utility infrastructure, provide a solid foundation for future economic development. Disrupters to economic prospects include:
 - i. Ongoing shifts in the economy from goods producing to service providing activities.
 - ii. Continued growth in logistics and transportation industries, reflecting the increasing scale and complexity of goods movement activity.
 - iii. The evolving role of Pearson Airport as a significant economic centre.
 - iv. Technological innovation, leading to increased e-retailing, mobility and, by extension, more people choosing to work at home or without a fixed place of work.

- v. Housing affordability and the locational choices of the millennial generation.

B. Planning Policy, Together with Demographic and Housing Market Conditions, Will Shape Residential Land Needs and Built Form

- a. While not immune to the nationwide aging population trend, high levels of immigration mean that Halton's population as a whole will remain comparatively young, though newer neighbourhoods will be much younger than the older population of established neighbourhoods.
- b. Long term population forecasts for the Region overall are realistic and have not changed materially in recent years. At the local municipal level, Milton has accounted for almost half of all population growth in Halton since 2001. However, growth in Milton has not occurred as quickly as anticipated when decisions to extend lake-based water and wastewater services northwards were made in the 1990s. Local conditions suggest that Burlington and Oakville will accommodate slightly more growth by 2031 than previously anticipated. As a result, Halton Hills and Milton will likely achieve the 2031 population targets established in ROPA 38, while Burlington and Oakville are likely to exceed those targets.
- c. Meeting *Growth Plan* intensification policies requires a shift in housing patterns in the Region—away from single-detached houses and towards apartment forms. Given a relatively high proportion of households will continue to be families, which have historically preferred ground-related housing, achieving this shift in Halton will pose a challenge.

C. Halton Plays an Important Role in the GTAH Economy

- a. Halton plays an important role in a fast growing regional economy—12% of GTAH job growth since 2001 has occurred in the Region. However, like the rest of the GTAH, outside of Toronto, job growth in Halton has been slower than anticipated in recent years, particularly on lands dedicated for employment uses.
- b. Consistent with national and regional trends, the Region has experienced a shift in employment from goods producing to service-providing industries over the last decade. Nevertheless, Halton's manufacturing sector remains an important component of the local economy, exhibiting modest growth between 2011 and 2016.
- c. Other key features of Halton's economy that affect land use planning are:

- i. The geography of employment in Halton is shifting: the number of people working with no fixed place of work or who work at home has steadily increased in recent years.
- ii. Halton is well served by a variety of retail formats, with the highest density of retail uses being in Burlington and Oakville.
- iii. Halton's employment lands are increasingly diverse and the density of employment on these lands is variable. Predicting the need for future employment land is critical to the IGMS work.

D. Growth to 2041: Accommodated Future Growth Post-2031

- a. Most growth in Halton to 2041 will be accommodated in existing settlement areas, either as intensification within the Provincially designated Built-Up Area (BUA) or as new development in the Designated Greenfield Area. Depending upon the intensification rate chosen, a portion of growth between 2031 and 2041 may require new greenfield areas to be designated through settlement area boundary expansions.
- b. The ability of the Region to accommodate growth through the redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas is a key focus of the IGMS.
 - i. Since 2016, Halton has achieved the *Growth Plan* requirement that 40% of all new housing units be constructed within the BUA. Local plans and studies demonstrate that the Region has the capacity to continue achieving this rate of intensification over the long-term.
 - ii. The *Growth Plan* identifies three Urban Growth Centres (UGCs) in Halton: Downtown Burlington, Midtown Oakville, and Downtown Milton. It is intended that these centres be the focus of new growth and infrastructure investment. A minimum density target for these areas is a combination of 200 people and jobs per hectare by 2031. The IGMS background analyses identify capacity for more than 26,000 housing units—mostly apartments—in these centres to meet the density target.
 - iii. Significant intensification is also planned for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs), which generally represent a 10 minute walk to existing or planned higher order transit stations/stops. The *Growth Plan* establishes an intensification target of 150 people and jobs per hectare for these areas. There are currently 11 existing and proposed MTSAs in the Region: 4 in Burlington; 3 in Milton; and 2 each in Oakville and Halton Hills.
- c. There is capacity for about 107,000 additional residential units within the existing Designated Greenfield Area in Halton, including 70,000 units in approved plans of subdivision and 37,000 units in vacant unplanned areas. The vast majority of this land supply is in North Oakville and Milton.

- d. Milton and Halton Hills are the only two municipalities with the potential to expand settlement area boundaries to accommodate additional Designated Greenfield Area, either for new community uses or for employment uses.
- e. Employment lands are critical to the growing Regional economy. However, it is recognized that there may be circumstances—when MTSA are located in employment areas, for example—where it may be appropriate to convert existing employment lands to other uses in order to meet intensification targets. Employment land conversions are tightly regulated by the *Growth Plan*.
- f. Employment in Halton is forecast to grow by almost 80% or 207,000 jobs from 2016 to 2041. About 40% of the growth is expected to be in each of the population-related employment (mainly retail, institutional and work at home in community areas), the employment-land employment (jobs in industrial-type buildings in employment areas), and the remaining 20% in major-office employment, located both within the employment areas and in other locations. This represents a significant shift in growth into major offices, which today accommodate about 10% of Regional employment.
- g. The existing developed and vacant designated employment areas in Halton can accommodate about 186,000 to 194,000 of the 207,000 employment land jobs, depending on how much employment might be converted to non-employment uses. The capacities are based on Burlington and Oakville maintaining their relatively high employment densities and Milton and Halton Hills achieving their current planned employment densities. These planned densities do account, in part, for the prevalence of low-employment density logistics uses in the vicinity of Highway 401. The result is a need for new employment land in the range of 560 to 890 ha, which is significantly less than the 1,100 ha added through the Sustainable Halton process.
- h. Any additional employment areas are expected to be accommodated somewhere within the Future Strategic Employment Areas currently identified in the Regional Plan. These areas are not land use designations but rather the areas identified as well-located lands, generally close to highway infrastructure that would be suitable for employment uses, if required in the future. For the purposes of the growth scenarios, new employment areas are assumed to be in the Future Strategic Employment Areas closest to Highway 401, in both Milton and Halton Hills.

E. A Range of Growth Scenarios Has Been Developed

- a. In order to test the range of growth options available to the Region, eight growth scenarios have been developed. The differences between the scenarios are relatively small. However, the scenarios represent as wide a range as possible,

given the current Provincial policy framework, and the overriding priority to accommodate growth within existing urban areas.

- b. All scenarios maintain the Natural Heritage System and Greenbelt boundaries as currently mapped and have regard for Halton's long standing goal to protect agricultural lands. All scenarios also conform to the provisions of the *Growth Plan*. As well, current levels of intensification and density in the Region are achieved as minimum benchmarks. These are considered common criteria within the context of the growth scenario evaluation framework.
- c. With respect to residential land needs, a number of detailed assumptions need to be made to describe the scenarios:
 - i. All scenarios accommodate 157,400 new housing units between 2016 and 2041.
 - ii. All scenarios assume 50% of new homes constructed between 2021 and 2031 will be within the BUA, rising to 60% between 2031 and 2041 for six of the scenarios and remaining at 50% for the two scenarios that consider the new targets as set out in the *Provincial Growth Plan, 2019*. Altogether, the BUA will accommodate 82,200 housing units for 6 of the scenarios to 2041 (52% of all new housing) and 75,600 housing units for the two scenarios with 50% of units in the BUA in the 2030s.
 - iii. New housing in the BUA will be 80% apartments and 20% ground-related forms to 2021, in line with current trends, and 90% apartments thereafter to 2041.
 - iv. New housing on the existing Designated Greenfield Area will be 90% ground-related forms in the lower intensification scenarios and a somewhat lower percentage in scenarios with less new greenfield land. It is noted that recently developed lands in Milton and Oakville contain about 95% ground-related housing
 - v. New housing in new Designated Greenfield Areas will be 80% ground-related forms (90% in the two scenarios with new targets as set out in the *Provincial Growth Plan, 2019*).
- d. The housing outlook is predicated on significant changes to the housing mix in Halton—mainly a much higher number of apartments than would otherwise be expected—as well as the occupancy patterns of new ground-related housing. In this last respect, new homes are assumed to accommodate more people than recently constructed homes in Halton.
- e. With respect to employment land needs, all scenarios also require some assumptions about future development, including:
 - i. A relatively steady relationship of population-related employment to population to 2041. Significant restructuring of the retail landscape will result in a reduced demand for land for retail uses.

- ii. Demand for industrial land in Halton will remain strong, especially in north Halton, though the employment associated with industrial development is likely to continue to fall as a share of total employment.
- iii. The recent shift in demand for major office space, from suburban locations in the GTAH to downtown Toronto locations, calls into question previous forecasts of major office employment in Halton. That said, the rapidly-rising lease rates and other factors will eventually see a return to a more balanced distribution of major office growth moving forward, particularly south Halton.

F. Growth Scenarios Test Different Development Patterns for Post-2031 Growth

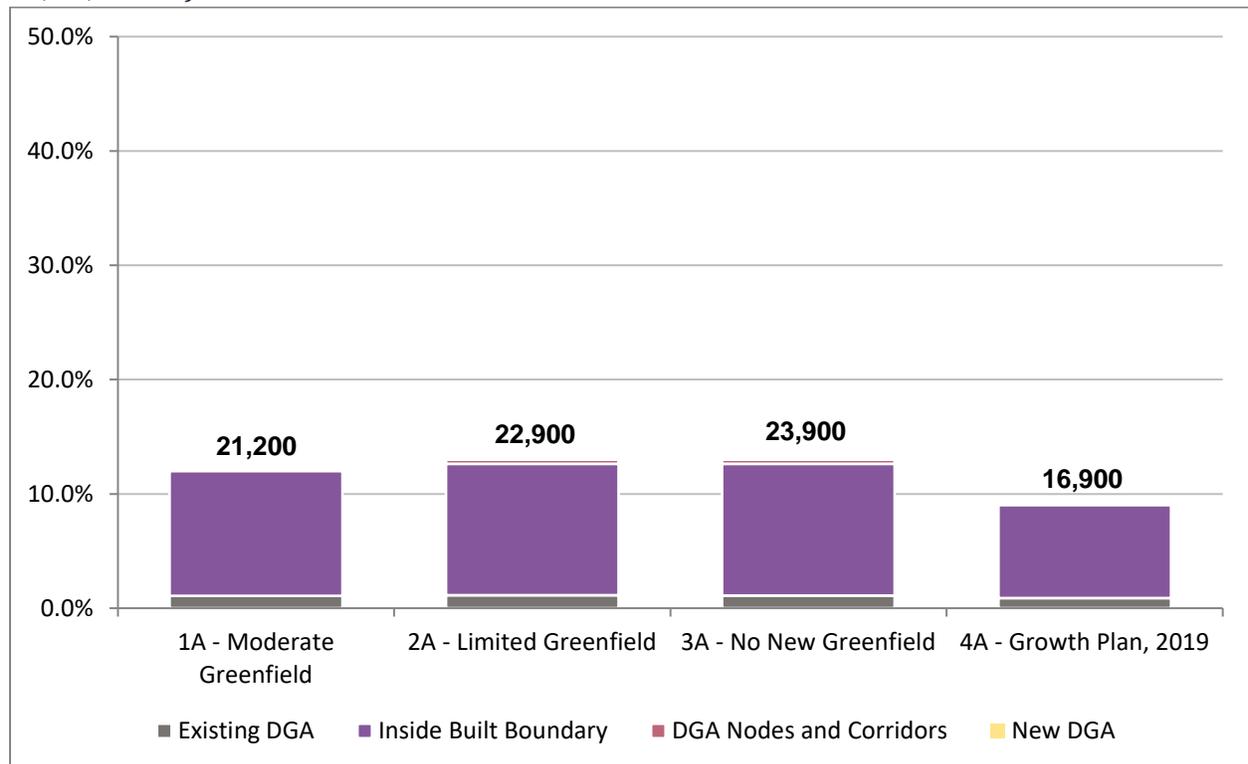
- a. For all eight scenarios, the pattern of growth planned for by the current in force *Halton Region Official Plan*, through Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 38 to 2031 is largely maintained. All scenarios reflect development that has taken place since ROPA 38 and a 2013 amendment to the *Growth Plan* that increased the Region's 2031 population forecast by 40,000.
- b. Four of the eight growth scenarios (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A) are based on the planned pattern of growth established by ROPA 38 continuing between 2031 and 2041 but at varying levels of intensification.
- c. The other four scenarios (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B) also test the effects of varying rates of intensification but in accordance with existing trends and emerging local plans for a number of higher-density mixed-use centers.
- d. In each of the "higher intensification" scenarios, additional units are allocated as apartments to the DGA rather than being added to the BUA to increase intensification beyond 60%. Making use of substantial DGA supply in this way achieves the twin goals of minimizing new greenfield land while contributing to the planned development of nodes and corridors in the DGA. This is shown as DGA Nodes and Corridors in the figures below and represents additional growth to the nodes and corridors above the growth already allocated in Scenarios 1 and 4.

Figures for Growth Scenarios 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A

Figure 1. Share of Regional Residential Growth by Planning Areas based on the Existing Planned Pattern Lens from 2031 to 2041 (Growth Scenarios 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)



Figure 2. Burlington's Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" from 2031 to 2041 (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)



Halton Region to 2041

Figure 3. Halton Hills' Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" from 2031 to 2041 (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)

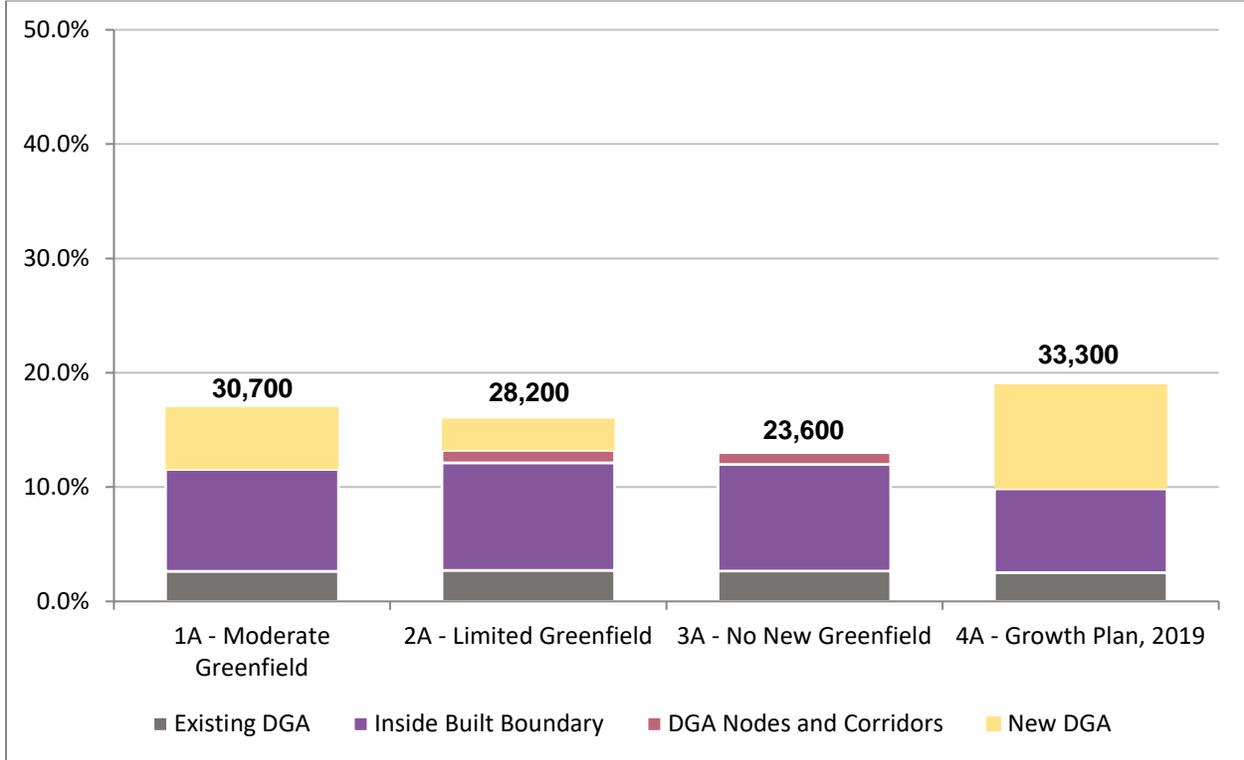


Figure 4. Milton's Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" from 2031 to 2041 (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)

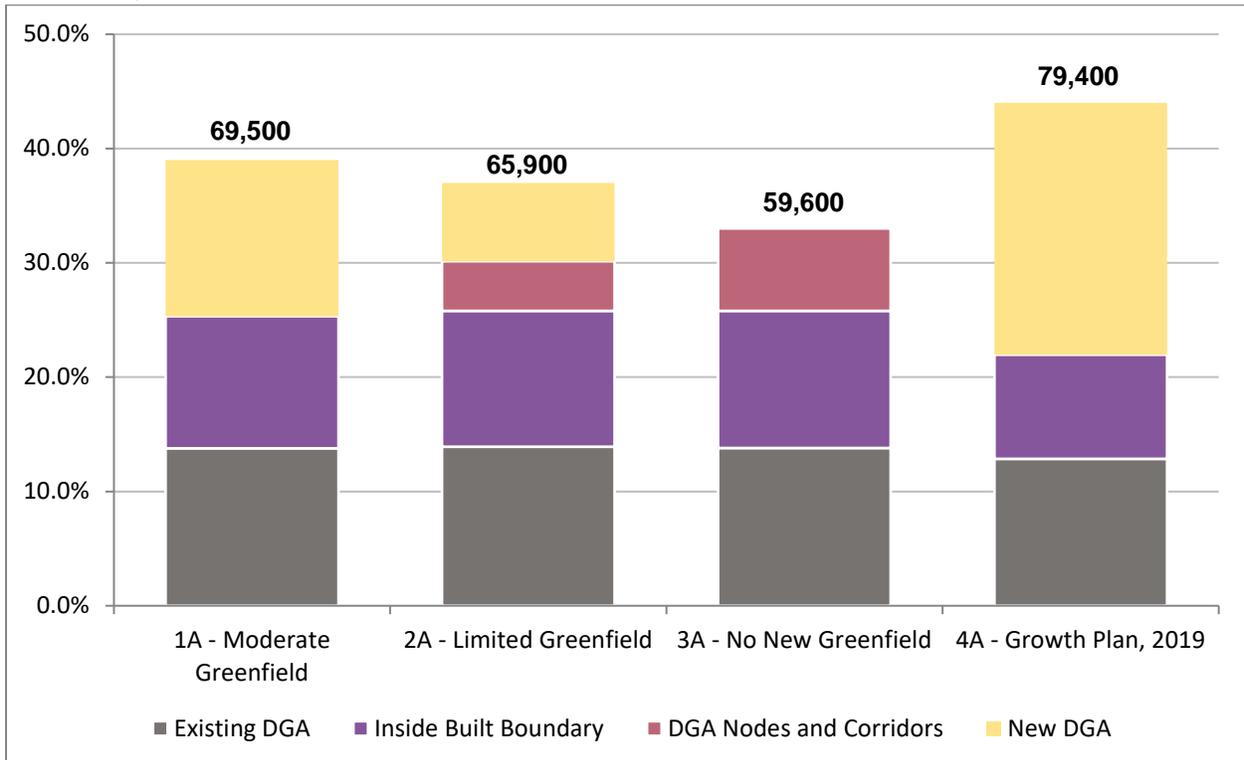
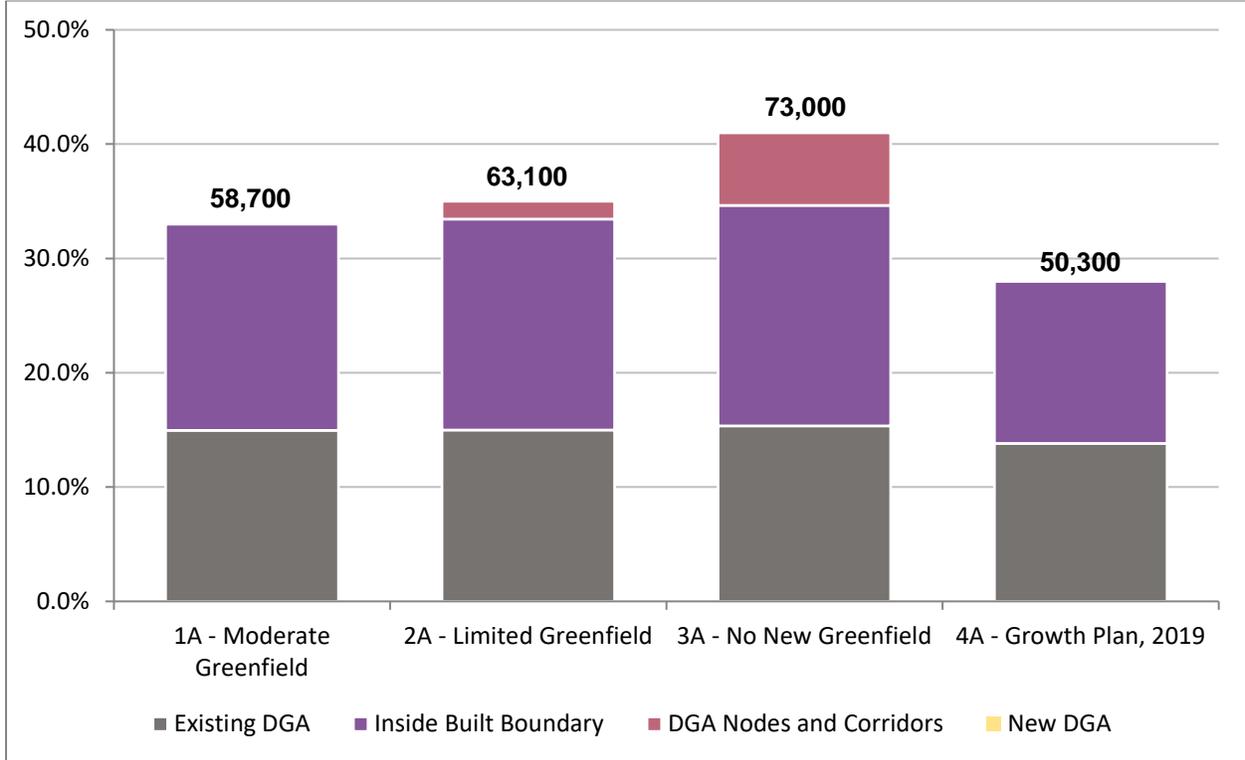


Figure 5. Oakville's Residential Share of the Regional Growth Scenario "A" from 2031 to 2041 (1A, 2A, 3A, and 4A)



Figures for Growth Scenarios 1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B

Figure 6. Share of Regional Residential Growth by Planning Areas based on Growth Scenario "B" from 2031 to 2041 (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B)

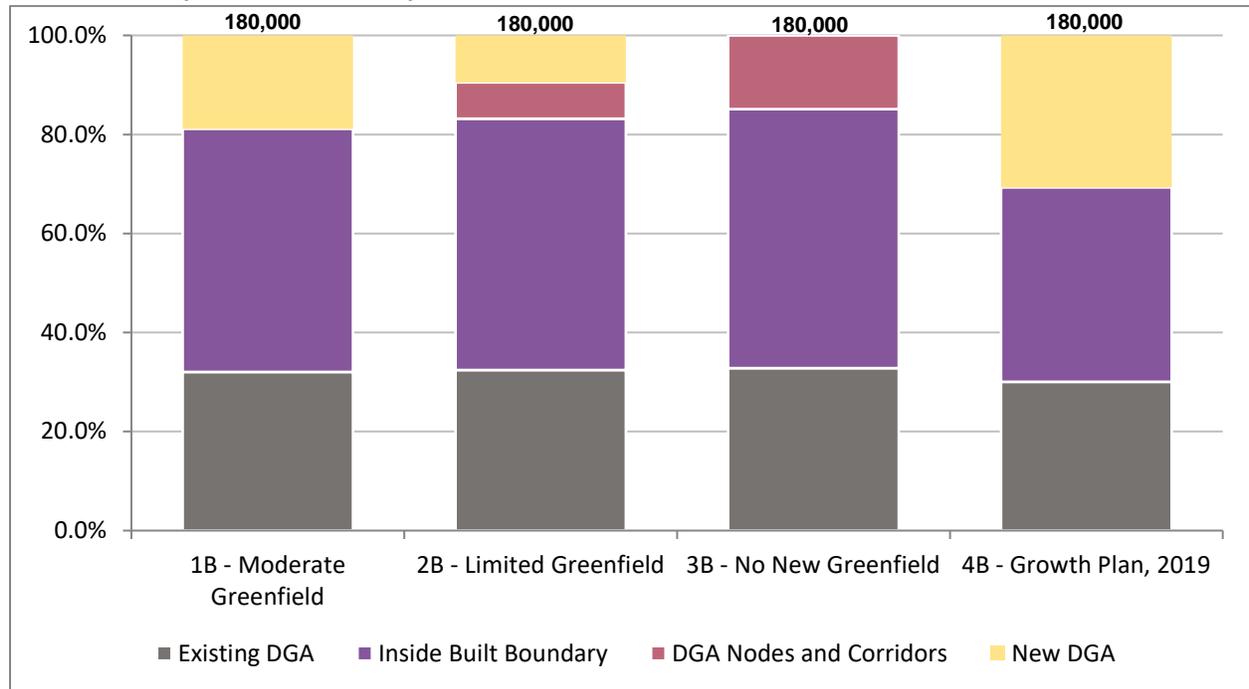
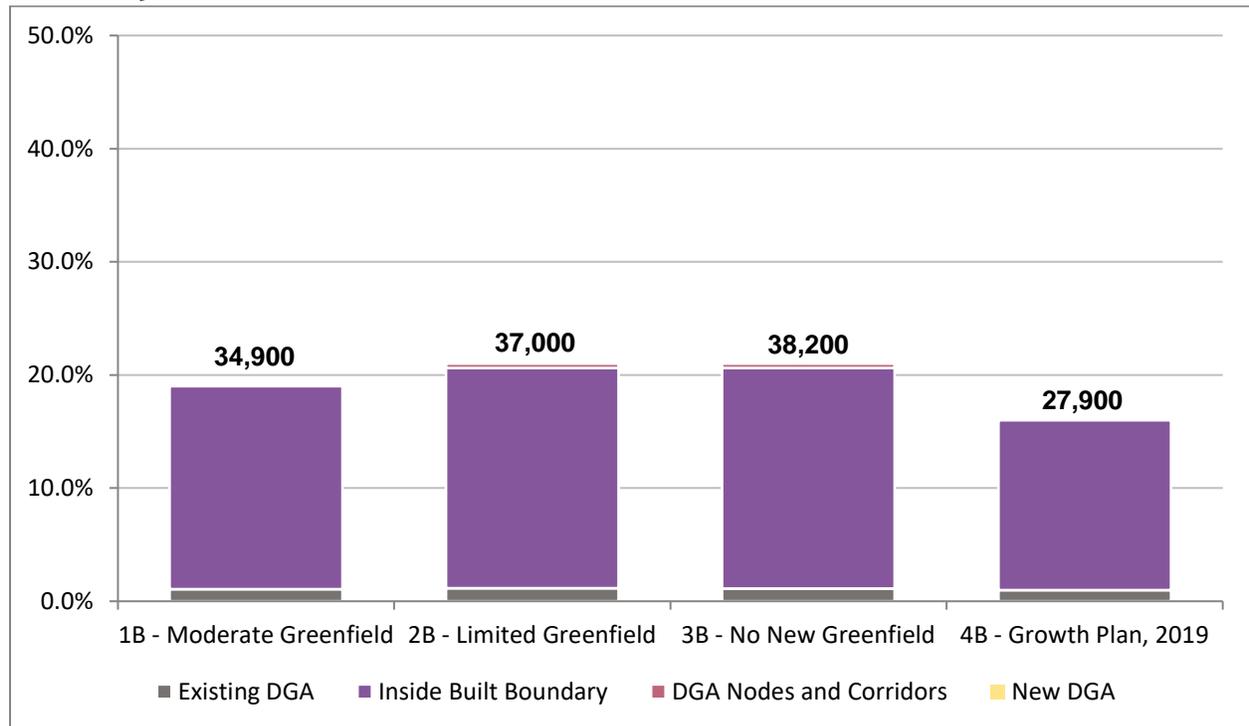


Figure 7. Burlington's Share of Regional Residential Growth Scenario "B" from 2031 to 2041 (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B)



Halton Region to 2041

Figure 8. Halton Hills' Share of Regional Residential Growth Scenario "B" from 2031 to 2041 (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B)

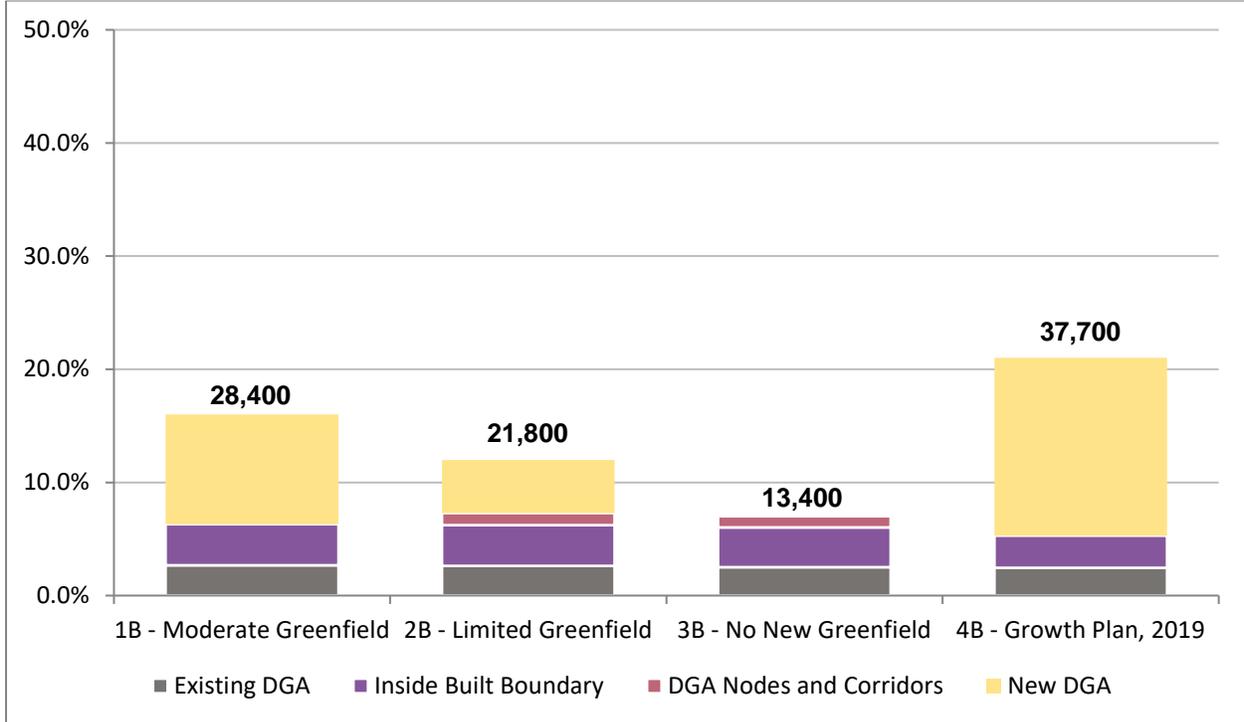


Figure 9. Milton's Share of Regional Residential Growth Scenario "B" from 2031 to 2041 (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B)

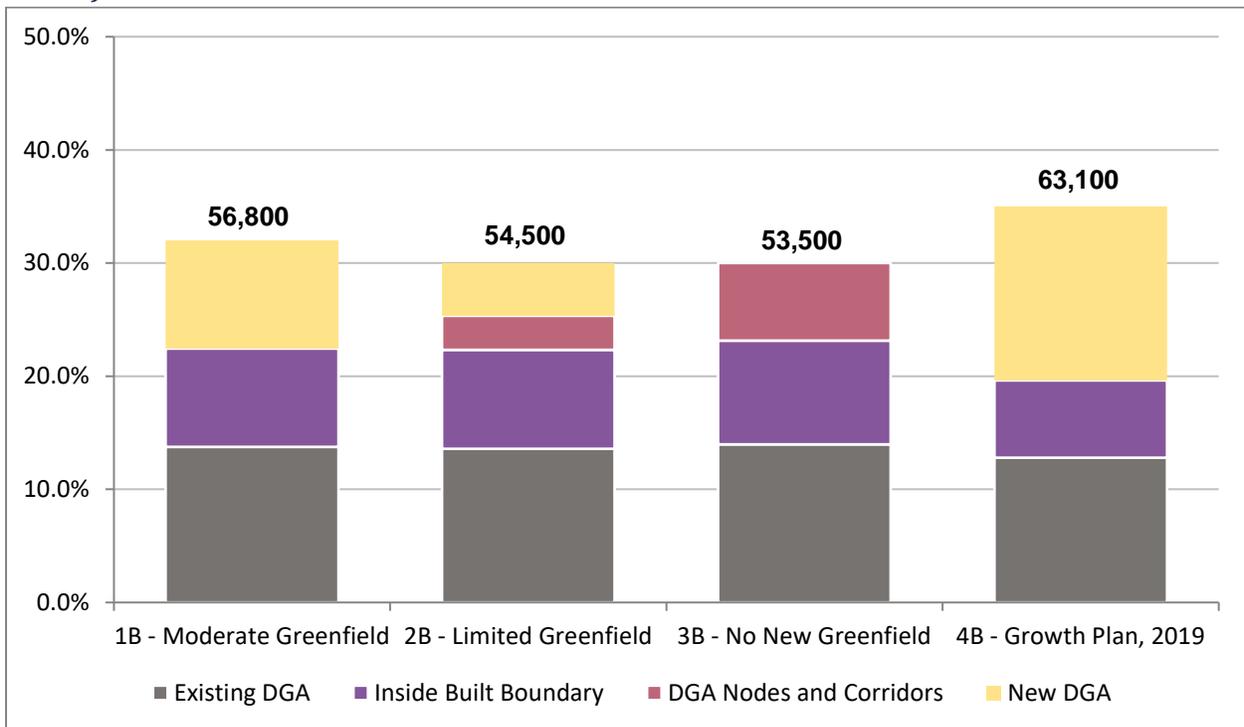
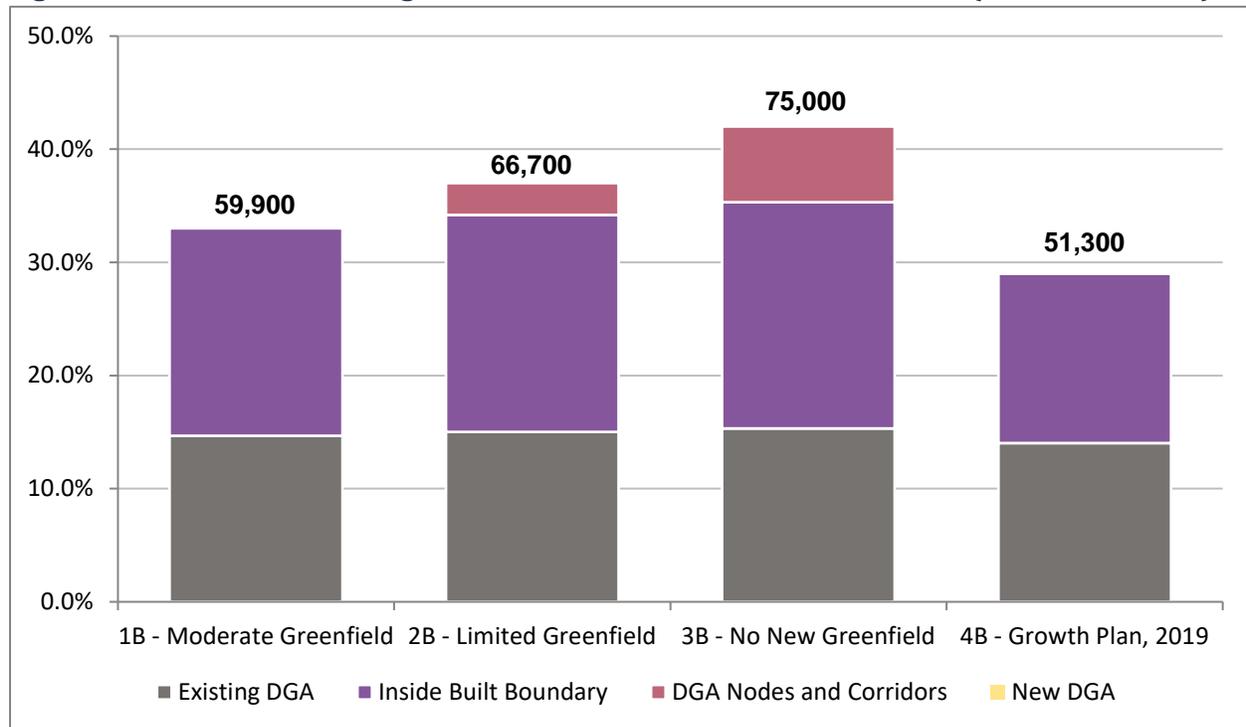


Figure 10. Oakville's Share of Regional Growth Scenario "B" from 2031 to 2041 (1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B)



- e. Scenarios 2B (Alt) tests an alternative location for accommodating growth in Scenario 2B, accounting for the Town of Milton’s proposed Agerton Secondary Plan.
- f. Each set of four scenarios also tests the extent to which new Designated Greenfield Area will be required to accommodate growth beyond 2031:
 - i. Scenarios 1A and 1B – assume a moderate amount of new greenfield land
 - ii. Scenarios 2A and 2B – assume a limited amount of new greenfield land
 - iii. Scenarios 3A and 3B – assume no new greenfield land
 - iv. Scenarios 4A and 4B – test what may be required to address intensification and greenfield density targets in the Provincial *Growth Plan*, 2019.

G. Servicing and Financing Growth Will Be Similar Under All Scenarios

- a. The infrastructure assessment demonstrates that there are no substantial differences in infrastructure opportunities (water, wastewater and transportation) and constraints to 2041 between the eight scenarios.

- b. All scenarios also exhibit similar transportation capacity deficiencies over the long term.
- c. As a result, the preliminary assessment suggests that there will be minimal differences between the financial impacts of the scenarios for the Region. A more detailed review of impacts will be reviewed as we move towards a set of evaluated Growth Concepts.

H. Next Steps

- a. Building on this report, the next step in the IGMS process will be to evaluate the growth scenarios in consultation with Regional and local municipal staff, the IGMS governing committees, key stakeholders, and the consulting team. The result will be a Preferred Growth Concept for the Region.
- b. A framework for evaluating the growth scenarios has been developed based on the following themes:
 - i. Regional urban system and local character
 - ii. Infrastructure and financing
 - iii. Agriculture, environment and climate change
 - iv. Growing the economy and moving people and goods
- c. This report will be presented to Regional Council in June 2019, and feedback will help guide the evaluation which will run from June to September 2019.
- d. A set of evaluated Growth Concepts are planned to be circulated in September 2019 with a view to adopting a final Growth Management Plan for the Region in early 2020.