

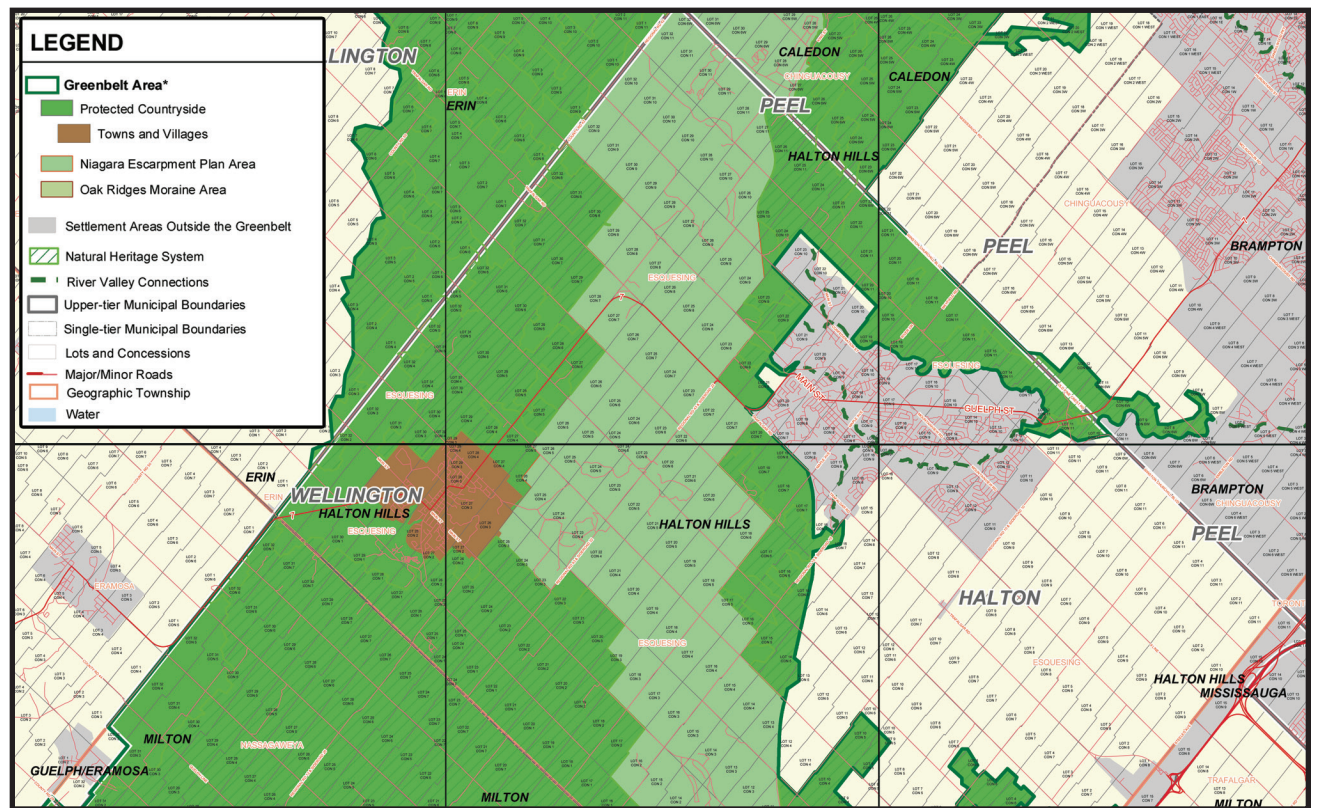
# Motion from Region puts Halton Hills in awkward position

By: Vivien Fleisher

Council received a report on April 20 from Planning and Sustainability Commissioner Jon Linhardt and Economic Development Manager Damian Szybalski regarding the Province's "Protecting Water for Future Generations: Growing the Greenbelt in the Outer Ring" policy proposal. All of this was spurred February 21 when Halton Regional Council passed a motion—forwarded by Oakville Mayor Rob Burton—to expand the greenbelt into the whitebelt lands south of Georgetown and in Milton—defined as those lands outside the greenbelt and existing settlement areas eligible for future growth. Burton is openly anti-sprawl, but his bid to speak for all struck Mayor Rick Bonnette as premature given the lack of advanced warning. The Province is looking to enhance protection of water

sources and expanding the greenbelt into the whitebelt is one way. A cursory glance at the map of Halton Hills shows it to be roughly 50 per cent protected already by the greenbelt. As expressed in an earlier council meeting, Mayor Bonnette spoke for several councillors when he described the motion as "rushed" and outside the spirit of consultation. Additionally, with the town having made public engagement a key priority, they find themselves in the awkward position of being seen as opposed to the laudable goal of water and greenspace protection. However, future growth management up to 2041 would be limited despite the fact that Halton Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review called for a strategy up to 2041, thereby hastily undermining Halton Hills' ability to grow.

With Council's approval,



Map of the area showing Greenbelt and Whitebelt areas.

- map compiled from Ministry of Municipal Affairs [www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1392.aspx](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1392.aspx)

Mayor Bonnette wrote to Premier Wynne on March 5 requesting that the Province deny the request, or failing that, allow the town more time to consult with residents. Councillor Fogal responded to the report by reiterating what a surprise move it was by Mayor Burton to target the lands south of Georgetown and in

Milton. She expressed the outrageous nature of this, coupled with the absence of a backup report, or a phone call ahead of time. Equally upsetting was watching Regional colleagues support it. She hastened to add that it's not off the table forever. However, in opposing Burton's motion, she felt concerned things would be set in stone, wondering where it left Halton Hills. Linhardt explained the report's intent was to address that process should be followed. Councillor Lawlor,

who is anti-sprawl, added that the only way Halton Hills could grow would be via the whitebelt lands, asking if this was "the thin end of the wedge? If we support this, are we deciding its okay to expand south into the whitebelt lands?" Linhardt explained that the need would have to be justified, and the report's primary purpose is to keep the door open to Halton Hills' growth needs.

Mayor Bonnette agreed that their report doesn't mean never expanding the

greenbelt. However, with Mayor Burton's motion coming as it did within a week of council's Public Engagement Charter, Bonnette was unequivocal that it was reckless, and Halton Hills would be hamstrung by it. Councillor Lawlor was supportive by the end, feeling more confident that it was not the thin end of the wedge after all. Council voted unanimously to support the report, which Councillor Lewis suggested they take directly to Mayor Burton.



Acton Horticultural Society

ANNUAL

**PLANT SALE**  
& SILENT AUCTION

**Sat May 19**  
**9 am**  
**Acton Arena**

415 Queen St (on Hwy 7)

An excellent selection of perennials & shrubs, including donations from local nurseries.

**Blooming bargains for everyone!**

**BECOME A MEMBER** for \$10 & get 10% off your purchase, as well as enjoy great speakers & horticulture events.

On June 7th,  
when it's all said and done,  
we will elect a  
**Member of Provincial Parliament**  
to represent all of us in  
Wellington-Halton Hills.

\* \* \* \* \*



**RE-ELECT**  
**TED ARNOTT**  
TRUSTED. EXPERIENCED. DEDICATED.

1.866.788.1688 | [www.re-electarnott.ca](http://www.re-electarnott.ca)



AUTHORIZED BY  
THE CFO FOR THE CAMPAIGN TO RE-ELECT TED ARNOTT