

# Town councillors endorse growth principles

By Melanie Hennessey  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

The Town has a long list of concerns it wants the Region to address before it will support identifying a preferred method for growth beyond 2021.

Town council endorsed the list of growth principles prepared by Town staff at its meeting Monday night.

The item comes in response to the Region's Sustainable Halton plan, which is being developed to steer future growth while preserving and protecting things like greenspace and farmland.

As part of the process, Region staff has come up with five concepts that show how about 2,400 hectares of 'greenfields,' or undeveloped land, in Milton and Halton Hills could accommodate 120,000 people and the needed infrastructure between 2021 and 2031.

The first scenario for the new 10-year timeframe sees Milton taking all of that growth, while the other four propose that Halton Hills accommodate from 20,000 to 40,000 new residents, with the balance going to Milton.

In response to the concepts, staff developed a list that tells the Region the Town will only support identifying a preferred land use concept for growth beyond 2021 on the basis of principles, including:

- Balanced residential/employment growth based upon a minimum .5 employee-to-resident ratio
- Increased financial support from the Region for its capital projects
- Justification and potential refinement of the natural heritage system
- Continued and respected input into the Region's evaluation of the proposed growth concepts

That a financial impact analysis be completed and presented to town council that incorporates all budget impacts at the regional and local levels and includes options to mitigate the impacts of growth on the taxpayer

Ward 2 Councillor Greg Nelson said to him, all of the principles are "deal breakers."

"You can't take any part of it out and expect a complete package," he said. "If even one of these is put to a back burner, I'm out."

The Town is also recommending that more areas of potential future employment land in Milton be considered in the plans. The current concepts direct employment uses onto about 600 hectares along Hwy. 401, divided between Milton and Halton Hills.

A few members of the development community turned out to voice their support for the principles, including CN Rail and the Orlando Corporation.

Orlando president Phil King said he thinks the Region has grossly underestimated how much employment land will be needed. He said at least two to

three times the amount calculated will be required.

Ward 4 Councillor Paul Scherer shared similar sentiments about the need for more employment land.

"We need to have people working closer to where they live," he said.

John O'Brien, who appeared on behalf of the Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton, also voiced support for the growth principles.

He told council the diocese is proposing a Catholic cemetery at the northwest corner of Lower Base Line and Regional Road 25 and asked for the Town's support in establishing the cemetery, should the lands be identified

for urban growth through Sustainable Halton.

At the end of the discussion, Wards 2 and 4 Councillor Colin Best proposed an amendment to the motion before council. It asks that the Province file a provincial infrastructure and financing plan — for things like hospitals and schools — with affected municipalities before the adoption of the Sustainable Halton plan.

Ward 1 Councillor Brian Penman said he thinks asking the Province for such a plan will only delay the process further.

But Best said the Province is already working on the numbers. "I'm not ask-


ing anymore than what we are expected to give the Province."

Council narrowly supported Best's amendment.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at [mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com).

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