



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Jill Hogan, Commissioner, Development Services

Date: January 26, 2026

Report No: DS-002-26

Subject: Grand River Source Protection Plan Water Quantity Policies Amendments

- Recommendation:**
1. THAT Council endorse the proposed amendments to the Grand River Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report under the *Clean Water Act, 2006* as outlined in report No.DS-002-26”.
 2. THAT a copy of Report No. DS-002-26 be forwarded to the Chair of the Lake Erie Source Protection Region for their information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Milton is in two Source Protection Regions: Halton-Hamilton and Lake Erie. Under the Clean Water Act, 2006 the policies of the Grand River Source Protection Plan are applied in north Milton.

The Grand River Source Protection Authority has initiated an amendment to the Grand River Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan under Section 34 of the Clean Water Act, 2006. The proposed new policies align with existing in-effect water quantity policies that are found in the Halton-Hamilton source protection plans, which covers the majority of Milton. The policies also align with Milton’s current practices, such as encouraging low impact development features to promote groundwater recharge.

Staff has been involved in discussions through the development of the proposed policies and recommend that Council endorse the proposed amendments.

REPORT



Background

Source Water Protection

The Clean Water Act, 2006 ensures the protection of municipal drinking water sources such as groundwater aquifers and lakes by creating a multi-barrier protection approach. The framework focuses on protecting municipal drinking water at the source. Led by the Conservation Authorities, science-based assessment reports have been completed to characterize municipal drinking water resources and determine vulnerable areas. The studies are used to inform 'source protection plans'. Source protection plans are sets of policies that manage activities that could harm the water sources in the vulnerable areas. The policies are implemented by multiple partners including local governments, the provincial government and conservation authorities.

Source Protection Plans

While the majority of Milton is within the Halton-Hamilton Source Water Protection Plan area, a portion of north Milton is within the Lake Erie Source Protection Region, Grand River Source Protection Area (Appendix 1). As a result, and as required under the Clean Water Act, 2006 the policies of the Grand River Source Protection Plan are applied in north Milton. This source protection plan includes protection policies that use education and outreach, incentives, land use planning tools and other related legislation (i.e. Building Code).

Roles and Responsibilities

The Conservation Authorities administer the source water protection program. Halton Region, as a municipal drinking water provider, has a leadership role in developing and implementing many of the source protection policies. Milton also has a responsibility. For example, many of the land use planning policies related policies are implemented at the Town level when administering development applications.

Discussion

The Grand River Source Protection Authority has initiated an amendment to the Grand River Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan under Section 34 of the Clean Water Act, 2006. The updates are the result of technical studies for the Guelph-Guelph/Eramosa Township water supply system. Although the water supply system (the municipal ground water well) is outside of Milton, the area of land that needs to be managed to protect the water source extends into Milton.

Discussion

The updated studies and policies are intended to ensure that the quantity of available municipal drinking water is not negatively impacted by too much water being removed from the aquifer relative to the amount of water that is returned to the aquifer. To date, the Grand River Source Protection Plan only includes policies that protect the quality of sources of drinking water, not the quantity. The updated assessment reports will therefore identify the following activities as significant drinking water threats within vulnerable areas:

- Permitted municipal water takings;
- Permitted and non-permitted non-municipal water takings such as domestic water takings; and
- Activities that reduce groundwater recharge.

Staff from Halton Region participated as a part of the technical working group to support the development of the proposed draft policies. Halton staff discussed the development of the draft policies with Town staff throughout the process. The proposed new policies align with existing in-effect water quantity policies that are found in the Halton-Hamilton source protection plans, which covers the majority of Milton. The policies also align with Milton's current practices, such as encouraging low impact development features to promote groundwater recharge.

The proposed new policies would require Town staff, when reviewing planning applications to implement the following:

- For development requiring a new or amended Permit to Take Water (PTTW), the Town will consult with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to discuss any necessary approval conditions for the PTTW.
- Require new development and site alteration to implement best management practices such as Low Impact Development (LID) with the goal to maintain predevelopment water recharge rate. Implementation of best management practices is encouraged, but voluntary, for Agricultural Uses, Agriculture-related Uses, or On-farm Diversified Uses where the total impervious surface does not exceed 10 percent of the lot.

A proposed new policy, which would not be applicable in northern Milton given the Greenbelt Plan restrictions would require, all site plan and subdivision applications for major new residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses to provide a water balance



Discussion

assessment for the proposed development to the satisfaction of the Planning Approval Authority, that maintains pre-development recharge to the greatest extent feasible through best management practices such as Low Impact Development, minimizing impervious surfaces, and lot level infiltration.

Next Steps

The next step for the Source Protection Authority is to undertake public consultation. These consultations are expected to take place in late 2026. Comments received will be used to update the draft Source Protection Plan. An updated draft will then be submitted by the Grand River Source Protection Authority to the Ministry of Environment, Parks and Conservation for review and approval.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications for the Town.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Hogan
Commissioner, Development Services

For questions, please contact: Gail Anderson, Senior Planner Phone: Ext. 2332

Attachments

Appendix 1 - Source Water Protection Regions in the Town of Milton

Approved by CAO
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer



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Recognition of Traditional Lands

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.

Appendix 1: Source Water Protection Regions in Halton

