



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 14, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	GRIDS 2 and Municipal Comprehensive Review - Terms of Reference and Work Plan (PED17010) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction: N/A

Information:

What is GRIDS?

The Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS) was adopted in 2006 and was an integrated planning process that identified a broad land use structure, associated infrastructure, economic development strategy and financial implications for growth options to serve Hamilton for 30 years (to the year 2031).

The adoption of GRIDS in 2006 was the culmination of a three year process which involved significant public engagement, stakeholder consultation, and inter-departmental staff input. The GRIDS process started with the identification of a series of growth concepts (“how” the City would grow) which, through evaluation and review, were refined into five growth options. The five growth options were geographic based (“where” the City would grow). The five growth options included an urban boundary expansion area for both employment and non-employment uses. Stakeholder, public and technical review of the growth options resulted in the identification of the preferred growth option – Nodes and Corridors. The preferred growth option formed the basis of the City’s urban structure in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, and identified two future urban boundary expansion areas - one for employment and one for non-employment land uses.

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The integrated GRIDS process also included updates to the Water/Wastewater, Stormwater, and Transportation Master Plans. The updates to these Master Plans were co-ordinated with the GRIDS process. Information from the Plans was critical in informing the evaluation of the growth options. Finalization of the preferred growth option was necessary to complete the Master Plan updates.

This report will provide an update to Council and members of the public on the forthcoming update to GRIDS, known as GRIDS 2, including the key steps included in the growth strategy update, and the timing for completion of this important project. The proposed Terms of Reference and work plan are attached as Appendices “A” and “B” to Report PED17010.

Why are we updating GRIDS?

GRIDS identified a growth strategy to allocate forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2031. In 2013, the Province released new population and employment forecasts for communities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe to the year 2041. The forecasts for Hamilton project an increase of 40,000 jobs and 100,000 people between 2031 and 2041. As such, GRIDS must be updated to allocate the additional jobs and persons beyond 2031 (to 2041) and to determine the impact on the Master Plans.

The GRIDS update (GRIDS 2), together with the updates to the Transportation and Infrastructure Master Plans, will be a critical input into the Development Charges update in 2019.

GRIDS 2 will identify where intensification / redevelopment will be planned to occur, and identify future urban boundary expansion areas required to accommodate additional growth. In addition, GRIDS 2 will form the basis for the future Rural and Urban Hamilton Official Plan reviews in accordance with Provincial planning requirements.

What is the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR)?

A municipal comprehensive review (MCR) is a requirement of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) at the time of an Official Plan review, and must be completed prior to any expansion of the urban boundary. However, many of the studies that are required as part of the MCR are also part of a growth strategy. As such, the MCR will be completed concurrently with GRIDS 2, which has the benefit of combining the public and stakeholder consultation into one process, and efficiently using staff time and resources. The requirements to be completed as part of the MCR are identified in the Growth Plan, and include a review of

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impacts on natural heritage resources, agricultural operations, confirmation of the City's ability to meet intensification and density targets, and infrastructure impacts.

Timing and Key Steps

GRIDS 2 and the MCR will be completed over the next year, with a targeted completion in March / April 2018. It is important to complete GRIDS 2 in a timely manner in order to ensure that the growth option identified in GRIDS 2 can be implemented in the Master Plan updates and feed into the Development Charges Review. GRIDS 2 is one of the projects included within the Corporate Strategic Growth Initiatives Project, which is the project group that has been formed to ensure that all of the City's key strategic growth related projects are coordinated and completed in a timely and fiscally responsible manner.

The key milestones and associated timing for GRIDS 2/ MCR are identified in Appendices "A" and "B" to Report PED17010, and outlined briefly below:

Background Information / Updates

It has been 10 years since the adoption of GRIDS. As such, there is a significant amount of background information and updates that need to be completed, including:

- Baseline conditions update – a brief review of growth trends in the City since the adoption of GRIDS in 2006, including intensification and density information, geographic distribution of growth, demographic changes and development activity.
- Update to the GRIDS Nine Directions – a review of the Nine Directions (established in the original GRIDS to assist in the development of growth options) in relation to the City's new Strategic Plan and Vision.
- Residential intensification supply update – an update to the 2006 Residential Intensification Study to forecast intensification rates to the year 2041 for Traffic Zones across the City.
- Employment land review – as a component of the MCR, a review of the City's Employment Areas to determine if any boundary revisions are warranted.
- Employment measurement review – a consideration of the appropriate measure of employment density, which currently varies across different plans and documents.

Land Budget

A land budget is an assessment of how much land will be required to accommodate future population and employment growth in the City to the year 2041. The land budget

will consider how much of the City's projected growth can be accommodated within the existing urban boundary through intensification and infill, and compare this to the overall demand. The land budget will identify the overall land need in terms of both residential and employment land. This will be prepared by a consultant specializing in this field.

As noted below, through the Co-ordinated Provincial Plan Review, the Province of Ontario has indicated that a common methodology to be used by all municipalities in the completion of land budgets will be established. It is anticipated that the common methodology will not be completed before late 2017. As such, the City will commence its land budget exercise in the interest of moving forward with the GRIDS update in a timely manner, however, it must be noted that revisions to the land budget may be required upon the release of the common methodology, which would have an impact on the timing of the GRIDS 2 completion.

Evaluation of Growth Options / Public Consultation

The land budget will identify how much additional land for both employment and non-employment uses will be required to accommodate forecasted growth. Based on this land need, growth options will be evaluated for both employment and non-employment lands to review and evaluate potential growth areas. Potential growth options will be presented to the public and stakeholders for comment. Servicing considerations and financial implications will also be evaluated with consideration of the Transportation and Servicing / Infrastructure Master Plans. This review and evaluation will culminate in the identification of the preferred growth option.

Public and stakeholder consultation will be an integral component of the GRIDS update and MCR. It is foreseen that a minimum of two rounds of public consultation in the form of open houses will occur. A consultant team will be hired to develop a public consultation strategy and to facilitate the public engagement for the project.

Further, in terms of public consultation, it is noted that additional consultation under the *Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Planning Act* will be required to implement the future Master Plan and Official Plan updates, and additional Planning Committee meetings will be required by statutory process.

Master Plan Updates

Updates to the Master Plans will be completed by Public Works staff in coordination with GRIDS 2. The Transportation Master Plan update is underway and may have to be modified / updated as GRIDS proceeds. Updates to the Servicing / Infrastructure Master Plans (Stormwater and Water / Wastewater) will also be completed to plan to

the year 2041. Input from the Master Plan updates will form part of the evaluation of the growth options.

Financial Review

Upon identification of the preferred growth option, a review of the financial implications of the preferred option will be undertaken by an outside consultant specializing in such work. The financial review will be co-ordinated with the Master Plan updates by taking into consideration the financial implications from servicing and infrastructure as identified in the Master Plan updates, as well as other growth-related components and costs arising from the preferred growth option. This review will feed into the Development Charges Review (2017 – 2019).

Final Report

Upon completion, a final GRIDS 2 report will be presented to Planning Committee and Council for adoption of the City's preferred growth strategy. The final report is targeted for completion in early 2018.

Provincial Plan Review

In May 2016, the Province released draft updates to the Growth Plan and the Greenbelt Plan. Changes to these documents can have an impact on the GRIDS update and MCR. Significant areas of change which could have an impact on the timing and completion of GRIDS 2 include:

- Increase in intensification target to 60% (Growth Plan);
- Increase in greenfield density target to 80 persons and jobs per hectare (Growth Plan);
- New requirements for increased density at major transit station areas (Growth Plan);
- Development of a common land budget methodology (Growth Plan); and,
- Refinements to the Greenbelt Plan boundary (Greenbelt Plan).

The final Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan updates are expected to be released by the Province in early 2017. The timing of this release, the extent of policy changes, and the timing of the Provincial land budget methodology can all have an impact on the timing of the GRIDS update and MCR.

Staffing / Budget

Funding has been approved through the 2016 Capital Budget process for the planning related work to update GRIDS.

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Staffing has been accommodated through the Planning Division, Policy Planning and Zoning By-law Reform Section. Additional staff resources from Public Works, Finance and Community Services will provide input, as required.

Appendices:

Appendix "A": GRIDS 2 / MCR Terms of Reference

Appendix "B": GRIDS 2 / MCR Work Plan

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