

Upper West Side

LANDOWNERS GROUP

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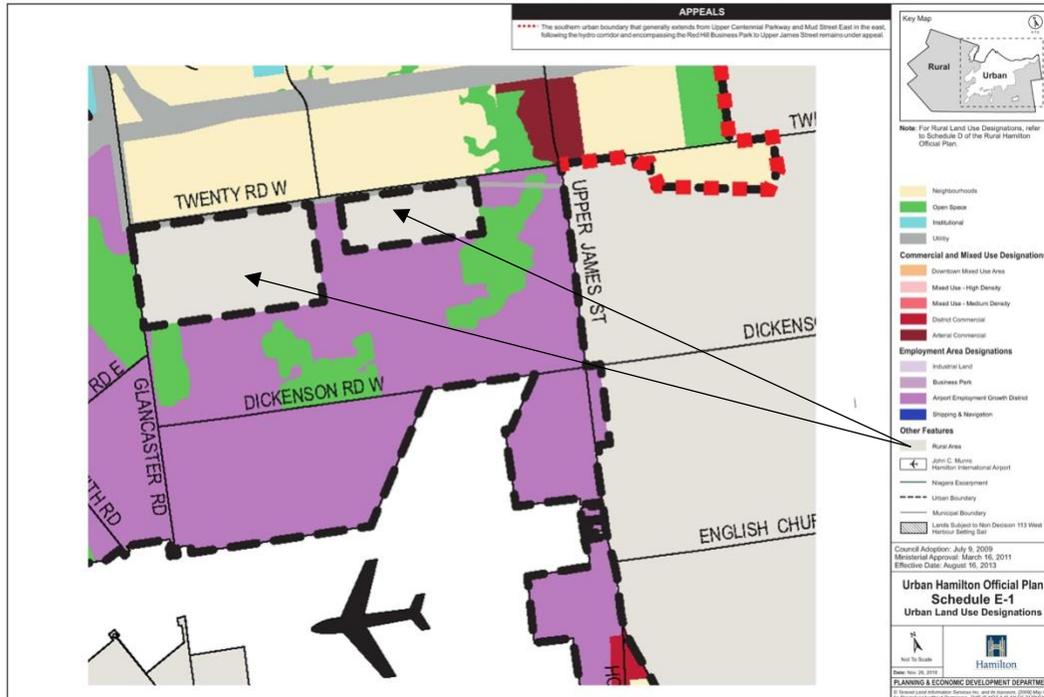
Monday February 25, 2019

Mayor and Members of City Council
City of Hamilton
71 Main St West
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

Mayor Eisenberger and Members of City Council:

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

As many of you are aware, the Upper West Side Landowners Group (UWSLG), are the owners of the lands south of Twenty Road West between Upper James and Glancaster. The southerly portion of the block along with the Garth Street corridor is located in the Airport Employment Growth District (AEGD). There are two areas, east and west of the Garth Street corridor that are currently outside of the urban area and are not part of the AEGD. As was discussed at Planning Committee on February 19th, these two small infill remnant areas are fully surrounded by the urban boundaries as shown in the attached figure from the current Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP):



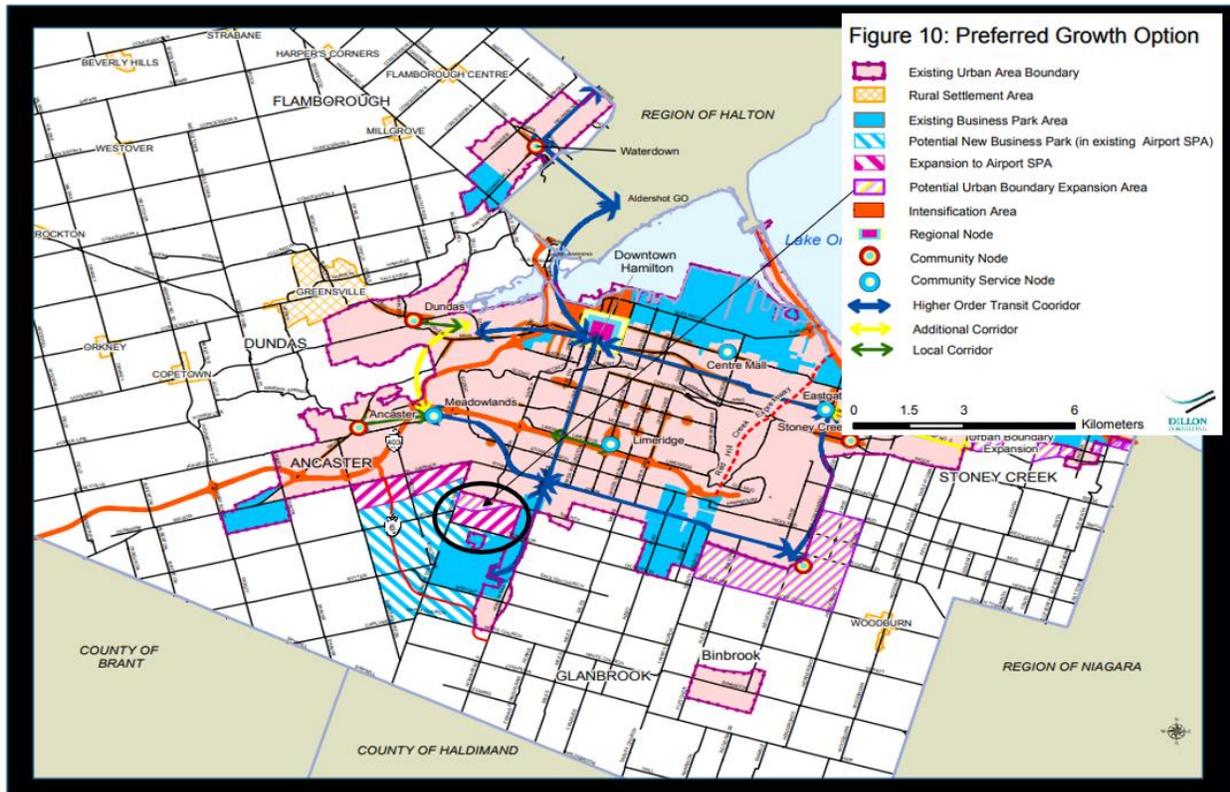
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It is important for Council to appreciate that there are four important matters arising in the Planning Committee discussion and questions of staff that require clarification as follows:

1. TWENTY ROAD WEST WAS IDENTIFIED FOR URBAN EXPANSION IN GRIDS:

Based on the discussion during the Planning Committee meeting, there appeared to be a lack of understanding of what the City actually approved in the Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS) (2006). GRIDS recommended Elfrida and Twenty Road West as potential growth areas. Here is the figure from the approved GRIDS report and the applicable text referencing Twenty Road West. Twenty Road West is identified with the exact same preferred growth option status as Elfrida – Potential Urban Boundary Expansion Area.



GRIDS – Figure 10 (p 72, 2006)

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In addition, the accompanying text of GRIDS clarifies the status of our lands as “infilling” in nature. In GRIDS, “infill” is defined as “small-scale development or redevelopment on vacant or underused land within built-up areas of existing communities, where infrastructure is already in place”. The UWSLG has completed the studies to determine that servicing is already available and has further had the rural areas analyzed by an accredited agricultural consultant to determine if the quality of soil and land location is suitable for agriculture – which it is not.

Moreover, GRIDS clarifies that infill development has always been a potential outcome for the Twenty Road West growth area, as it:

Explored opportunities to reshape the employment area around the airport (Deferral 11 Area, Greenbelt and Highway 6 area) to provide more continuous development while providing appropriate residential/employment area separators (p 65).

Further, GRIDS stated that for the proposed urban boundary expansion area identified on Figure 10 above, Twenty Road West is considered a:

Small expansion to round out existing neighbourhoods between the airport employment area and existing residential area (95 net hectares) south of Twenty Road and east of Glanaster Road in the Deferral 11 area of the Regional Official Plan (p.75).

2. TWENTY ROAD WEST WAS EXCLUDED FROM THE EMPLOYMENT AREA – IT WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE AEGD AREA OF 555 HA FOR EMPLOYMENT

The AEGD study area comprised an area of roughly 1200 ha around the John C. Munro Airport. In the AEGD proceedings, it was determined that 555 ha of employment lands were required for the AEGD. The final land areas to accommodate that 555 ha requirement were then resolved through a resolution of the AEGD secondary plan appeals. The Twenty Road West lands were excluded from the required employment lands. Our group submitted a consultant’s report from Malone Given Parsons detailing the critical deficiencies of the Twenty Road West lands for substantial employment uses, given among other things, the adjacent sensitive residential uses on the north side of Twenty Road and other qualitative factors. It was therefore established the Twenty Road West lands were not suitable or required for employment uses in the AEGD secondary plan.

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3. A PREFERRED URBAN BOUNDARY EXPANSION AREA WAS NEVER FINALLY APPROVED AS AN OUTCOME OF GRIDS:

The Province did not approve any defined area for urban boundary expansion as an outcome of GRIDS. In fact, the Province specifically removed all references to the “Elfrida” area in the official plan amendment that implemented GRIDS. At this point “Elfrida” does not enjoy any additional planning status relative to the other optional growth areas including the UWS area. Despite this fact, the City continues to extensively fund planning and infrastructure studies to develop a secondary plan for Elfrida. On the other hand, our land ownership group has fully funded planning and infrastructure studies necessary to support urban boundary expansion and a secondary plan.

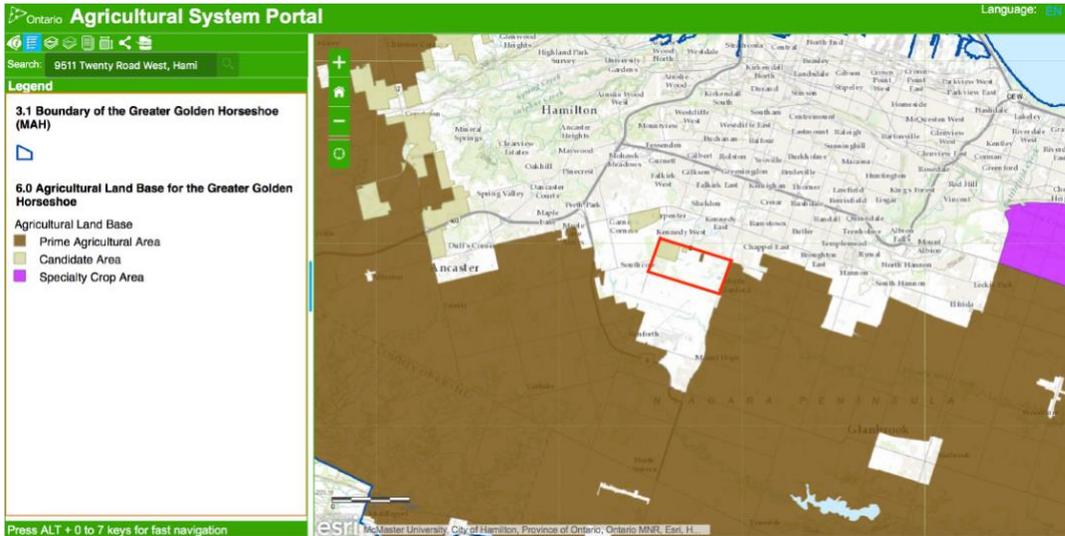
4. TWENTY ROAD WEST HAS NO SUBSTANTIVE PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND AND HAS PROPOSED A NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM CONSISTENT WITH PROVINCIAL MAPPING.

Provincial Policy requires that Prime Agricultural lands shall be used for urban settlement expansion only where no other options are available that utilize less capable lands. The attached maps show that the UWS lands have no significant Prime Agricultural lands. Provincial mapping recently released in 2018 demonstrates that other candidate expansion lands, notably Elfrida, have significant Prime Agricultural Resources that need to be protected. Also, the following Provincial mapping for Natural Heritage systems is consistent with our proposal for the UWS area (which was based on a comprehensive Environmental Study).

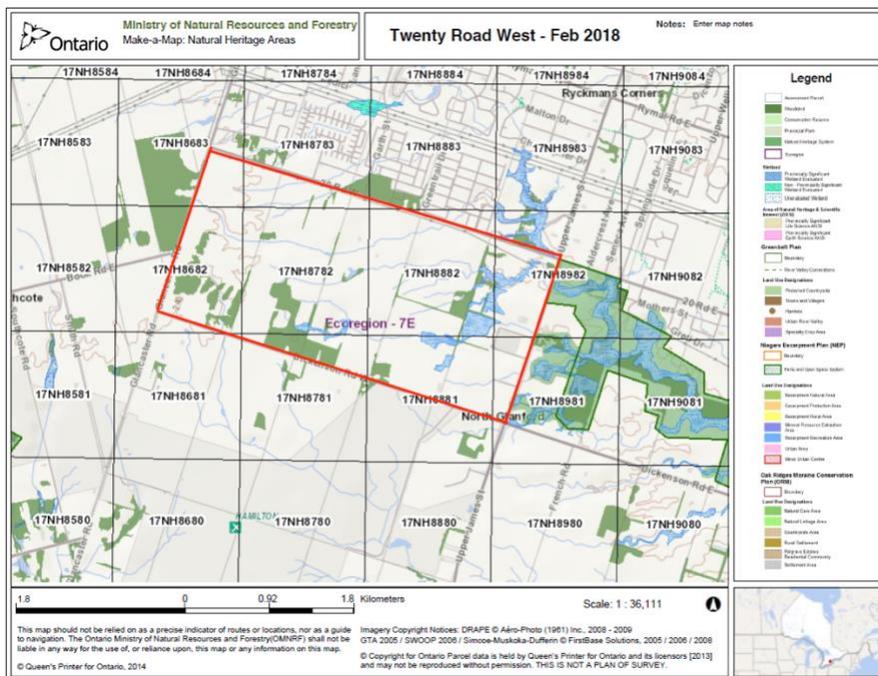
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Prime Agricultural Mapping (OMAFRA, 2018)



Natural Heritage System Mapping (MNR, 2018)



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PROJECT STATUS

The UWSLG is an active participant in the current Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process. However, the timing has been unduly burdensome for the UWSLG as these landowners have been trying to bring their community plan into fruition since as early as 2006 when GRIDS identified the potential urban boundary expansion and when it was recognized in Official Plan policy that lands outside of the airport employment area would be considered for urban expansion. Since then the landowners have been cooperating and informing City Staff of the current development conditions of the Twenty Road West area.

This development will provide an immediate financial benefit to the City of Hamilton as follows:

- Building Permit Revenue: \$25.8 million
- Development Charge Revenue: \$257.1 million
- Annual Tax Revenue: \$35.9 million per year
- Delivery of the Garth Street Extension: 8.7 million (exclusive of design and administration costs)

Further, the lands are immediately serviceable, not located on prime agricultural soil, and the landowners are assisting City Staff with the Dickenson Road Environmental Assessment process, to further the infrastructure needs of Hamilton.

Even with all the necessary completed studies and due diligence completed, the City has provided assistance to the Elfrida growth area to complete the Watershed Study and have land locked the rural “whitebelt” areas along Twenty Road West until the MCR completion, which has been postponed numerous times. The current MCR completion has now been extended to the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022. If this timeline continues then the current UWSLG will have been needlessly deadlocked for years despite our immediate ability to aid the city in its current housing crisis and support the John. C Munro Airport along with other infrastructure.

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PROVINCIAL POLICY STATEMENT (2014)

As the province is amending the Growth Plan (2017), the province has provided policies in their provincial Policy Statement (PPS) that should be adhered to, such as the following:

“1.1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns

- a) *promoting **efficient development** and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;*
- b) *accommodating an appropriate range and **mix of residential** (including second units, affordable housing and housing for older persons), **employment** (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries, long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;*
- c) *avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;*
- d) ***avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion or settlement areas in those areas which are adjacent or close to settlement areas;***
- e) *promoting cost-effective development patterns and standards to **minimize** land consumption and **servicing costs**;*
- f) *improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by identifying, preventing and removing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society;*
- g) *ensuring that **necessary infrastructure**, electricity generation facilities and transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs; and,*
- h) *promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity and consider the impacts of a changing climate.”*

According to subsection 1.1.1 above, the Twenty Road West (UWS) growth area complies with the PPS as it will provide efficient and congruent infill development, with a range of residential, mixed use and employment combined, adjacent to existing residential development and other built forms, will provide the necessary extension to Dickenson Road as desired in the AEGD Secondary Plan and will maintain the Natural Heritage System as defined by the City.

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CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the Province, through the proposed Growth Plan Amendments, is now considering establishing new policies that would help municipalities address critical housing needs through enabling modest urban boundary expansions or boundary adjustments where there is a clear and compelling planning rationale as is the case with the UWS area. Accordingly, we are asking City Council to retain these proposed Growth Plan changes in your response to the province.

We would therefore ask Council to delete recommendations (d) (iii),(iv),(v),(vi),(vii) and (viii) as these proposed Growth Plan policy amendments provide valuable tools for the City of Hamilton to make smart and timely growth decisions.

Sincerely,

The Upper West Side Landowners Group