

# CITY OF HAMILTON

## NOTICE OF MOTION

Special General Issues Committee: March 29, 2021

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR B. CLARK.....**

### **Request to Delay Submission of Growth Plan Conformity Official Plan Amendment, Suspension of the Timetable for Municipal Conformity to the Growth Plan and an Extension the Deadline for Growth Plan Conformity**

WHEREAS, the Province of Ontario has mandated the City of Hamilton to conduct a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) of its Official Plan; whereby, decisions must be made as to how all of the population and employment growth is to be accommodated in the local municipalities for the years 2031 to 2051;

WHEREAS, since June 2019, the Province has amended a number of Provincial Statutes and policies that impact how municipalities plan for growth including the following:

- Provincial Policy Statement;
- A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- *Development Charges Act*,
- *Planning Act*,
- *Environmental Assessment Act*; and.
- *Conservation Authorities Act*,

WHEREAS, these significant Provincial changes include:

- reduced density targets in new greenfield development from 80 persons and jobs per hectare to 50 persons and jobs per hectare;
- reduced intensification targets from 60% beyond 2031 to 50%;
- setting minimum population and employment growth forecasts that can be exceeded, subject to Provincial approval;
- extended the planning horizon from 2041 to the year 2051;
- introduced market demand as a consideration in determining the housing mix; and,
- revisions to how municipalities fund growth;

WHEREAS, these Provincial changes signal an abrupt shift from the emphasis on creating compact and complete communities to a planning regime that facilitates lower density and car dependent communities;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton has declared a climate change emergency and must consider the role of land use planning in their strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions;

WHEREAS, these Provincial changes create pressure to convert more class 1, 2 and 3 farmlands in Hamilton to urban uses than would otherwise be necessary, which is contrary to Hamilton's Official Plan;

WHEREAS, ensuring that Ontarians have access to healthy safe food in the future requires thoughtful consideration of the long-term impact of converting thousands of acres of prime agricultural lands in the Hamilton area to urban uses;

WHEREAS, the change of the planning horizon to 2051, by the Province, means that future municipal councils and the public will have little power to change decisions where they will grow after 2031 to the 2051 planning horizon;

WHEREAS, in the rural areas, internet service is often poor or non-existent, making it difficult for rural residents to engage in virtual public consultations;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton's current timelines project an Official Plan Amendment by January 2022, seven months before the current Provincial Deadline of July 2022;

WHEREAS, the desired outcome of the City of Hamilton's Strategic Plan, under the Community Engagement and Participation Priority is..."Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.";

WHEREAS, the current pandemic is making effective, in person public consultation impossible at a time when robust, informed public consultation is needed more than ever; and,

WHEREAS, the nature of work has evolved in response to the pandemic, which may cause long-term changes to the assumptions underlying the province's Land Needs Assessment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Mayor correspond with the Honourable Premier Doug Ford and the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to request the Province allow the City of Hamilton to delay its submission of its Growth Plan conformity Official Plan Amendment until proper, in person, informed consultation with the public has been conducted on the growth concepts and the preferred growth concepts;
- (b) That the Province be requested to suspend the timetable for municipal conformity to the Growth Plan to ensure that the public can fully participate in the process of planning their communities for the growth planning period covering 2031 to 2051;

- (c) That the Province be requested to extend the deadline for Growth Plan conformity in order to allow municipalities time to better understand and reflect the impacts of COVID as it relates to real estate markets, housing demand, commercial and office development impacts, and overall land needs; and,
- (d) That this resolution be copied to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the leaders of the Provincial opposition parties, Hamilton's MPP's, and the neighbouring municipalities.