



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 5, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Municipal Comprehensive Review / Official Plan Review Work Plan (PED21067) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Delia McPhail (905) 546-2424 Ext. 6663
SUBMITTED BY:	Steve Robichaud Director, Planning and Chief Planner Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable.

INFORMATION

This Report highlights the topic areas to be addressed through the MCR – Official Plan Conformity Review and provides context in terms of the purpose of an Official Plan (OP) Review and how the review fits into the overall GRIDS 2 and the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) Project timelines. This Report has been prepared to provide an update and roadmap on the MCR process and scope of work for Council and the general public as part of the on-going community engagement and consultation process.

1.0 Background

Municipalities, based on provincial requirements and good land use planning practice, review their Official Plans on a regular basis to ensure they remain up-to-date, reflect current provincial policy and represent the long term vision of the municipality.

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The Rural Hamilton Official Plan and Urban Hamilton Official Plan were approved by the Ontario Municipal Board and came into effect on March 7, 2012 and August 16, 2013, respectively.

The provincial requirements to undertake Official Plan reviews and conformity exercises are contained within the *Planning Act* and the *Places to Grow Act*, 2005 and the *Greenbelt Act*, 2005, as follows:

- A Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) is a requirement of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to comprehensively apply the policies of the provincial plan and implement any required conformity revisions to the Official Plans through amendments to the City's Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plans. In addition, the Greenbelt Plan was updated in 2017 and revisions to the Rural Hamilton Official Plan are required to implement changes from this Plan. Further, the Provincial Policy Statement was released in 2017 with a small revision in 2020. Updated Official Plan policies are also required to be implement any PPS changes. These three reviews are referred to as the "Conformity Review".
- The *Planning Act* requires the City to review the Official Plan no less than 10 years after the Official Plan comes into effect, and every five years thereafter. The purpose of this review is ensure the land use planning policies relating to City of Hamilton are up-to-date and are reflective of community goals and objectives. This component of the process is known as the "Official Plan review – Local Context".

This Report will clarify the different components of the Conformity Review, the Official Plan Review and timing.

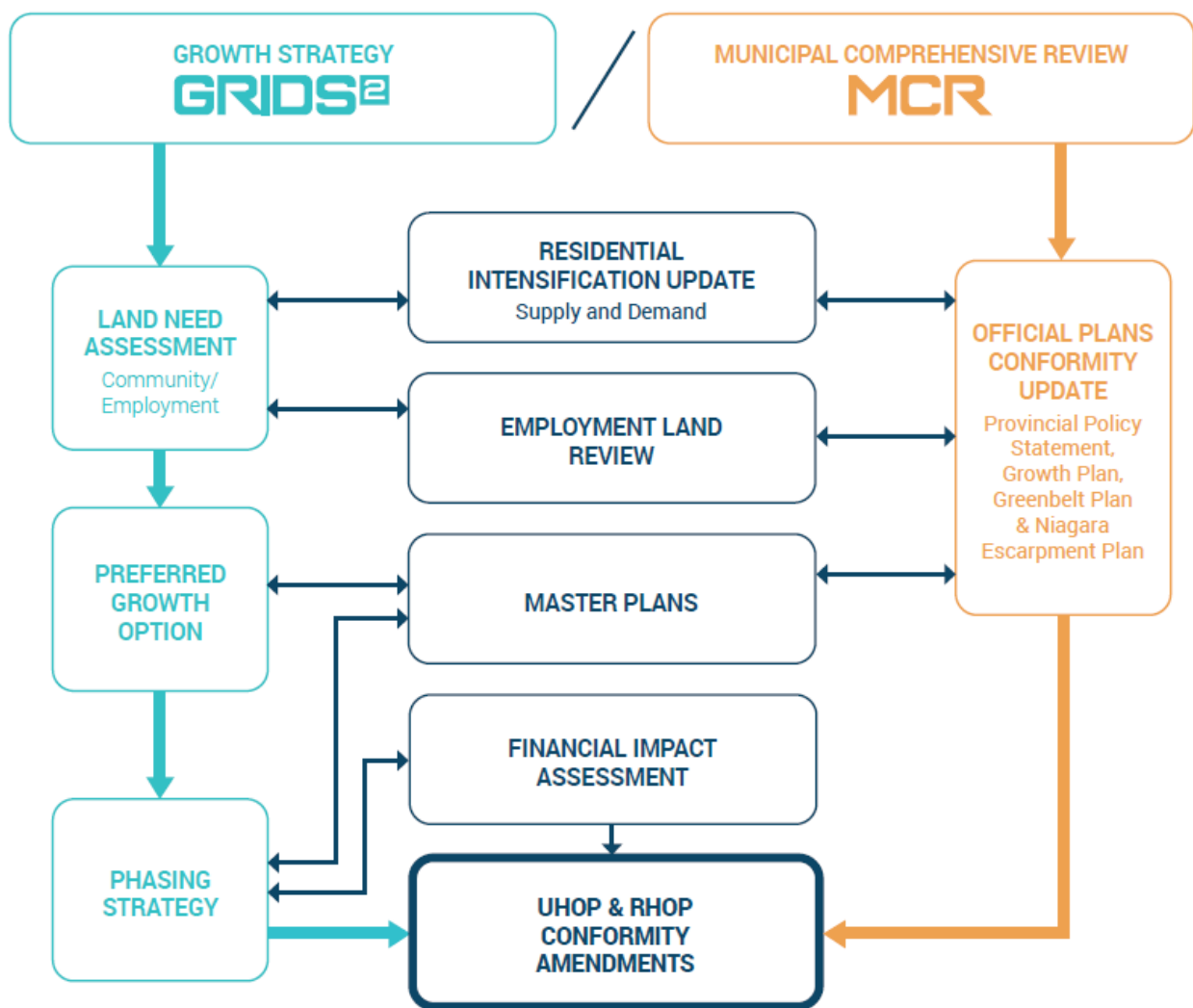
The current Official Plan Review is not intended to be a rewrite of the City's Official Plans, but rather a targeted update to only those sections and policies that require changes to address provincial policies and locally-identified issues. The organization and structure of the Official Plans will remain the same.

1.1 GRIDS 2 & Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) Project

The City is undertaking an update to GRIDS, known as GRIDS 2, which is a long term growth strategy to allocate forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2051, and encompasses matters that have historically not been part of traditional land use planning studies. The provincial forecasts for Hamilton project a population of 820,000 people and employment of 360,000 jobs by the year 2051. As such, GRIDS must be updated to plan for the additional jobs and persons to 2051 and assess the implications for the Official Plan, Infrastructure Master Plans and Development Charges By-law.

A municipal comprehensive review (MCR) is a requirement of the Provincial Policy Statement and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Plan. The MCR is broad and encompasses many inter-related components, and must be completed prior to any expansion of the urban boundary. 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 utilizes staff time and resources. The outcome of the MCR and GRIDS 2 will be implemented through Official Plan Amendments to the Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plans.

The following flow chart depicts the City of Hamilton's Municipal Comprehensive Review Process, as it relates to the GRIDS 2 process.



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The Conformity Review is a key component of the MCR. The MCR will result in official plan amendments to each of the Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plans that comprehensively apply all the necessary changes to reflect the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans. Under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, MCR amendments require the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Unlike other Official Plan Amendments adopted by Council, approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is required for the Official Plan Amendment that implements the MCR (Ontario Regulation 525/97).

The Province has set July 1, 2022 as the date by which municipalities must submit to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing those Official Plan Amendments that address conformity matters as part of the MCR. A draft Official Plan Amendment must be submitted to the Province a minimum of 90 days prior to the statutory public meeting required under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*.

2.0 Official Plan Review

As noted above the OP review has been broken down into 2 components – Conformity Review and Local Context review. Review of the City’s Official Plan policies will occur at the same time as the GRIDS 2 project completes the necessary steps to determine how, where, and when the City will accommodate additional growth.

Given the timeframe set by the Province, Planning Division staff have structured the Official Plan Review project’s workplan to prioritize elements of the review related to conformity matters in relation to the Provincial Plans.

Phase One – “Conformity Review”:

The first Official Plan Amendments to be completed will be focused on bringing the Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plans into conformity with the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and the policies of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019, as amended, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, 2017, and the Greenbelt Plan, 2017. Therefore, the scope of the review will focus on identifying and amending any Official Plan policies to ensure that they conform or are consistent with applicable Provincial Plan policies.

An MCR may be implemented in phases through more than one Official Plan Amendment. Staff anticipate the first OPA to be brought forward in Spring 2022 will focus on Urban conformity issues and conformity issues that are common to both the Rural Hamilton Official Plan and the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. Staff anticipate a second conformity-related OPA to be brought forward at a later date that will focus specifically on Rural conformity issues. The reason for the delay is to focus on mapping refinements to the agricultural system mapping and potential refinements to the natural heritage system.

As required, these amendments will be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval.

Phase Two – “Official Plan Review – Local Context”:

Staff recognizes that updates to the City’s Official Plans will be necessary to address local community issues, which will be dealt with in the second phase. This phase will not be subject to the stringent timelines of the matters related to the MCR conformity review with the Provincial Plans and the resulting Official Plan Amendments will be exempt from the approval of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

2.1 Timing of Official Plan Review – First Phase (MCR Conformity Review – Urban)

Phase 1 (MCR Conformity Review – Urban) is expected to be completed this year, with the project’s timeline and key deliverables identified in Appendix “A” to Report PED21067. The project workplan for the remainder of Phase 1 (MCR Conformity Review – Rural) and Phase 2 (Official Plan Review – Local Context) will be identified at a later date.

2.2 Topic-Based Approach:

The Official Plan Review will follow a topic-based approach to first focus the review on matters that deal directly with the Conformity Review to the PPS and Provincial Plans, followed by a review of the Official Plans in the local context to address any significant policy changes. Administrative and Housekeeping Amendments will continue to be brought forward by Policy Planning staff, on an as-needed basis, to ensure the Official Plans are clearly and accurately implemented.

Conformity Review:

Changes to the Provincial Policy Statement and the Provincial Plans result in policy updates to the following sections of the City’s Official Plans:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| • Provincial Plans | • Urban Structure | • Cultural Heritage |
| • Transportation | • Housing | • Climate-Related |
| • Natural Heritage | • Infrastructure | • Implementation |
| • Glossary | • Growth Management | • Residential Intensification |
| • Employment | • Agriculture / Specialty Crop / Rural (at a later date) | • Mineral Aggregates (at a later date) |

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Official Plan Review – Local Context:

Once the Conformity Review component of the Official Plan Review has been completed, staff will complete the Official Plan Review process by addressing policy and mapping updates focussing on local community issues, including the following:

- Noise
- Urban Design
- Waste
- Neighbourhoods
- Parks and Recreation
- Institutional
- Right-of-Ways
- Commercial / Mixed Use

Appendix “B” to Report PED21067 highlights some of the key changes expected for each of the above topics included in the Conformity Review and Official Plan Review – Local Context. This list may be updated or refined as additional revision areas are identified during the course of the review.

APPENDICIES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” - Project Timeline: Municipal Comprehensive Review / Official Plan Review Work Plan

Appendix “B” - Highlights of Provincial Policy Changes by Topic Area: Urban and Rural Hamilton Official Plans

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