



March 7, 2021

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

RE: Motion to Delay Land Use Planning Deadline

As you are aware, the province has revised municipal planning guidelines to include population projections to 2051, while lowering density targets for new development and enacting a “market-driven” approach to planning for new residential.

As the Climate Change Committee of the Durand Neighbourhood Association, we request that Hamilton City Council delay Hamilton’s Official Review Plans (MRC) at the March 29 GIC meeting. There is recent precedent for this delay as Halton Hills unanimously voted on February 1st for a delay, and the Region of Halton did the same on February 17.

We must not lock in planning guidelines that encourage sprawl until 2051. Land use planning is the key lever in locking in or locking out greenhouse emissions according to Yuill Herbert, a leading energy consultant for many Canadian municipalities including Burlington.

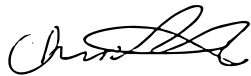
Given COVID restrictions, constituents cannot be properly consulted on major policy decisions. Many residents do not have internet access or lack the expertise to use Zoom software to delegate to council. Critical decisions which will impact Hamilton for the next 30 years, should not be made while in-person consultation is impossible. Hamilton’s 2016-2025 Strategic Plan makes clear the city’s commitment and responsibility to community engagement and participation when it states: “Citizens are consulted and involved in making the decisions that impact them.”

The best option for our municipality is to freeze the urban boundary and direct new development to within the existing built-up areas. Low density residential development is an economic disaster, as well as an environmental one. Our current infrastructure deficit will only grow as we continue to build out into green fields. Our current tax base cannot support the building of new roads and water infrastructure as existing infrastructure repairs and maintenance are already pushing budgets to the limit. Moreover, there are major environmental impacts that are a result of sprawl. In particular, storm run-off from impermeable surfaces will only increase as the effects of climate change grow. As well, transportation emissions from these developments will prevent us from reaching our climate targets and should not be considered. We have more than enough land within the current urban boundary to develop complete, self-sustaining communities for future growth until 2031 and should have the flexibility to plan for 2041 using the guiding principles of Places to Grow.

Councillor Fogal of Halton Hills suggests that for this action to delay to be effective, councils around the Golden Horseshoe will need to pass similar motions and stand in solidarity. Therefore, for posterity's sake, we urge you to delay Hamilton's Official Review Plans (MRC) at the March 29 GIC meeting.

Thank you for considering these important issues.

Sincerely,



Christopher Redmond
President, Durand Neighbourhood Association



Frances Murray
Chair, DNA, Climate
Change Committee