



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**Planning Division**

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members General Issues Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	March 29, 2021
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	GRIDS 2 and Municipal Comprehensive Review – Final Land Needs Assessment (PED17010(i)) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Heather Travis (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4168
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Steve Robichaud Director, Planning and Chief Planner Planning and Economic Development Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the City of Hamilton Land Needs Assessment to 2051 – Technical Working Paper, prepared by Lorus & Associates, dated March 2021, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED17010(i) be adopted by Council for the GRIDS 2 / MCR integrated growth management planning process;
- (b) That the following reports be approved by Council:
  - (i) Residential Intensification Market Demand Study, prepared by Lorus and Associates, dated March 2021, attached as Appendix “B” to Report PED17010(i);
  - (ii) Residential Intensification Supply Update, dated March 2021, attached as Appendix “C” to Report PED17010(i);
  - (iii) Existing Designated Greenfield Area Density Analysis, dated March 2021, attached as Appendix “D” to Report PED17010(i);
- (c) That Council adopt the “Ambitious Density” scenario, as identified in the Land Needs Assessment to 2051 – Technical Working Paper prepared by Lorus &

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Associates, dated March 2021, as the preferred Community Area land needs scenario, and the following growth projections, intensification target, planned density of greenfield areas, and Community / Employment Area land needs be utilized and incorporated into the GRIDS 2 / MCR process and the development and evaluation of growth scenarios:

- (i) A projected household growth of 110,300 households;
  - (ii) An intensification target of 50% between 2021 and 2031, 60% between 2031 and 2041 and 70% between 2041 and 2051;
  - (iii) A planned density of 60 persons and jobs per hectare (pjh) in existing Designated Greenfield Areas and 77 pjh in new Designated Greenfield Areas (urban expansion areas);
  - (iv) A Community Area land need of 1,340 gross developable ha to 2051; and,
  - (v) An Employment Area land need of 0 ha, to be confirmed subject to the finalization of the Employment Land Review report.
- (d) That the GRIDS 2 / MCR process and the development and evaluation of scenarios consider phasing options that would ensure that any future urban boundary expansions are controlled and phased, including consideration of options for identifying growth needs beyond 2041 without formally designating the land as urban at this time; and,
- (e) That at the conclusion of GRIDS 2 / MCR and the final approval of the implementing Official Plan Amendments identifying the land need to accommodate growth to 2051, staff prepare a report for Council with respect to the necessary steps for recommending to the Province that any remaining Community Area whitebelt lands be added to the Greenbelt.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Through GRIDS (Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy) 2 and the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), the City is planning for growth to the year 2051. The Provincial Growth Plan identifies an ultimate 2051 population of 820,000 persons and employment of 360,000 jobs in the year 2051. This growth equates to an increase of 236,000 people, 110,000 housing units, and 122,000 jobs over the next 30 years.

A Land Needs Assessment (LNA) is a study that identifies how much of the forecasted growth can be accommodated within the City's existing urban area based on inputted targets, and how much growth may need to be accommodated within any potential urban expansion area. The LNA considers the need for "Community" lands (i.e. lands

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to accommodate population growth and some commercial and institutional employment growth) separate from “Employment” lands (i.e. lands designated to accommodate employment growth including Business Parks and Industrial areas).

In January 2021, staff consulted on the draft LNA which was presented to General Issues Committee in December 2020. The final LNA, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED17010(i) reflects some minor changes and clarifications to address the comments received through the consultation. A full review of the consultation on the LNA and related reports is included as Appendix “E” to Report PED17010(i) and a summary of the changes to the LNA and related reports resulting from the consultation is included in the Analysis / Rationale for Recommendation section of this Report.

The “Ambitious Density” growth scenario is being recommended for Council’s adoption. The recommended “Ambitious Density” scenario results in the lowest land need out of the four scenarios modelled in the LNA, and from a climate change policy perspective, represents the preferred option.

In the “Ambitious Density” scenario, the City will be planning to accommodate almost 80% of its housing unit growth within the existing urban area, through both intensification and development of existing greenfield lands. This scenario, which is based on a planned intensification target which increases over time, from 50% between 2021 and 2031, to 60% between 2031 and 2041 and to 70% between 2041 and 2051, and a density of 77 persons and jobs per hectare (pjh) in new growth areas, results in a need of approximately 1,340 gross developable ha of Community Area lands. For Employment Area lands, the LNA identifies that the City’s supply and demand for Employment Area jobs is in balance, and no additional employment lands are required to the year 2051.

GRIDS 2 / MCR, including the LNA, are being completed in accordance with requirements of the Provincial Growth Plan, including the LNA Methodology (see below under Policy Implications and Legislated Requirements), as recently re-iterated by the letter from the Province dated February 23, 2021 (attached as Appendix “H” to Report PED17010(i)).

**Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 28**

**FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **1.0 GRIDS 2 / Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR)**

GRIDS 2 (Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy) will result in a long term growth strategy which allocates forecasted population and employment growth for the 2021 to 2051 time period. The forecasts for Hamilton project a total 2051 population of 820,000 persons and total employment of 360,000 jobs.

The MCR is being completed concurrently with GRIDS 2. The MCR is broad and encompasses many inter-related components, and must be completed prior to any expansion of the urban boundary. Many of the studies that are required as part of the MCR are also part of a growth strategy. Like the first GRIDS, GRIDS 2 / MCR is an integrated study which will inform the updates to the Infrastructure Master Plans, transportation network review, and Fiscal Impact Assessment (FIA) that will assist with future updates to the Development Charges By-law. The outcomes of the Growth Strategy and MCR will be implemented through the City's Official Plans.

### **2.0 Draft Land Needs Assessment – Lorus & Associates (December 2020)**

In December 2020, the draft LNA was received at the General Issues Committee meeting of December 14, 2020. The draft LNA was completed in accordance with the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology. Table 1 below identifies the City's updated population forecast phased by 10 year planning increment, and related housing unit growth based on updated demographic and census data. This breakdown is provided by the City's land economist (Lorus & Associates), based on the updated *Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051* from Hemson Consulting, as an input to the LNA. Table 1 also identifies the City's planned phasing of job growth to 2051, by 10 year planning increment. Further details on this forecast are found in the LNA attached as Appendix "A" to Report PED17010(i).

**Table 1: City of Hamilton Population, Housing and Job Forecast 2021 – 2051**

	2021	2031	2041	2051
Population	584,000	652,000	733,000	820,000
<i>Population growth by 10 year period</i>		+ 68,000	+ 81,000	+ 87,000
Housing units	223,000	258,000	295,000	332,000
<i>Unit growth by 10 year period</i>		+35,000	+ 37,000	+ 37,000
Employment	238,000	271,000	310,000	360,000
<i>Employment growth by 10 year period</i>		+ 33,000	+ 39,000	+ 50,000

**Source: Hemson Consulting, 2020; Growth Plan 2019, as amended.**

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For the consideration of Community Area land need, the LNA modelled four land need scenarios based on different intensification and density assumptions. The scenarios are summarized in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: LNA Results – Community Area Land Need Scenarios**

Scenario	Intensification Target (%)			Land Need (ha)
	2021 – 2031	2031 – 2041	2041 - 2051	
1. Current Trends	40			3,440
2. Growth Plan minimum	50			2,190
3. Increased Targets	50	55	60	1,630
	(55% average over the period)			
4. Ambitious Density	50	60	70	1,340
	(60% average over the period)			

**Source: Lorius & Associates, Land Needs Assessment Technical Working Paper, 2021**

While the LNA did not model a ‘no urban boundary expansion’ option, this option was considered in Report PED17010(h), with staff noting that this option would require an intensification rate exceeding 80% for the period from 2021 to 2051. The Report further noted that this option would be precluded going forward as it would not meet the requirements of a market-based housing supply under the Provincial LNA methodology which requires the City to plan for the full range of market needs.

As was previously noted in Report PED17010(h), the City’s options for expanding the urban boundary to accommodate population growth are limited. The City cannot expand its urban boundary into the Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside (with a limited 10ha exception for Towns / Villages). The City has limited whitebelt lands (i.e. rural lands that are not within the Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside). The total area of whitebelt lands is approximately 4,320 ha. Of this area, only 2,200 ha can be considered for expansion for Community Area uses due to restrictions from the airport Noise Exposure Forecast contours. Netting out non-developable features, such as natural heritage features, cemeteries and rights-of-way, reduces the gross developable whitebelt land area for Community Area uses to approximately 1,600 ha. Based on these land supply restrictions, it was noted in staff Report PED17010(h) that two of the LNA scenarios could be considered for adoption going forward – the Increased Targets scenario and the Ambitious Density scenario (the Growth Plan Minimum and Current Trends scenarios exceed the available whitebelt land supply).

For Employment Area lands, based on the City’s existing available Employment Area land supply and assumptions about the future density of development of those lands,

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the LNA identifies that the City’s supply and demand for Employment Area jobs is in balance, and no additional employment lands are required to the year 2051.

**3. Project Chronology**

Key dates / milestones in the GRIDS 2 / MCR process are highlighted in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: GRIDS 2 / MCR Chronology**

<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Key Project Milestones</b>	<b>Status</b>
Spring 2017	MCR Commencement, Employment Land Review call for requests	Completed
May 2017	Growth Plan 2017 released	Completed
May 2018	Land Needs Assessment Methodology released by Province	Completed
May / June 2018	First round of public / stakeholder consultation – focus on urban structure (i.e. where should intensification occur?) and major transit station area planning	Completed
November 2018	Imagining New Communities – information sessions on greenfield density	Completed
May 2019	Growth Plan 2019 released	Completed
October 2019	GRIDS 2 / MCR Council workshop on intensification, density and land needs assessment	Completed
November 2019	Draft Employment Land report received by Council	Completed
November / December 2019	Second round of public consultation (intensification and density targets, evaluation criteria, employment land review)	Completed
January 2020	Elfrida / LPAT “motion” decision issued	Completed
August 2020	Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan and revised Land Needs Assessment Methodology released by Province	Completed
December 2020	Draft Land Needs Assessment and related technical reports received by Council	Completed
January 2021	Third round of public consultation (draft LNA and related	Completed

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<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Key Project Milestones</b>	<b>Status</b>
	reports)	
March 2021	Adoption of Land Needs Assessment	Pending
March 2021	Draft Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria presented to Council	Pending (Draft Framework completed)
April 2021	Public Consultation on Draft Framework and Phasing Criteria	Pending
April 2021	Approval of Employment Land Review report	Pending
May 2021	Approval of Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria	Pending
May to September 2021	Growth Options Evaluation / Scenario Modelling	Pending
November 2021	Public Consultation on Evaluation and Phasing Analysis Results, including Preliminary Preferred Growth Option	Pending
January / February 2022	Approval of Final Preferred Growth Option	Pending
April 2022	Statutory Public Open House under Section 26 of the Planning Act – MCR Official Plan Amendment	Pending
June 2022	Council approval of MCR Official Plan Amendment and submission of Official Plan Amendment to Province for approval	Pending

**Key Project Timelines**

The GRIDS 2 / MCR study design and workplan is required to move forward at an efficient pace, in accordance with the timeline identified in Appendix “I”, due to several factors:

- Provincial deadlines – the Province requires municipalities to update their Official Plans to conform to the revised Provincial Plans by July 1, 2022. The July 1, 2022 deadline was established in 2017. Despite the fact that there have been several versions of the Growth Plan drafted / approved since that time (Growth Plan 2017 Amendment 1 (draft only); Growth Plan 2019; and Growth Plan 2019, Amendment 1); an extended planning horizon to 2051; revised population and job forecasts; two versions of the Land Needs Assessment methodology which differ significantly; and

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a revised Provincial Policy Statement, there has been no extension of the conformity deadline.

The Province must approve the MCR Official Plan Amendment (OPA) within 120 days of the receipt of the Amendment. If the Province does not give notice of decision within 120 days, the OPA may be subject to appeals. Therefore, the timing of when the City's OPA is sent to the Province is critical. To tighten timelines further, there is a Provincial election scheduled for June 2022, meaning that no decisions will be made following the writ anticipated in April 2022.

Other Provincial requirements include a 90-day review period of the proposed Official Plan Amendment prior to a statutory Open House under Section 26 of the Planning Act. Combined, these requirements leave little room for delay in the GRIDS 2 / MCR process if the City is to meet the conformity deadline. These requirements are re-iterated in the letter from the Province dated February 23, 2021, attached as Appendix "H" to Report PED17010(i).

- Master Plan Updates / Development Charges Review – GRIDS 2 / MCR is an integrated planning process which includes updates to the Water / Wastewater and Stormwater Management Master Plans. The Master Plan Updates have their own legislated timeframes and requirements. The Master Plan Updates rely on the determination of the GRIDS 2 / MCR final preferred growth option to identify the necessary infrastructure upgrades needed to accommodate the future growth to 2051. A delay in the GRIDS 2 / MCR process including the identification of the final preferred growth option will cause a subsequent delay to the Master Plan processes. This delay will in turn impact the timing of the City's next Development Charges By-law Update which is reliant upon the outcome of the Master Plan Updates. Due to the many changes at the Provincial level noted above, these projects have already been delayed and there is very little, if any, buffer room for additional delays.

Based on the above, it is critical for the GRIDS 2 / MCR project to continue to move forward, including the approval of the LNA through this report, such that the City is in a position to approve the Final Preferred Growth Option in January / February 2022 and pass the implementing Official Plan Amendment by June 2022 (in advance of the July 1, 2022 deadline).

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

### **1.0 Provincial Legislation and Policy Framework**

#### **1.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2020**

Policy 1.4.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) requires municipalities to provide an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet



projected growth requirements. Specifically, the PPS requires municipalities to maintain at all times the ability to accommodate 15 years of residential growth through intensification and redevelopment, and if necessary, lands which are designated and available for residential development. Further, municipalities must also maintain land with servicing capacity to provide at least a three year supply of residential units.

Policy 1.4.1 must be read in conjunction with other policies in both the PPS (see policies 1.1.1(b) and 1.1.3.8(a)) which require municipalities to accommodate an appropriate 'market-based' range and mix of housing types. The provision of a market-based range of housing types requires municipalities to plan for a range of housing units in accordance with Provincial forecasts, including single / semi-detached units, townhouses, apartments and accessory units. The required 15 year residential supply cannot be met through intensification alone because it would result in a unit mix comprised primarily of apartments, and would not meet the provincial requirement for a market based housing supply.

The PPS directs municipalities to promote opportunities for intensification and to implement minimum targets for intensification within built-up areas as established by provincial plans. For the City of Hamilton, the provincial plan providing direction is the Growth Plan (2019). New development in greenfield areas should have a compact form and efficient land use. Further, the PPS identifies the requirement to demonstrate that sufficient land to accommodate growth and market demand is not available through intensification, redevelopment and greenfield areas to accommodate projected growth prior to a settlement area boundary expansion occurring. The Land Needs Assessment demonstrates this requirement.

## **1.2 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019, as amended**

The Provincial Growth Plan provides the population and employment forecasts which municipalities must plan to accommodate, as well as the minimum intensification and density targets the City must plan to achieve. For the City of Hamilton, the minimum intensification target is 50%, meaning that 50% of new residential units must be developed within the delineated built-up area each year, as per policy 2.2.2.1. The target is a minimum, and the City may plan to achieve a higher target as appropriate.

The Growth Plan, 2019 as amended, requires municipalities to undertake assessment of intensification and redevelopment opportunities within the urban area prior to undertaking any municipally-initiated urban boundary expansion. As it relates to the City of Hamilton, these assessments were undertaken at the same time as the LNA (and are attached as Appendices "B" to "D" to Report PED17010(i)). The Residential Intensification Market Demand Report (Appendix "B" to Report PED17010(i)) and Residential Intensification Supply Update (Appendix "C" to Report PED17010(i)) provide support for the identification of the City's intensification target of 50% for the short term to 2031 and increasing thereafter to 70%. The Existing Designated Greenfield Area

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(DGA) Density Analysis (Appendix “C” to Report PED17010(i)) provides information to demonstrate the City is exceeding the minimum density target identified in the Growth Plan for the existing DGA.

Similar to the PPS direction, the Growth Plan requires the City to plan for a market-based range of housing, particularly through the direction of the LNA methodology (see below). The policies of the Provincial Growth Plan state that the Province will establish the LNA methodology and that an LNA must be completed in accordance with the Provincial methodology.

A full policy review is included in Report PED17010(h), dated December 14, 2020, including consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement, and conformity to the Growth Plan, 2019 as amended, and the Urban Hamilton Official Plan.

## **2.0 Land Needs Assessment Methodology, 2020**

In August 2020, the Province released the Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

The new method is a market-based approach which is based on an identification of the City’s forecasted housing unit growth, and a determination of how much of the proposed unit growth can be accommodated as intensification or development of the City’s existing greenfield lands within the urban area. If there is a shortfall in units that cannot be accommodated in the existing urban area, then this shortfall is to be accommodated through an urban boundary expansion, based on an estimation of the density of each unit type. The method allows the City to consider higher intensification and density targets than the Growth Plan minimums.

The LNA, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED17010(i), has been completed in accordance with the provincially mandated method.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

### **1.0 Public Consultation**

Commencing in January 2021 and continuing into early February 2021, staff conducted consultation on the draft LNA and the land needs scenario that will be utilized going forward. Extensive efforts to promote and educate the public about the consultation opportunities were made in recognition of the importance of the LNA as a part of the larger GRIDS 2 / MCR process which will guide the growth and development of the City for the next 30 years. A full consultation summary report is attached as Appendix “E” to Report PED17010(i). The highlights of the engagement campaign and key statistics and results are included below.

## **1.1 Advertising**

Staff used multiple means and techniques to advertise the LNA public engagement campaign. Both digital (e.g. social media and email) and non-digital (e.g. newspaper ads, signs) formats were used to reach as wide of an audience as possible and are listed below:

- Billboards: two digital billboards displayed the information one million times (impressions) over the month of January. The billboards were located at Mud Street and Upper Centennial Parkway and on the Lincoln M Alexander Parkway near Mohawk Road;
- City-signs: City-owned digital signs at City Hall and Gage Park showed the information 20 times per hour through the month of January;
- Print ads: Ads were run in the Hamilton Spectator and the Hamilton Community newspapers on January 7, 2021. The ads provided notice of the Public Open House dates and information on the Engage Hamilton portal;
- Web advertising: internet advertising was targeted at the Spectator and Hamilton News websites in the form of a banner that displayed the GRIDS 2 / MCR LNA consultation information
- Social media: notifications of the LNA consultation and public open houses were shared via City of Hamilton Twitter (6 tweets – 41,200 impressions), LinkedIn (2 posts – 4,700 impressions) and Instagram (1 post – 19,400 impressions, 1 Instagram story – 5,400 impressions) over the month of January. Social media ‘boosting’ was used to promote the ad and allow more people to view it beyond the those who follow the City accounts. The advertising boost resulted in an additional 86,000 impressions across the platforms.
- TV: staff appeared on the Cable 14 show The Hamilton Network to promote the public open houses and provide information on the importance of the LNA and the GRIDS 2 / MCR project;
- Direct Emails: direct email notification of the Engage Hamilton portal and consultation opportunities was provided through the following means:
  - Hamilton Youth network: staff coordinated with the Hamilton Strategic Youth Initiatives to spread the word to 400 members, age 14 – 29, through the newsletter entitled “This Week in the World of Youth”;
  - GRIDS 2 / MCR project mailing list (approximately 250 emails on list); and,

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- Emails to members of Council to provide information on consultation opportunities that can be shared with constituents.

## **1.2 Engage Hamilton Portal and Survey**

The City's Engage Hamilton public consultation portal was used to facilitate engagement on the draft LNA in January 2021. The Engage Hamilton portal included the following elements:

- Extensive information on the draft LNA and related reports with graphics and charts to facilitate understanding of complex information;
- Frequently Asked Questions and Answers;
- Explanatory video explaining the LNA in simple terms with closed captioning to facilitate the hearing impaired;
- Registration for Open House events; and,
- Survey

A total of 2,200 people visited the Engage Hamilton LNA page during the month of January, 2021.

The Engage Hamilton LNA Survey asked respondents about their preference on the Increased Targets or the Ambitious Density growth scenarios (see Table 1 of this Report for summary of the scenarios). The survey also asked about preferred rates of intensification, density of future communities, and climate change considerations.

In total, 147 survey responses were received. 70% of respondents supported the highest intensification targets (average of 60%) in the Ambitious Density land needs scenario. The reasons given for this support included a desire to see the City 'build up, not out', need to preserve agricultural lands and open space areas, climate change implications, and support for more dense, walkable neighbourhoods. Of the 30% in support of the Increased Targets scenario (average intensification target of 55%), the rationale included a belief that the intensification target was more attainable and a need to satisfy market demand.

Feedback indicating that neither scenario was preferred was also received. Respondents noted that the City should instead maintain a firm urban boundary and that the growth options should include the option 'no urban boundary expansion' notwithstanding the Provincial market-based LNA methodology.

Respondents were asked what were their top 3 factors when indicating their preference between the scenarios. The top 3 chosen factors were: complete communities; climate change implications; and, transit accessibility.

In terms of density of new communities, respondents leaned toward higher density of development in new communities, preferring that single detached dwellings be developed on lots with smaller frontages (45%) or a mix of smaller and larger frontages (38%). A combined total of 68% supported a housing mix that featured more stacked or back to back type of dwelling units or an even mix of street and block townhouses and stacked or back to back units, as compared to the 33% wishing to see all or mostly lower density housing forms.

Finally, participants were asked about the top 5 considerations in relation to the design of new communities from a climate change perspective, in order of importance: transit connection to the rest of the City, greenspace for carbon sequestration, green building design, alternative / renewable energy planning, and low impact development techniques.

A full survey summary is included in Appendix “E” to Report PED17010(i).

### **1.3 Public Open Houses (Webex Events Format)**

Two virtual public open houses were held on the following dates and times:

- January 18, 2021 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm
- January 20, 2021 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm

A total of 98 participants joined in the two events which were held via Webex Events.

The open houses consisted of a staff presentation which highlighted the findings of the draft LNA, and a question and answer period moderated by a facilitator. Questions were raised by the attendees with topics ranging from the option for a no urban boundary expansion scenario in the LNA, a desire to build up not out, questions surrounding incentives and programs to increase intensification, questions on employment trends and demographic trends including the population and employment forecasts, and questions on how a climate change lens will be applied in the GRIDS 2 / MCR analysis. All questions are summarized in the report attached as Appendix “E” to Report PED17010(i) and a summary of questions and answers are provided in Appendices “F-1” to “F-5” to Report PED17010(i).

### **1.4 Stakeholder Meeting (Webex Meetings Format)**

A GRIDS 2 / MCR stakeholder meeting was held on January 15, 2021 with a total of 23 participants representing a range of organizations (including Environment Hamilton, Greenbelt Foundation, Conservation Authorities, Bay Area Climate Change Office, BIAs, Chambers of Commerce, West End Homebuilders Association, Hamilton Burlington Realtors Association, School Boards). The meeting included a staff and consultant presentation with details on the draft LNA, followed by a question and

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answer period. The stakeholders were provided with a question and answer sheet following the meeting and asked to provide their thoughts on the draft LNA and the preferred LNA scenarios through comments to staff.

Of the feedback received through stakeholders, there was support for both the Increased Targets and Ambitious Density scenarios, with some comments indicating that the Increased Targets scenario appeared to be a more realistic and attainable growth target for the City. However, the need to continue to plan for and encourage intensification and the many benefits of increasing intensification including climate change benefits, housing options and revitalization of neighbourhoods were also cited. Stakeholder feedback is summarized in Appendix “E” to Report PED17010(i).

### **1.5 Indigenous Consultation**

As noted in the letter from the Province dated February 23, 2021 (attached as Appendix “H” to Report PED17010(i)), municipalities are required to engage with Indigenous communities as part of their MCR process. Throughout the GRIDS 2 / MCR project staff have endeavoured to provide information and consult with local Indigenous groups and organizations to ensure that feedback can be shared in meaningful way; staff have met with local groups during past project phases. Staff reached out to six groups to provide a project update and request the opportunity to meet to share further information on the LNA and implications of the LNA and MCR going forward. In response to the requests, three responses were received: the Huron-Wendat advised that they did not have an interest at this point in the process but would stay informed going forward; the Mississaugas of the Credit noted that they would provide comments in the future; and the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre (HRIC) expressed interest in the project and requested a more information. Staff met with the HRIC by phone in early March 2021 to discuss project details, the LNA, and opportunities for HRIC involvement going forward. Staff answered questions related to intensification planning, affordable housing and implications on long range planning arising from the pandemic. HRIC has noted interest in continuing to be involved in the project going forward, including through the upcoming Official Plan Review. Staff will continue to consult with local Indigenous communities throughout the project and through the implementation of the Growth Management Strategy (eg Secondary Plans, Class EA projects).

### **1.6 Other Consultation**

Staff have endeavoured to provide information and provide opportunities for feedback from as many groups as possible and were able to meet one on one with parties that expressed interest, including the following groups:

Hamilton Cycling Committee – staff presented at the Hamilton Cycling Committee (HCC) meeting of February 3 to provide an overview of the GRIDS 2 / MCR project, the LNA results, and next steps in the process. Staff responded to questions from the

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Committee. Staff understand that a motion was put forward from the HCC which supported the Ambitious Density scenario in the LNA, and further provided some direction and opinion on land use planning matters and transit. The motion has not yet been finalized by the Public Works Committee so final wording is not available at present.

Hamilton International Airport (HIA) – staff met with representatives from HIA to provide an overview of the draft LNA results and an outline of next steps in the process, and how HIA can continue to be involved going forward.

### **1.7 Request for Technical Clarifications**

A request was received from a land economist representing a party to the ongoing UHOP / RHOP appeals requesting technical clarifications to several questions relating to the reports attached Appendices “A” to “D” of Report PED17010(i). The correspondence is attached as Appendix “G” to Report PED17010(i). Staff and the City’s consultant (Lorius & Associates) provided responses to the questions (also attached), and have updated the attached reports, as necessary to provide clarity / corrections, as identified in the Analysis / Rationale for Recommendation section of this Report.

A summary of key themes and comments received through the public consultation, and how these comments have been addressed and have influenced the recommendations of this Report is found in the Analysis / Rationale for Recommendation section of this report.

### **2.0 Province of Ontario – Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ontario Growth Secretariat**

Staff provided the draft LNA to Provincial Ontario Growth Secretariat staff for review to ensure compliance with the provincially-mandated LNA method. Provincial staff provided the following feedback:

“Based on our preliminary review, your Draft Land Needs Assessment appears to conform to the requirements set out in the Land Needs Assessment Methodology (2020). Notably, we highlighted the following:

- The Draft Land Needs Assessment adequately addresses the components of the Province’s new Land Needs Assessment Methodology (2020) including the need to consider market demand across the range of housing types.
- The Draft Land Needs Assessment implements the 2051 planning horizon including updated Schedule 3 growth forecasts as per the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 (A Place to Grow), as amended.

- Each growth scenario under consideration would support the minimum density and intensification targets established in A Place to Grow for the City of Hamilton.”

In addition, on February 24, 2021, a letter was received from the Province (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ontario Growth Secretariat) addressing matters related to the MCR process. The letter, attached as Appendix “H” to Report PED17010(i), indicates that the Growth Plan requires municipalities to designate all land required to accommodate the Plan forecasts to 2051. Further, the letter reiterates the conformity deadline of July 1, 2022 and requires that municipalities submit their conformity Official Plan Amendments to the Province by end of 2021 or early 2022.

Further, it is noted that pursuant to Section 17(17.1) of the Planning Act, the draft MCR Official Plan Amendment (OPA) must be provided to the Province for review a minimum of 90 days prior to a statutory Open House under Section 26 of the Planning Act. Staff have requested clarification on whether or not the draft OPA must be endorsed by Council prior to submission of the document and supporting materials to the Province.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

### **1.0 Land Needs Assessment**

A Land Needs Assessment (LNA) is a technical background study that is a requirement of the Provincial Growth Plan and which must be completed as part of the City’s MCR. An LNA will identify how much of the City’s forecasted population and job growth will be accommodated through infill / intensification and existing designated greenfield lands, and how much additional land in the form of urban area expansion may be required to accommodate the forecasted growth. If additional land is required, the LNA does not identify the location or phasing of the future growth.

The LNA considers the need for “Community” lands (i.e. lands to accommodate population growth and some commercial and institutional employment growth) separate from “Employment” lands (i.e. lands designated to accommodate employment growth including Business Parks and Industrial areas).

The results of the draft LNA presented at the December 14, 2020 GIC Committee identified that the City would require an urban boundary expansion to accommodate a portion of its forecasted population growth under the Growth Plan. Four different Community Area land need scenarios were modelled to illustrate different growth options based on different intensification and density assumptions (see Table 1 to this Report). Further details of the preferred scenario (Ambitious Density) are highlighted below.



For Employment Area land need, the draft LNA identified that the City's supply and demand of Employment Area lands to accommodate future job growth are in balance, and no additional Employment Area lands area required to 2051.

## **2.0 Public Consultation Summary**

The consultation undertaken on the Land Needs Assessment and related reports had multiple objectives:

- Identify any issues or technical concerns with the LNA methodology; and,
- Educate the public about the LNA and the draft results, build awareness about the LNA and GRIDS 2 / MCR, and gain feedback and insight from the public on which scenario in the LNA is preferred.

A summary of the key themes and comments received in relation to the above objectives is provided below:

### **2.1 Technical comments on the LNA methodology and Staff Responses:**

A series of technical questions on the LNA and the related reports was received from a land economist representing an appellant in the UHOP / RHOP appeals. The questions were seeking clarification on certain matters (e.g. questions on the population forecasts, person per unit and employment assumptions, calculations related to community land area); requests for additional data (e.g. Vacant Residential Land Inventory unit breakdown; intensification supply breakdown by unit type); and consistency between the reports.

Staff, in conjunction with the City's consultant (Lorius & Associates), responded to the questions with the clarifications and additional data requested (see Appendix "G" to Report PED17010(i)). There was a very minor change to the LNA results arising from an update to the housing completion information to reflect data to year-end 2020. In addition, the LNA and related reports have undergone minor revisions to ensure that documents are clear, consistent and have up to date data. The minor revisions are summarized below in the section "Final Land Needs Assessment".

In addition, a question was raised regarding the terminology of 'gross' vs 'net' land area in the LNA and the staff report (PED17010(h)), and the land areas described by the two terms in the different reports.

Regarding the question of 'gross' vs 'net developable area' land descriptions, it is noted that the terms 'gross' and 'net' are used somewhat differently in the LNA than within previous staff report PED17010(h) which was presented to Committee in December 2020. In the LNA, the term 'net residential land area' refers to the lands required for

residential uses only (i.e. the sum of the individual residential lots) whereas the ‘gross’ land area includes the sum of individual residential lots as well as additional lands required for supporting community lands such as open space, walkways, commercial and institutional use, roads and local infrastructure. The ‘gross’ land area in the LNA excludes natural heritage features and other non-developable lands and is equivalent to the ‘net developable area’ as described in the previous staff report. As such, the term ‘gross’ in the LNA and ‘net developable area’ in the previous report are referring to the same land area: that being the total developable land area for Community Area uses. For ease of understanding, the term ‘gross developable area’ will be used to describe the required land needed for all Community Area land uses, excluding non-developable features, in this staff report.

In addition, it should be noted that the gross developable area excludes non-developable lands such as natural heritage features, cemeteries etc from the land need calculation. Therefore, the actual land area added to the urban boundary as part of the next phase of GRIDS 2 / MCR will exceed the land area identified in the LNA to account for the non-developable lands included in the expansion area. Any non-developable lands added to the urban boundary would be protected from future development by policy and zoning restrictions.

## **2.2 Public Comments – Key Themes and Comments resulting from Public / Stakeholder Engagement and Staff Responses**

A full summary of questions and comments received through all means of public consultation is attached as Appendices “F1 – F5” to Report PED17010(i).

Many questions and requests for clarification on different matters were received, including the provincial forecasts and how they are developed, the LNA methodology and market demand, how the City plans for intensification, employment trends and covid-19 impacts, and the next steps in the process including phasing evaluation. Staff’s responses to these and other questions are found in Appendices “F1 – F5”. Key themes are summarized in the next sections:

### ***2.2.1 The City should have modelled a no urban boundary expansion option in the LNA.***

There were many comments received, in the on-line survey, through email, and in the open house, which supported a firm urban boundary and a desire to preserve rural / agricultural lands. There was concern that this option was not fully investigated. There was a concern that the proposed expansion would result in ‘sprawl’.

Further, comments noted that there should have been an option for a ‘no urban boundary expansion preference’ in the on-line survey.

*Staff response:*

Staff acknowledge the opinion voiced in some of the comments that the City should not be expanding the urban boundary by any amount and to preserve lands designated as rural and agriculture.

Staff note that while the LNA did not model a ‘no urban boundary expansion’ option, this option was considered in Report PED17010(h), with staff noting that this option would require an intensification rate exceeding 80% for the period from 2021 to 2051. Staff and the City’s land needs consultant do not consider this option as an option that would satisfy provincial requirements for a market based land needs assessment, as it would not result in the provision of a market-based supply of housing to provide the full range of required unit types, in accordance with the mandated method for undertaking the land needs analysis.

There is an opinion that the required urban boundary expansion will result in urban sprawl, or uncontrolled development. To this point, staff note the following information:

- The recommended expansion land need, at approximately 1,340 ha, equates to 1.5% of the City’s total rural land area. The remaining 98.5% of the City’s rural lands will remain outside of the urban boundary as part of Rural Hamilton.
- Within the City’s rural area, 60% (53,700 ha) of the lands are designated as Agriculture / Specialty Crop or ‘Prime’. Approximately 2% of this 53,700 ha is located within the potential Community Area urban expansion lands. Therefore, even after expansion occurs, at least 98% of the City’s existing prime agricultural lands will remain and will be protected.

Based on the above, it is apparent that an expansion of approximately 1,340 ha to accommodate the next 30 years of the City’s growth is not resulting in urban sprawl, and to the contrary, the overwhelming majority of the City’s rural land, including prime agricultural lands, will remain protected.

The on-line survey was not amended to include an option to prefer a no urban boundary expansion scenario. Staff find that it is not appropriate to provide an option in a survey that cannot be recommended for approval going forward. The survey did include a comment section for respondents to provide open-ended comments on the intensification target and land needs scenarios, which provided the option to suggest the no urban boundary expansion consideration.

***2.2.2 The Ambitious Density scenario was preferred in the survey responses with a desire to see less land added to the urban boundary.***

*Staff response:*

Staff have considered the public comments in making the recommendation to support the Ambitious Density scenario as the final Community Area land needs scenario. The community expressed a strong desire to see a lesser land need requirement citing climate change implications as a primary reason for supporting the higher targets. The staff recommendation is in keeping with this feedback.

***2.2.3 The City needs to investigate opportunities for intensification of greyfields and other lands within the existing urban area to accommodate intensification, including opportunities for missing middle housing, prior to expanding the urban boundary.***

*Staff response:*

Staff agree that it is important for the City to focus a significant amount of growth within the existing urban area through intensification and redevelopment. Intensification has long been a planning goal of the City. This goal is reflected in the Nodes and Corridors structure of the UHOP as well as many initiatives within the City, including: two recently approved Secondary Plans in Downtown Hamilton and Centennial Neighbourhood Secondary Plans which encourage the mixed use redevelopment of commercial corridors and areas; the City's Downtown, Transit-Oriented Corridor and Commercial-Mixed Use Zones which allow redevelopment of commercial sites is as-of-right; and Secondary Dwelling Units that will be permitted more broadly across the urban area.

The focus on intensifying the existing urban area is reflected in the recommended land need scenario. Staff note the recommended Ambitious Density scenario, which is based on an average intensification target of 60%, with a rate of up to 70% in the later stage of the planning period, represents the City planning for a much greater amount of intensification than what is required as a minimum by the Province, and which greatly exceeds the amount of intensification which has been planned for in the past. Some numbers of note:

- Under the Ambitious Density scenario, the City will be planning to accommodate 66,190 dwelling units through intensification over the next 30 years. This intensification rate results in an increase of more than 11,000 additional units than what is required by the Growth Plan minimum target (55,160 units).
- By decade, under the Ambitious Density scenario, the required intensification units are: 17,700 (2021 – 2031); 22,200 (2031 – 2041); and 26,300 (2041 – 2051). In comparison, over the last 10 years between 2010 and 2019, the City experienced a total of 8,260 intensification units.

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It is apparent from the above, under the Ambitious Density scenario, the City is aggressively planning for far greater numbers of intensification units than is required by the Province and has been experienced in the past.

Through the Residential Intensification Supply Update (Appendix “C” to Report PED17010(i)), intensification opportunities across the City were examined, including opportunities for greyfield redevelopment (i.e. redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial areas, parking lots etc). The City will continue to encourage this type of intensification going forward.

An important fact to remember is the City, through planning initiatives and other incentives, can provide opportunities for intensification to occur. However, it is the market that drives whether or not a given site is intensified; there are a number of factors that influence market demand, including site characteristics, ownership, economic climate, and the attractiveness of the City as part of the overall region. Planning policy alone cannot guarantee that intensification will occur.

***2.2.4 The City should complete the low carbon scenario modelling in the Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP) prior to finalizing the LNA and the next phase of GRIDS 2 / MCR. Climate change should be the priority lens.***

*Staff response:*

Staff are continuing to investigate opportunities for incorporating the modelling of the CEEP into future phases of GRIDS 2 / MCR, in keeping with the strong support to connect these projects identified by public comments. Climate change will continue to be a key lens moving forward in future project phases.

**3.0 Final Land Needs Assessment and Related Reports – Technical Changes:**

The LNA, attached as Appendix “A” to Report PED17010(i), is being recommended for endorsement as the City’s final Land Needs Assessment to 2051. The draft LNA was presented in December 2020 and has been subject to public consultation and feedback since that time. The following changes have been made to the final document from the draft version resulting from questions and comments received during the consultation period. The changes relate to providing additional clarity and rationale and a minor change to the final calculation based on updated information:

- Table 10 in the LNA is the DGA Unit Supply Potential 2021 to 2051.

The estimated unit completion data table has been revised to reflect updated data to year end 2020, whereas Table 10 in the draft LNA had been based on data to June 2020. The results of this update is a difference of approximately 200 units less for the updated estimated completions to mid-year 2021 and a shift in the unit mix for

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the estimated completions within the Designated Greenfield Area toward single and semi-detached units.

- A question was raised regarding how ‘stacked’ townhouses were considered in the LNA in terms of the future density calculations in the new greenfield areas.

The LNA scenarios do not envision a specific form of housing, but rather a denser pattern of rowhouse development which may include smaller lot street towns and back-to-backs (“maisonettes”). For the purposes of the LNA it is assumed that the full range of higher density row housing forms will be accommodated. Stacked towns, however, are considered apartments as defined for the Census. This clarification has been made in the revised LNA.

- General editorial changes to the LNA were made to provide clarity on certain matters in the text of the LNA, add a map of the City’s built boundary for context. These minor revisions did not change any of the data in the LNA or the outcomes of the analysis.

In addition, the following changes have been made to the Designated Greenfield Area Density Analysis, attached as Appendix “D” to Report PED17010(i):

- Correction to Table 4 (page 13) to change the population in the Draft Approved category to 17,440. This change fixes a typographical error from the previous version which listed the population as 14,440; and,
- Updating the person per unit (PPU) assumptions listed on page 10 is to provide clarity. The PPU’s on page 10 are the PPU’s which were used in the analysis as related to existing units in the DGA. The PPU’s used in the analysis for new units to be constructed in the future (i.e. VRL units) are the PPU’s from the City’s DC Background Study: single / semi-detached - 3.405; towns – 2.437; apartments – 1.663. Appendix “D” has been updated to explain this difference.
- Updating the information on the calculation of jobs in the existing DGA to provide additional clarity.
- Minor editorial revisions to provide clarity and / or additional information.

There were no substantive changes made to the other reports (the Residential Intensification Market Demand Report attached as Appendix “B” to Report PED17010(i) and the Residential Intensification Supply Update attached as Appendix “C” to Report PED17010(i)). Minor editorial revisions to provide clarification were provided, but no changes to the data or outcome of the analysis were made.

**4.0 Community Area Land Need Preferred Scenario:**

As a result of the GRIDS 2 / MCR work completed to date, and public and community feedback on the draft LNA documents, staff are recommending the Ambitious Density scenario as the preferred Community Area land need scenario to 2051, summarized in Table 4:

**Table 4: Ambitious Density Scenario Summary**

Scenario	Intensification Rate		Density – New Growth Areas	Land Need
Ambitious Density	21 – 31	50%	77 pjh	1,340 gross developable ha
	31 – 41	60%		
	41 – 51	70%		

*Source: Lorius & Associates, Land Needs Assessment Technical Working Paper, 2021*

The city-wide unit breakdown by policy area and type resulting from the Ambitious Density scenario is illustrated in Table 5:

**Table 5: City-wide Unit Growth, by Type, 2021 to 2051 – Ambitious Density Scenario**

Area	Singles / Semis	Townhouses	Apartments (includes accessory units)	Total
	# units	# units	# units	# units (%)
Built-up Area	3,310	9,930	52,950	66,190 (60)
Existing Designated Greenfield Areas	5,570	7,120	2,650	15,330 (14)
Urban Expansion Area	18,110	10,550	n/a	28,660 (26)
Rural	140			140 (>1)
City Total (%)	27,120 (25)	27,600 (25)	55,600 (50)	110,320 (100)

*Source: Lorius & Associates, Land Needs Assessment Technical Working Paper, 2021*

The above breakdown is for the purposes of the LNA for calculating overall land need, and accurately identifies the unit breakdowns between the existing urban area and new growth areas. Apartments are not identified in the urban expansion area due to a surplus of planned apartment units in the City’s existing Designated Greenfield Areas. However, it is anticipated that some sites that are identified as being planned apartment units in the existing DGA may develop at a lower density. Further analysis as part of

the implementation strategy and planning for the expansion areas will be undertaken regarding the potential inclusion of apartment units in the new growth areas to ensure a range of housing is provided and complete community objectives are met.

The rationale for supporting the Ambitious Density scenario is summarized below:

- *Climate Change Lens:* From a climate change perspective and to support the City's goal of being carbon neutral by 2050 and balancing Provincial policy requirements, this scenario results in the least amount of expansion area land required to accommodate the provincial forecasts. Planning for increased intensification and planned density will have the impact of focusing more growth in the existing urban area but still maintaining a balanced approach to future development. This approach has the benefit of creating compact urban growth, aimed at increasing opportunities for active transportation and transit use.

The Ambitious Density scenario allows for increased preservation of rural / open space lands and reduced need for new transportation and servicing infrastructure outside of the existing urban boundary. Preservation of rural / open space lands allows opportunities for natural stormwater management and flooding resilience to be maximized. Applying a climate change lens at the LNA stage of the decision-making process suggests pursuing higher intensification and density targets, while still meeting the provincial requirement for a market-based assessment. This approach is reflected in the Ambitious Density scenario of the LNA.

- *Increasing Intensification Rate:* the Ambitious Density scenario is based on an intensification rate that increases over the course of the planning period, from 50% between 2021 and 2031, to 60% between 2031 and 2041, to 70% between 2041 and 2051. There are benefits to planning for an increasing rate over time. The intensification target of 50% for the first part of the planning period is consistent with the findings of the Residential Intensification Market Demand Report (Lorius & Associates) and is identified as a suitable aspirational target for the short term.

The intensification rate increases over the planning period. Progress toward reaching the target will be monitored and future adjustments can be made, as necessary. Planning for future growth and development to 2051 requires that assumptions be made about factors such as intensification market potential, housing trends, and economic shifts. It is staff's opinion that it is better to plan now for a more aggressive target that has a smaller urban expansion need. Population and job growth will be monitored against provincial forecasts, required infrastructure and transportation upgrades, and the financial implications of growth. Planning for a lower intensification and / or density target would require the City to plan for and designate additional lands for development. This option has the risk of over-designation of lands if the City exceeds the lower targets and is therefore not preferred.

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- *Compact New Communities:* The Ambitious Density scenario is modelled on a planned density of 77 pjh in new Designated Greenfield Areas (i.e. urban expansion areas). 77 pjh is an increase from the current target for Designated Greenfield Areas in the UHOP of 70 pjh on non-employment lands. Planning the new growth areas at a higher density will result in new communities being developed with a higher proportion of smaller lot single and semi-detached dwellings and a greater proportion of various medium density housing forms including back to back townhouses, with an anticipated mix of approximately 60% singles and semis and 40% townhouses (with an equal mix of traditional street or block townhouses and higher density forms such as maisonettes). The anticipated net unit density from this mix would be approximately 43 uph. Planning for a compact form has many beneficial outcomes, including the development of walkable and active transportation-friendly communities, accommodating community facilities and other services that support residents and increased housing options. In addition, higher density communities may provide opportunities to investigate alternative energy systems at future planning stages.
- *Consultation Results:* Through the consultation on the LNA, the Ambitious Density scenario was supported over the Increased Targets scenario. Comments received in the survey noted that intensification should be prioritized over urban expansion ('build up not out') and the City needs to focus on developing underused parts of the urban area prior to expanding. The need to encourage intensification throughout the urban area was noted by many and to encourage opportunities to provide medium density / mid-rise housing forms. There was a preference to preserve rural lands to the greatest extent possible.

Staff acknowledge that comments were also received in favour of the Increased Targets scenario (30%). The comments in favour of this scenario noted concern the targets in the Ambitious Density scenario may be too aggressive and unattainable. The comments also noted there is potential for intensification to decrease as a result of the pandemic and market / housing choice changes. These concerns are valid and it is acknowledged the targets in the later years of the Ambitious Density scenario are significantly greater than recent rates of intensification the City has experienced. The City will continue to be proactive to encourage intensification through many avenues including zoning, incentives and removing obstacles to redevelopment (e.g. undertaking, required infrastructure upgrades, etc.). As noted, the City will have the opportunity to review the targets in future years to monitor trends and progress, and if the market for intensification is not increasing at the rate modelled in the Ambitious Density scenario, revisions can be considered.

- *10 Directions to Guide Development:* The GRIDS 2 10 Directions to Guide Development, Direction #3, supports new development to be concentrated within the urban boundary through intensification and redevelopment, supporting an option for a lesser overall land need in line with the Ambitious Density scenario which focuses

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almost 75% of the City's housing unit growth within the existing urban area. The Ambitious Density scenario also supports the efficient reuse of existing buildings, infrastructure and land (Direction #8), and supports climate change mitigation and adaptation goals of planning at transit-supportive density (Direction #1). Further, increasing the planned density supports planning of new communities with a greater variety of housing types and live/work options (Direction #2).

For the reasons listed above, staff recommend the Ambitious Density scenario, as modelled in the LNA attached as Appendix "A" to Report PED17010(i), be supported by Council, as per Recommendation (b) of this Report.

## **5.0 Employment Area Land Need**

With regards to Employment Area lands, the final LNA identifies the City's Employment Area land supply to be in balance and there is no requirement to designate any additional Employment Area lands. The City has sufficient supply of Employment Area Lands to accommodate the projected demand for Employment Area jobs. Current modelling identifies a surplus of approximately 60 ha of Employment Area lands to 2051.

The results of the draft Employment Land Review report (received by Council in November 2019 through Report PED17010(f)) identified a total of approximately 43 ha of land to be removed from the Employment Area designation.

Following public consultation on the Employment Land Review, staff are targeting the General Issues Committee meeting of April 21, 2021 for approval of the Employment Land Review report. Certain conversion request sites where the City is awaiting additional information are being deferred for consideration at this time.

Staff note that following a final decision on the Employment Land Review report, including the deferred requests for conversion, there will be a requirement to confirm the Employment Area land need calculations in the LNA to ensure that the City's employment land needs continue to be met.

## **6.0 Next Steps: Evaluation / Phasing of Growth and Implementation of Preferred Growth Option**

### **6.1 Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria**

The next phase of GRIDS 2 / MCR will be the evaluation of where and when the City will grow. As summarized in previous Report PED17010(h), the City's options for where the urban boundary can be expanded are limited to those rural areas that are not within the Greenbelt Plan area (with a small exception for a 10 ha expansion from Waterdown and / or Binbrook). These lands are referred to as 'whitebelt' lands. The City's total

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developable whitebelt land area for Community Area lands is approximately 1,600 ha (the final developable land area will be determined through future study). Under the Ambitious Density scenario, the City will not require all of the whitebelt lands to be added to the urban area.

The City has completed a draft Evaluation Framework and Phasing Principles (see Report PED17010(j)) which will guide the next stage of the GRIDS 2 / MCR project. The evaluation will be a two stage process. All potential growth areas will first be evaluated against a Feasibility Framework to ensure that all Growth Plan / Official Plan urban expansion criteria are met.

The second phase will be the evaluation of the phasing of growth areas. The final LNA (Ambitious Density scenario) identifies a requirement for approximately 1,340 ha of Community Area lands to accommodate growth to 2051. Not all of the lands will be required to accommodate development immediately. The projected required phasing of land need by time period is indicated below:

2021 – 2031: 300 ha  
2031 – 2041: 600 ha  
2041 – 2051: 440 ha

The phasing analysis will evaluate a series of growth scenarios (anticipated to be 4 – 5) against each other to ultimately determine the preferred scenario. The scenarios will be identified following the approval of the final LNA including endorsement of the final Community Area land need. Staff will report back to Committee and Council on the proposed scenario growth options that will be included in the evaluation.

The phasing evaluation will consider themes related to climate change adaptation and mitigation, servicing infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, agricultural and fiscal impact to make a determination of when the different whitebelt areas would be developed for urban uses based on the three time periods noted above. The evaluation will take place over the late Spring and Summer of 2021.

Consultation on the draft preferred growth option identified through the evaluation and phasing analysis will take place in Fall 2021. Following the completion of the consultation, the preferred growth option to the year 2051 will be identified.

## **6.2 Implementation of the Preferred Growth Option**

In Report PED19033(b) (Comments on Proposed Amendment 1 to A Place to Grow and the Land Needs Assessment Methodology, dated August 18, 2020) staff had noted that the extended planning horizon to 2051 presents challenges in planning for a number of unknown factors, including future social, economic and market changes. Staff and Council had recommended to the Province that Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan be

revised to provide municipalities with flexibility to not designate all required lands to the year 2051, but rather identify a strategy for how growth between 2041 and 2051 will be accommodated. The Province did not make this recommended change to the Growth Plan.

Given the uncertainties that exist in planning for a 30-year time horizon, and the irreversibility of any decision to expand the urban boundary, staff will review opportunities for the phased implementation of the GRIDS 2 preferred growth option, such as through UHOP policy direction and/or infrastructure phasing policies, to include options to require certain performance standards to be met (e.g. achievement of certain intensification or density targets) and/or certain growth targets to be met, prior to phasing of urban expansion growth. Consideration of options for identifying growth needs beyond 2041 without formally designating the land as urban at this time will be undertaken (Recommendation (d) of this Report).

Further, as per Recommendation (e) of this Report, at the conclusion of GRIDS 2 / MCR and the implementation and approval of the related Official Plan Amendments, the quantum and location of urban boundary expansion lands to accommodate the population and employment forecasts until 2051 will be known. The City will be nearing a mature city state whereby whitebelt options to accommodate Community Area growth will be almost entirely planned / developed. At this point, there would be an opportunity to identify land that may be suitable for inclusion in the Greenbelt Plan because of the extent of the NEF contours, potential infrastructure challenges or other matters. Therefore staff, are recommending that a report be brought forward at that time with respect to the necessary steps for recommending to the Province that any remaining Community Area whitebelt lands be added to the Greenbelt.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. Do not endorse the LNA. This option would have the risk of delaying the GRIDS 2 / MCR process which is on an expedited timeline to meet the provincial MCR conformity date of July 2022.
2. Support an alternative scenario (e.g. Increased Targets scenario) in the Land Needs Assessment – Technical Working Paper which would result in a greater required land need to 2051.

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Economic Prosperity and Growth**

*Hamilton* has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

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**Clean and Green**

*Hamilton* is environmentally sustainable with a healthy balance of natural and urban spaces.

**Built Environment and Infrastructure**

*Hamilton* is supported by state of the art infrastructure, transportation options, buildings and public spaces that create a dynamic City.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

- Appendix “A” – City of Hamilton Land Needs Assessment to 2051
- Appendix “B” – City of Hamilton Residential Intensification Market Demand Analysis
- Appendix “C” – Residential Intensification Supply Update
- Appendix “D” – Existing Designated Greenfield Area Density Analysis
- Appendix “E” – Public Consultation Summary Report: Land Needs Assessment
- Appendix “F-1” – Public / Stakeholder Comments: General
- Appendix “F-2” – Public / Stakeholder Comments: Community Area Land Need
- Appendix “F-3” – Public / Stakeholder Comments: Employment Area Land Need
- Appendix “F-4” – Public / Stakeholder Comments: Climate Change Lens
- Appendix “F-5” – Public / Stakeholder Comments: Phasing Evaluation
- Appendix “G” – Response to Technical Comments on LNA methodology
- Appendix “H” – Letter from Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Ontario Growth Secretariat)
- Appendix “I” – Updated GRIDS 2 / MCR Project Timeline