

Written Delegation to the General Issues Committee Meeting, Monday March 29, 2021

Completed by Carolanne Forster and Duncan Forster
Residents of the Municipality of Hamilton

Good Morning/Afternoon Chairperson and Members of the Planning Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to write to this Committee today.

We are responding to the City of Hamilton's Urban Growth Management Plan and the possible expansion of the present urban boundary as one option contained in the draft **Land Needs Assessment (LNA)** document.

We take serious issue with the kind of decision making taking place at this time during the second and third waves of a **pandemic** which has forced Hamiltonians into isolation for the past full year and continues forward. The City's proposed 'Public Engagement' timeline for January, February and March 2021, has occurred during a Public Health mandated lockdown. The public, as a key stakeholder is preoccupied and less likely to engage in these vital planning issues.

Given this, we respectfully request this process is **delayed** until the pandemic is declared over. We list the following key issues the public may not be fully educated about or broadly aware of with respect to multiple provincial planning policy guideline changes brought in by the Ford government:

- Private boundary expansions up to 40 hectares in size with no limits to the allowed number, and private requests that can occur outside the municipal process, threatening the urban/rural boundary
- Reinstatement of market demand as the driving force for LNA
- Urban intensification and density targets lowered from 60% to 50%
- Planning horizon expanded from 2041 to 2051 - increased time horizons lead to greater unpredictability in housing demand forecasts.
- The potential for serious urban sprawl resulting in the loss of large parcels of natural areas and prime agricultural lands

The City of Hamilton LNA planning 'engagement survey,' posted to its website, provided two options for the public to select. Gentle density or ambitious density, with no mention of urban boundary expansion. With a now 30 year planning horizon, community members need more choices.

Lastly, Hamiltonians are very concerned about climate change. Many do not want the urban boundary expanded and want to see the city deal with growth in a way that is more climate adaptable and resilient, both for themselves and for our future generations.

Taken together, these points demonstrate that significant changes are being made to the Urban Growth Management Plan. Given this, and that the current pandemic is focusing the public's attention elsewhere, we believe a delay in the process is appropriate.

Thank you for your time,
Carolanne Forster
Duncan Forster

