

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2020

The Provincial Policy Statement provides direction on growth management, housing supply and criteria for settlement area boundary expansion which is applicable to the GRIDS 2 / MCR evaluation of growth options. Policy references are cited below followed by staff commentary:

“1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

- a) Promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;
- b) Accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential types (including single-detached, additional residential units, multi-unit housing, affordable housing and housing for older persons), employment (including industrial and commercial), institutional (including places of worship, cemeteries and long-term care homes), recreation, park and open space, and other uses to meet long-term needs;
- c) Avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;
- d) Avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of *settlement areas* in those areas which are adjacent or close to *settlement areas*;
- e) Promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, *transit-supportive* development, *intensification* and *infrastructure* planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs;
- f) Improving accessibility for persons with disabilities and older persons by addressing land use barriers which restrict their full participation in society;
- g) Ensuring that necessary *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* are or will be available to meet current and projected needs;
- h) Promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity; and,
- i) Preparing for the regional and local impacts of a changing climate.

- 1.1.2 Sufficient land shall be made available to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet projected needs for a time horizon of up to 25 years, informed by provincial guidelines. However, where an alternate time period has been established for specific areas of the Province as a result of a provincial planning exercise or a *provincial plan*, that time frame may be used for municipalities within the area.

Within *settlement areas*, sufficient land shall be made available through *intensification* and *redevelopment* and, if necessary, *designated growth areas*.

Nothing in policy 1.1.2 limits the planning for *infrastructure*, *public service facilities* and *employment areas* beyond a 25-year time horizon.

- 1.1.3.1 *Settlement areas* shall be the focus of growth and development.

- 1.1.3.2 Land use patterns within *settlement areas* shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:

- a) Efficiently use land and resources;
- b) Are appropriate for, and efficiently use, the *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available, and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion;
- c) Minimize negative impacts to air quality and climate change, and promote energy efficiency;
- d) Prepare for the *impacts of a changing climate*;
- e) Support *active transportation*;
- f) Are *transit-supportive*, where transit is planned, exists or may be developed; and,
- g) Are *freight-supportive*;

- 1.1.3.3 Planning authorities shall identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for *transit-supportive* development, accommodating a significant supply and range of *housing options* through *intensification* and *redevelopment* where this can be accommodated taking into account existing building stock or areas, including *brownfield sites*, and the availability of suitable existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* required to accommodate projected needs;

- 1.1.3.5 Planning authorities shall establish and implement minimum targets for *intensification* and *redevelopment* within built-up areas, based on local

conditions. However, where provincial targets are established through *provincial plans*, the provincial target shall represent the minimum target for affected areas;

- 1.1.3.6 New development taking place in *designated growth areas* should occur adjacent to the existing built-up area and should have a compact form, mix of uses and densities that allow for the efficient use of land, *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*;
- 1.1.3.8 A planning authority may identify a *settlement area* or allow the expansion of a *settlement area* boundary only at the time of a *comprehensive review* and only where it has been demonstrated that:
- a) Sufficient opportunities to accommodate growth and to satisfy market demand are not available through *intensification*, *redevelopment* and *designated growth areas* to accommodate the projected needs over the identified planning horizon;
 - b) The *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* which are planned or available are suitable for the development over the long term, are financially viable over their life cycle, and protect public health and safety and the natural environment;
 - c) In *prime agricultural areas*:
 - 1) The lands do not comprise *specialty crop areas*;
 - 2) Alternative locations have been evaluated, and,
 - i) There are no reasonable alternatives which avoid *prime agricultural areas*; and,
 - ii) There are no reasonable alternatives on lower priority agricultural lands in *prime agricultural areas*;
 - d) the new or expanding *settlement area* is in compliance with the *minimum distance separation formulae*; and,
 - e) impacts from new or expanding *settlement areas* on agricultural operations which are adjacent or close to the *settlement area* are mitigated to the extent feasible.

In undertaking a *comprehensive review*, the level of detail of the assessment should correspond with the complexity and scale of the settlement boundary expansion or development proposal.

- 1.4.3 Planning authorities shall provide for an appropriate range and mix of *housing options* and densities to meet projected market-based and affordable housing needs of current and future residents of the *regional market area* by:
- b) Permitting and facilitating:
 - 1) All *housing options* required to meet the social, health, economic and well-being requirements of current and future residents, including *special needs* requirements and needs arising from demographic changes and employment opportunities; and,
 - 2) All types of *residential intensification*, including additional residential units, and *redevelopment* in accordance with policy 1.1.3.3;
 - c) Directing the development of new housing towards locations where appropriate levels of *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* are or will be available to support current and projected needs;
 - d) Promoting densities for new housing which efficiently use land, resources, *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*, and support the use of *active transportation* and transit in areas where it exists or is to be developed; and,
 - e) Requiring *transit-supportive* development and prioritizing *intensification*, including potential air rights development, in proximity to transit, including corridors and stations;

- 1.6.1 *Infrastructure* and *public service facilities* shall be provided in an efficient manner that prepares for the *impacts of a changing climate* while accommodating projected needs;

Planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* shall be coordinated and integrated with land use planning and growth management so that they are:

- a) Financially viable over their life cycle, which may be demonstrated through asset management planning; and,
- b) Available to meet current and projected needs.”

Staff comments:

The PPS provides general direction on managing growth and the creation of healthy and liveable communities through the efficient use of land, provision of an affordable and market-based mix of housing, protection of the environment and public health, integration of land use, infrastructure and transportation planning amongst other matters. Both the “How Should Hamilton Grow?” and the Evaluation and Phasing

Criteria frameworks are consistent with the above direction and provide tools to ensure Hamilton will grow in a sustainable and efficient manner.

GRIDS 2 / MCR is planning to the year 2051 in accordance with the time horizon established in the Provincial Growth Plan, as per the direction of PPS policy 1.1.2. The “How Should Hamilton Grow?” framework includes consideration of the ability of each scenario (No Urban Boundary Expansion and Ambitious Density) to provide for an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet future needs.

The PPS policies direct growth to be focussed in settlement areas through efficient and transit-supportive land use patterns, in accordance with intensification and density targets.

Policy 1.1.3.8 of the PPS provides direction on the considerations that a municipality must undertake prior to expanding a settlement area (urban area) boundary. These considerations are reflected in the Evaluation and Phasing Principles. The PPS requires municipalities to assess availability of infrastructure and public service facilities including financial viability, and impacts on agricultural lands, prior to expansion of the urban boundary.

The importance of planning for a range and mix of housing options and densities to meet future needs is identified in Policy 1.4.3. The “How Should Hamilton Grow?” framework includes consideration of the ability of each growth scenario (No Urban Boundary Expansion and Ambitious Density) to provide for an appropriate range and mix of land uses to meet future needs.

The evaluation tools meet the requirements of policy 1.6.1 by integrating infrastructure and public service facility considerations in to the evaluation process and ensuring fiscally responsible planning for these needs.

Growth Plan 2019, as Amended

The Growth Plan provides policy direction on managing growth, including the population forecasts municipalities must plan for and the minimum intensification and density targets which municipalities must use for planning purposes. In addition, the Growth Plan identifies the requirements for municipalities to plan in accordance with the Provincial land needs assessment methodology. Detailed direction on settlement area expansion criteria is also provided. Policy references are provide below followed by staff commentary:

“2.2.1.1 Population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 or such higher forecasts as established by the applicable upper-or single-tier municipality through its *municipal comprehensive review* will be used for planning and managing growth in the *GGH* to the horizon of this Plan in accordance with the policies in subsection 5.2.4;

2.2.1.2 Forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan will be allocated based on the following:

- a) The vast majority of growth will be directed to *settlement areas* that:
 - i) Have a *delineated built boundary*;
 - ii) Have existing or planned *municipal water and wastewater systems*; and,
 - iii) Can support the achievement of *complete communities*;
- b) Growth will be limited in *settlement areas* that:
 - i) Are *rural settlements*;
 - ii) Are not serviced by existing or planned *municipal water and wastewater systems*; or,
 - iii) Are in the *Greenbelt Area*;
- c) Within *settlement areas*, growth will be focused in:
 - i) *Delineated built-up areas*;
 - ii) *Strategic growth areas*;
 - iii) Locations with existing or planned transit, with a priority on *higher order transit* where it exists or is planned; and,
 - iv) Areas with existing or planned *public service facilities*;
- d) Development will be directed to *settlement areas*, except where the policies of this Plan permit otherwise;
- e) Development will be generally directed away from *hazardous lands*; and,
- f) The establishment of new *settlement areas* is prohibited;

2.2.1.3 Upper-and single-tier municipalities will undertake integrated planning to manage forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan, which will:

- a) Establish a hierarchy of *settlement areas*, and of areas within *settlement areas*, in accordance with policy 2.2.1.2;
- b) Be supported by planning for *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* by considering the full life cycle costs of these assets and developing options to pay for these costs over the long-term;
- c) Provide direction for an urban form that will optimize *infrastructure*, particularly along transit and transportation corridors, to support the achievement of *complete communities* through a more *compact built form*;

- d) Support the environmental and agricultural protection and conservation objectives of this Plan; and,
- e) Be implemented through a *municipal comprehensive review* and, where applicable, include direction to lower-tier municipalities;

2.2.1.4 Applying the policies of this Plan will support the achievement of *complete communities* that:

- a) Feature a diverse mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, and convenient access to local stores, services, and *public service facilities*;
- b) Improve social equity and overall quality of life, including human health, for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes;
- c) Provide a diverse range and mix of housing options, including additional residential units and *affordable* housing, to accommodate people at all stages of life, and to accommodate the needs of all household sizes and incomes;
- d) Expand convenient access to:
 - i) A range of transportation options, including options for the safe, comfortable and convenient use of *active transportation*;
 - ii) *Public service facilities*, co-located and integrated in community hubs;
 - iii) An appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks, trails, and other recreational facilities; and,
 - iv) Healthy, local, and affordable food options, including through urban agriculture;
- e) Provide for a more *compact built form* and a vibrant *public realm*, including public open spaces;
- f) Mitigate and adapt to the *impacts of a changing climate*, improve resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to environmental sustainability; and,
- g) Integrate *green infrastructure* and appropriate *low impact development*;

2.2.1.5 The Minister will establish a methodology for assessing land needs to implement this Plan, including relevant assumptions and other direction as required. This methodology will be used by upper-and single-tier municipalities to assess the quantity of land required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan;

2.2.6.1 Upper-and single-tier municipalities, in consultation with lower-tier municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, will:

- a) Support housing choice through the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan by:
 - i. Identifying a diverse range and mix of housing options and densities, including additional residential units and *affordable* housing to meet projected needs of current and future residents; and,
 - ii. Establishing targets for *affordable* ownership housing and rental housing;
- b) identify mechanisms, including the use of land use planning and financial tools, to support the implementation of policy 2.2.6.1 a);
- c) align land use planning with applicable housing and homelessness plans required under the Housing Services Act, 2011;
- d) address housing needs in accordance with provincial policy statements such as the Policy Statement: “Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans”; and,
- e) implement policy 2.2.6.1 a), b), c) and d) through official plan policies and designations and zoning by-laws;

2.2.6.2 Notwithstanding policy 1.4.1 of the PPS, 2020, in implementing policy 2.2.6.1, municipalities will support the achievement of *complete communities* by:

- a) Planning to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan;
- b) Planning to achieve the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
- c) Considering the range and mix of housing options and densities of the existing housing stock; and,
- d) Planning to diversify their overall housing stock across the municipality;

2.2.6.3 To support the achievement of *complete communities*, municipalities will consider the use of available tools to require that multi-unit residential

developments incorporate a mix of unit sizes to accommodate a diverse range of household sizes and incomes;

- 2.2.6.4 Municipalities will maintain at all times where development is to occur, land with servicing capacity sufficient to provide at least a three-year supply of residential units. This supply will include, and may exclusively consist of, lands suitably zoned for *intensification* and *redevelopment*;
- 2.2.6.5 When a *settlement area* boundary has been expanded in accordance with the policies in subsection 2.2.8, the new *designated greenfield area* will be planned in accordance with policies 2.2.6.1 and 2.2.6.2;
- 2.2.8.2 A *settlement area* boundary expansion may only occur through a *municipal comprehensive review* where it is demonstrated that:
- a) Based on the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan and a land needs assessment undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.1.5, sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan are not available through *intensification* and in the *designated greenfield area*:
 - i) Within the upper- or single-tier municipality, and,
 - ii) Within the applicable lower-tier municipality;
 - b) The proposed expansion will make available sufficient lands not exceeding the horizon of this Plan, based on the analysis provided for in policy 2.2.8.2 a), while minimizing land consumption; and,
 - c) The timing of the proposed expansion and the phasing of development within the *designated greenfield area* will not adversely affect the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan;
- 2.2.8.3. Where the need for a *settlement area* boundary expansion has been justified in accordance with policy 2.2.8.2, the feasibility of the proposed expansion will be determined and the most appropriate location for the proposed expansion will be identified based on the comprehensive application of all of the policies in this Plan, including the following:
- a) There is sufficient capacity in existing or planned *infrastructure* and *public service facilities*;
 - b) The *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* needed would be financially viable over the full life cycle of these assets;

- c) The proposed expansion would be informed by applicable water and wastewater master plans or equivalent and *stormwater master plans* or equivalent, as appropriate;
- d) The proposed expansion, including the associated water, wastewater and stormwater servicing, would be planned and demonstrated to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts on watershed conditions and the *water resource system*, including the *quality and quantity of water*;
- e) Key hydrologic areas and the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan should be avoided where possible;
- f) Prime agricultural areas should be avoided where possible. To support the Agricultural System, alternative locations across the upper-or single-tier municipality will be evaluated, prioritized and determined based on avoiding, minimizing and mitigating the impact on the Agricultural System and in accordance with the following:
 - i) Expansion into *specialty crop areas* is prohibited;
 - ii) Reasonable alternatives that avoid *prime agricultural areas* are evaluated; and,
 - iii) Where *prime agricultural areas* cannot be avoided, lower priority agricultural lands are used;
- g) The *settlement area* to be expanded is in compliance with the *minimum distance separation formulae*;
- h) Any adverse impacts on the *agri-food network*, including agricultural operations, from expanding *settlement areas* would be avoided, or if avoidance is not possible, minimized and mitigated as determined through an *agricultural impact assessment*;
- i) The policies of Sections 2 (Wise Use and Management of Resources) and 3 (Protecting Public Health and Safety) of the PPS are applied;
- j) The proposed expansion would meet any applicable requirements of the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation, Niagara Escarpment, and Lake Simcoe Protection Plans and any applicable source protection plan; and,
- k) Within the Protected Countryside in the *Greenbelt Area*:
 - i) The *settlement area* to be expanded is identified in the Greenbelt Plan as a Town/Village;

- ii) The proposed expansion would be modest in size, representing no more than a 5% increase in the geographic size of the *settlement area* based on the *settlement area* boundary delineated in the applicable official plan as of July 1, 2017, up to a maximum size of 10 hectares, and residential *development* would not be permitted on more than 50% of the lands that would be added to the *settlement area*;
- iii) The proposed expansion would support the achievement of *complete communities* or the local agricultural economy;
- iv) The proposed uses cannot be reasonably accommodated within the existing *settlement area* boundary;
- v) The proposed expansion would be serviced by existing *municipal water and wastewater systems* without impacting future; *intensification* opportunities in the existing *settlement area*; and,
- vi) expansion into the Natural Heritage System that has been identified in the Greenbelt Plan is prohibited;

3.2.1.2. Planning for new or expanded *infrastructure* will occur in an integrated manner, including evaluations of long-range scenario-based land use planning, environmental planning and financial planning, and will be supported by relevant studies and should involve:

- a) Leveraging *infrastructure* investment to direct growth and development in accordance with the policies and schedules of this Plan, including the achievement of the minimum intensification and density targets in this Plan;
- b) Providing sufficient *infrastructure* capacity in *strategic growth areas*;
- c) Identifying the full life cycle costs of *infrastructure* and developing options to pay for these costs over the long-term; and,
- d) Considering the *impacts of a changing climate.*”

Staff comments:

Section 2.2.1 of the Growth Plan establishes direction for managing growth to the horizon of the Plan. The policies encourage the vast majority of growth to be directed to serviced settlement areas, and further, to be focussed within strategic growth areas within settlement areas. Growth management is to be undertaken in a manner that considers financial implications of growth through the full life cycle of assets, and also prioritizes environmental and agricultural protection, complete community development, and planning for the impacts of a changing climate.

Policy 2.2.1.5 identifies the requirement for the Minister to establish a methodology to be used by municipalities to assess the quantity of land require to accommodate growth.

The “How Should Hamilton Grow” framework has been modelled based on the direction of Section 2.2.1 of the Growth Plan, supplemented by other locally important matters in accordance with the GRIDS 10 Directions to Guide Development.

The Growth Plan provides direction on planning for housing needs to the horizon of the Plan to include a range of housing options, including a mix of unit sizes, for all incomes and residents. A minimum three-year serviced land supply is required.

The Growth Plan identifies a series of comprehensive criteria that must be considered prior to expansion of the urban boundary. The criteria identified in the Growth Plan requires a municipality to consider a wide range of potential impacts of urban boundary expansion including servicing, financial viability, watershed planning and protection of the natural heritage system, and impacts on the agricultural system, amongst other matters. The Urban Boundary Expansion - Evaluation and Phasing Criteria (Whitebelt Lands), attached as Appendix “B” to Report PED17010(l) (dated August 4, 2021), has been designed to ensure compliance with the above noted matters. Special consideration to policy 2.2.8.3(k) regarding small expansion into the Greenbelt Protected Countryside has been addressed through the Screening Criteria and Evaluation Tool (Waterdown and Binbrook), attached as Appendix “C” to Report PED17010(l) (dated August 4, 2021).

Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP)

The Urban Hamilton Official Plan contains policies regarding urban boundary expansion and, specifically, the studies and criteria that must be considered prior to the City expanding its urban boundary. Note that all policies cited below in Section B.2.2 remain under appeal, and policies noted in bold or strikethrough are the subject of Ministry modifications to the UHOP. Staff comments follow the policy references.

- ~~B.2.2.22.2.1~~** The exact limits of the lands to be included as part of the *urban boundary* expansion shall be determined as part of a *municipally initiated comprehensive review* and secondary plan;
- ~~B.2.2.32.2.2~~** No *urban boundary* expansion shall occur until a *municipally initiated comprehensive review* and secondary plan have been completed;
- ~~B.2.2.42.2.3~~** Prior to the initiation of an *urban boundary* expansion, the City shall undertake a *municipally initiated comprehensive review* and secondary plan, in accordance with the policies of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. As part of these processes, the City shall complete background studies and conduct community planning and public consultation events including the establishment of a community liaison

committee. The background studies and consultation processes shall assist in identifying the layout of future land uses, determining more precise needs, land supply and infrastructure requirements, and development of community growth management policies and designations. More specifically, a *municipally initiated comprehensive review* and secondary plan shall include the following elements:

- a) A comprehensive review and land budget analysis is required to determine the need for an *urban boundary* expansion, which includes an assessment of occupied and vacant urban land, brownfield availability, greenfield densities, and *intensification* targets **to determine if sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth contained in Policy A.2.3.1 and Policy A.2.3.2 are not available [Mod 4(b)];**
- b) A *sub-watershed plan* to address storm water infrastructure and natural heritage system impacts, in accordance with Section F.3.1.6 – Watershed and Sub-watershed Plans;
- c) Environmental Impact Statement(s) pertaining to the natural heritage system, as required by applicable Official Plan and provincial policies;
- d) ~~An assessment of agricultural capability which considers directing urban growth onto those lands which are or are not on lower priority lands, which are designated Agriculture in prime agricultural areas, the lands do not comprise specialty crop areas, there are no reasonable alternatives that avoid prime agricultural areas and there are no reasonable alternatives on agricultural lands [Mod 4(c)];~~
in prime agricultural areas, the lands do not comprise specialty crop areas, there are no reasonable alternatives that avoid prime agricultural areas and there are no reasonable alternatives on agricultural lands [Mod 4(c)];
- e) Demonstrating that impacts from new or expanding *urban areas* on agricultural operations which are adjacent or close to the *urban areas* are mitigated to the extent feasible;
 - i) the designation of appropriate land uses and policies pertaining to the design and density of such uses;
 - ii) completion of Class Environmental Assessments for major urban servicing infrastructure deemed to be essential for commencement or completion of *development* of all or part of the lands;
 - iii) an urban *development* staging, phasing or implementation strategy in keeping with City-wide master plan priorities and secondary plan objectives; and,
 - iv) ***The timing of the urban boundary expansion and the phasing of development within the greenfield areas shall***

not adversely affect the of the residential intensification target and Greenfield density targets [Mod 4(d)];

- f) Completion of a financing policy for urban services and other community infrastructure;
- g) other studies and policies which the City deems necessary for the development of the future urban growth district as a sustainable transit oriented urban community; and,
- h) the *urban boundary* expansion makes available sufficient lands for a time horizon not exceeding 20 years, based on the analysis provided for in Policy ~~B.2.2.4 a) B.2.2.3 a)~~ [Mod 4 (e)].**

E.2.1 Hamilton’s urban structure shall be a node and corridor structure guided by the following general principles:

- a) Nodes and corridors are the focus of reurbanization activities (i.e. population growth, private and public *redevelopment*, and infrastructure investment);
- b) Nodes and corridors provide focal points of activity for Hamilton’s local communities and neighbourhoods;
- c) Nodes and corridors are connected to each other and are internally served by various modes of transportation, including *higher order transit*;
- d) Nodes and corridors provide a vibrant pedestrian environment and facilitate *active transportation* through careful attention to urban design; and,
- e) Nodes and corridors evolve with higher residential densities and mixed-use *developments* to achieve their planned functions and support transit.”

The UHOP criteria identifies the need to address similar matters as those identified in the Growth Plan, to be completed as part of a secondary plan and municipally initiated comprehensive review, including the completion of a land needs assessment, sub-watershed plan and environmental impact study, agricultural impact assessment and financing policy.

The Urban Structure identified in the UHOP promotes the focus of growth in the City’s nodes and corridors. The nodes and corridors structure is intended to support transit and active transportation, create vibrant activity areas and pedestrian environments, and plan for higher densities in strategically planned areas. The nodes and corridors growth focus is consistent with the policies of Section 2.2.1 Managing Growth of the Growth Plan (see above).