

GRIDS 2 and MCR: “How Should Hamilton Grow?” Evaluation

November 9th, 2021

Introductions

The following staff and consultants have contributed to the How Should Hamilton Grow? evaluation and are in attendance at the meeting today:

Staff	Consultants
Planning	Dillon Consulting (How Should Hamilton Grow?)
Growth Management	Watson (Fiscal Impact Assessment)
Public Works	SSG (GHG Emissions Analysis)
Finance	GM BluePlan / Wood (Water, Wastewater, Stormwater Servicing)
Public Health	Dillon Consulting (Agricultural Impact Assessment)
Transportation	

GRIDS 2 and the MCR



Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS) 2 – long-term planning exercise to 2051 that will guide how and where the forecasted growth of people and jobs will be accommodated.

GRIDS 2 is an integrated process which combines land use planning, infrastructure planning, human services requirements and fiscal impacts into one process

Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) – Provincial requirement to update the City’s Official Plans (Urban and Rural) to bring them into conformity with the most recent versions of provincial policy documents

GROWTH FORECAST: 2051



An increase of 236,000 people, for a total population of 820,000 people



An increase of 122,000 jobs, for a total employment of 360,000 jobs

PROJECT REVIEW



March 2021 –

- Staff presented **draft Land Needs Assessment (LNA)** and recommended approval of the **‘Ambitious Density’ scenario** (Report PED17010(i))
- Committee deferred the decision on the LNA and directed staff to **evaluate and model both the Ambitious Density scenario and a No Urban Boundary Expansion scenario** as potential growth options
- Committee directed staff to undertake a **city-wide mail-out consultation** on the two growth options
- Staff report presenting **draft Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria** (Report PED17010(j)) received by Council and staff were authorized to commence consultation

PROJECT REVIEW



May 2021 –

- Public engagement undertaken on the Draft Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria through the **Engage Hamilton** portal. More than 90 responses received.

June / July 2021 –

- **Mail-out consultation** to households in Hamilton delivered by Canada Post the week of June 21

June 2021 –

- Council direction for staff to retain a consultant to undertake a **peer review of the approach and methodology** utilized for the “City of Hamilton Land Needs Assessment to 2051 – Technical Working Paper” and “Residential Intensification Market Demand Study”

PROJECT REVIEW



August 2021 –

- Approval of **Employment Land Review** report (PED17010(k))
- Approval of **Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria** (PED17010(l))

August, 2021 -

- Additional public consultation undertaken on **How Should Hamilton Grow?** framework. 120 responses were received.

September, 2021 -

- Release of **mail-out consultation** results.

Growth Options – Population and Unit Growth

Option 1: Ambitious Density

Option 2: No Urban Boundary Expansion



Population growth

236,000

236,000

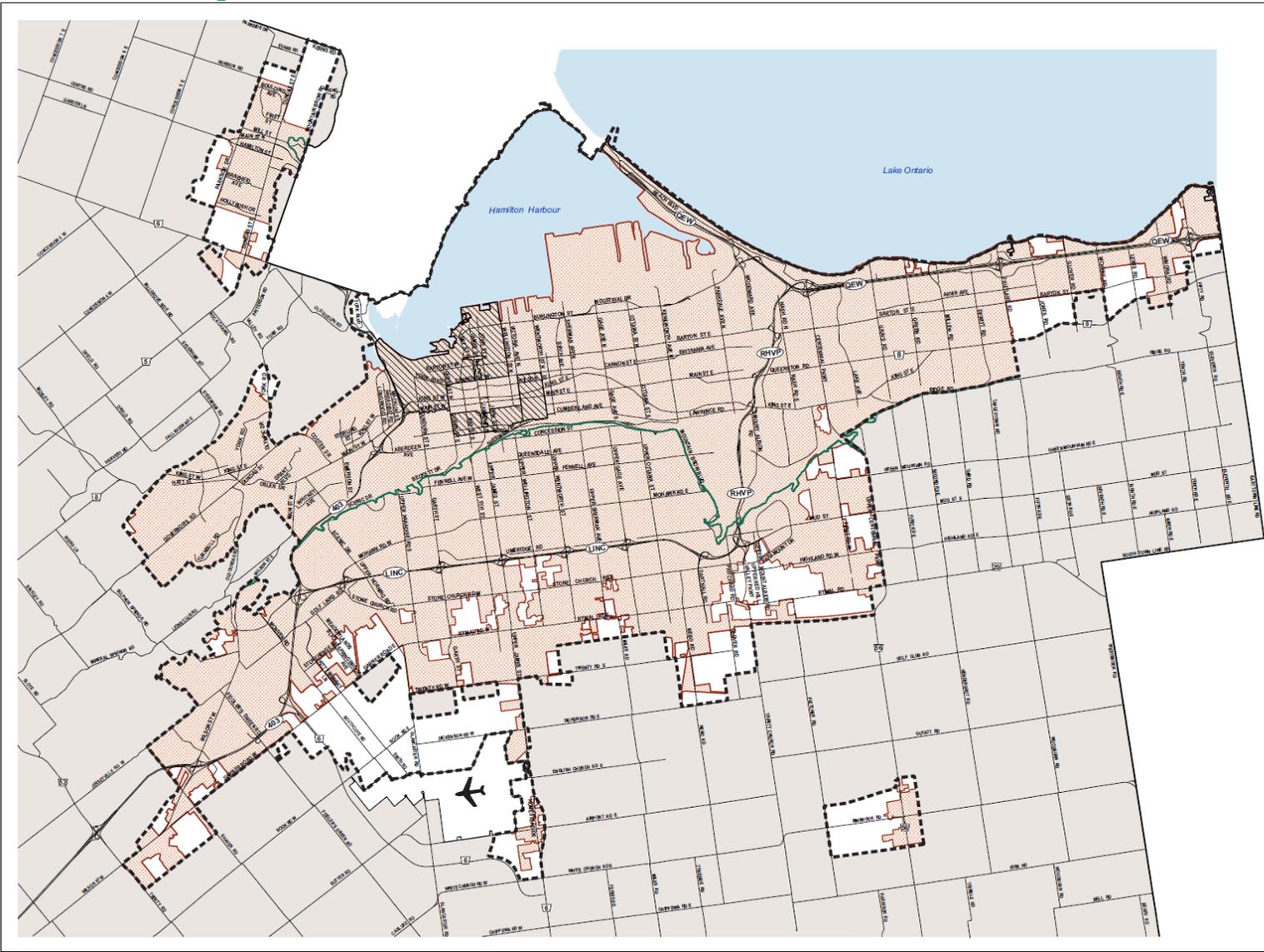


Unit growth

110,320

110,320

Growth Options – Distribution of Growth



APPEAL

The southern urban boundary that generally extends from Upper Centennial Parkway and Mud Street East in the east, following the hydro corridor and encompassing the Red Hill Business Park to Upper James Street remains under appeal – see illustration on Schedules E and E-1, Volume 1

- Legend**
- Built Boundary
 - Built-up Area
 - Central Hamilton
 - Other Features**
 - Rural Area
 - John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport
 - Niagara Escarpment
 - Urban Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary

Council Adoption: July 9, 2009
 Ministerial Approval: March 16, 2011
 Effective Date: August 16, 2013

**Urban Hamilton Official Plan
 Appendix G
 Boundaries Map**

Not to Scale
 Date: February 2021

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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Growth Options – Distribution of Growth

	Option 1: Ambitious Density	Option 2: No Urban Boundary Expansion
 Unit Growth within the <i>Existing Urban Area</i>	81,620	109,880
➤ Unit Growth within the <i>Built-Up Area</i> “Intensification”	66,190	94,450
 Unit growth in <i>Urban Expansion Area</i>	28,260	0

Growth Options – Unit Growth By Type

Option 1: Ambitious Density

Option 2: No Urban Boundary Expansion



Singles / semis

27,120 (25%)

9,585 (9%)



Towns

27,600 (25%)

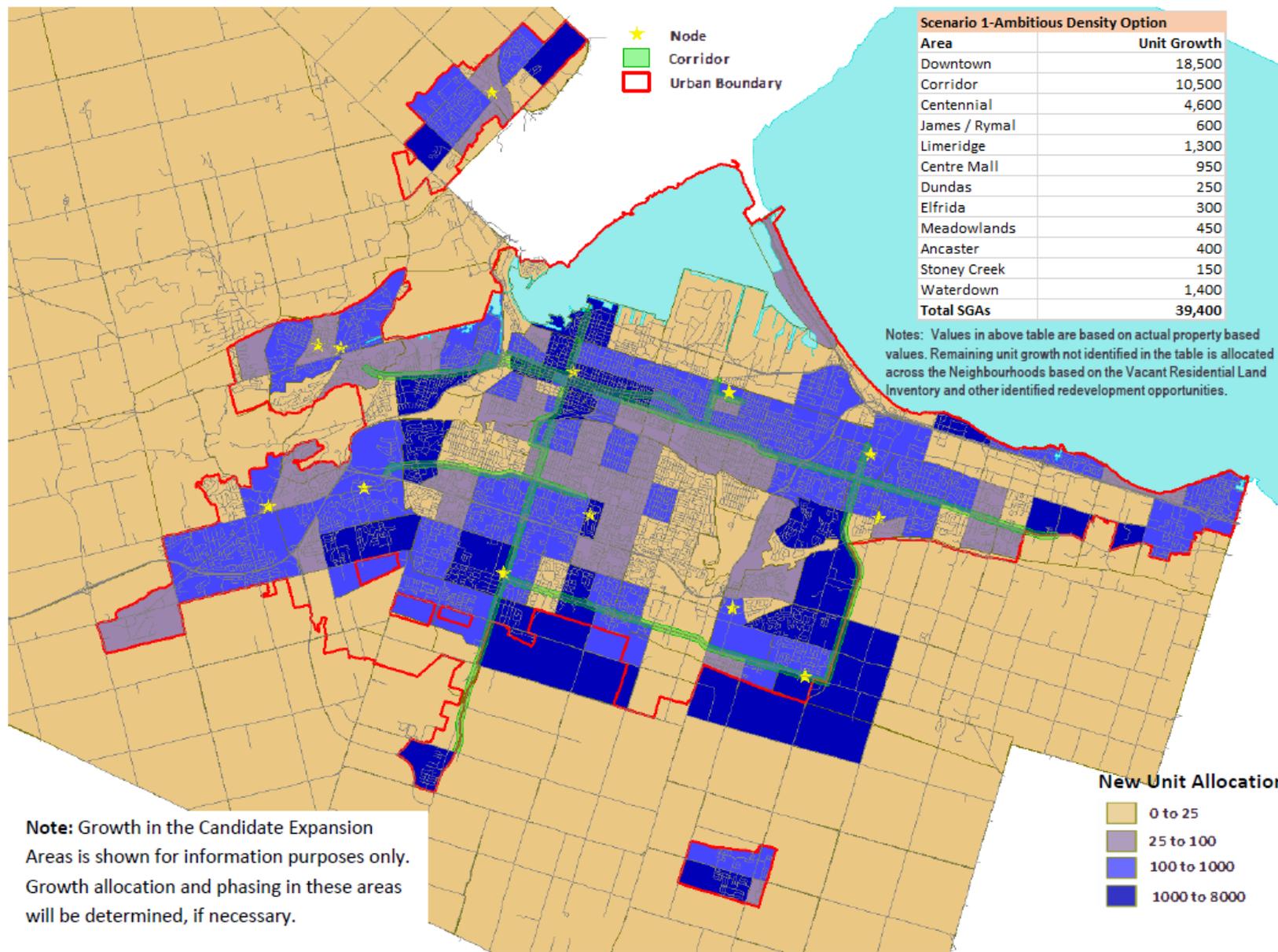
14,750 (13%)

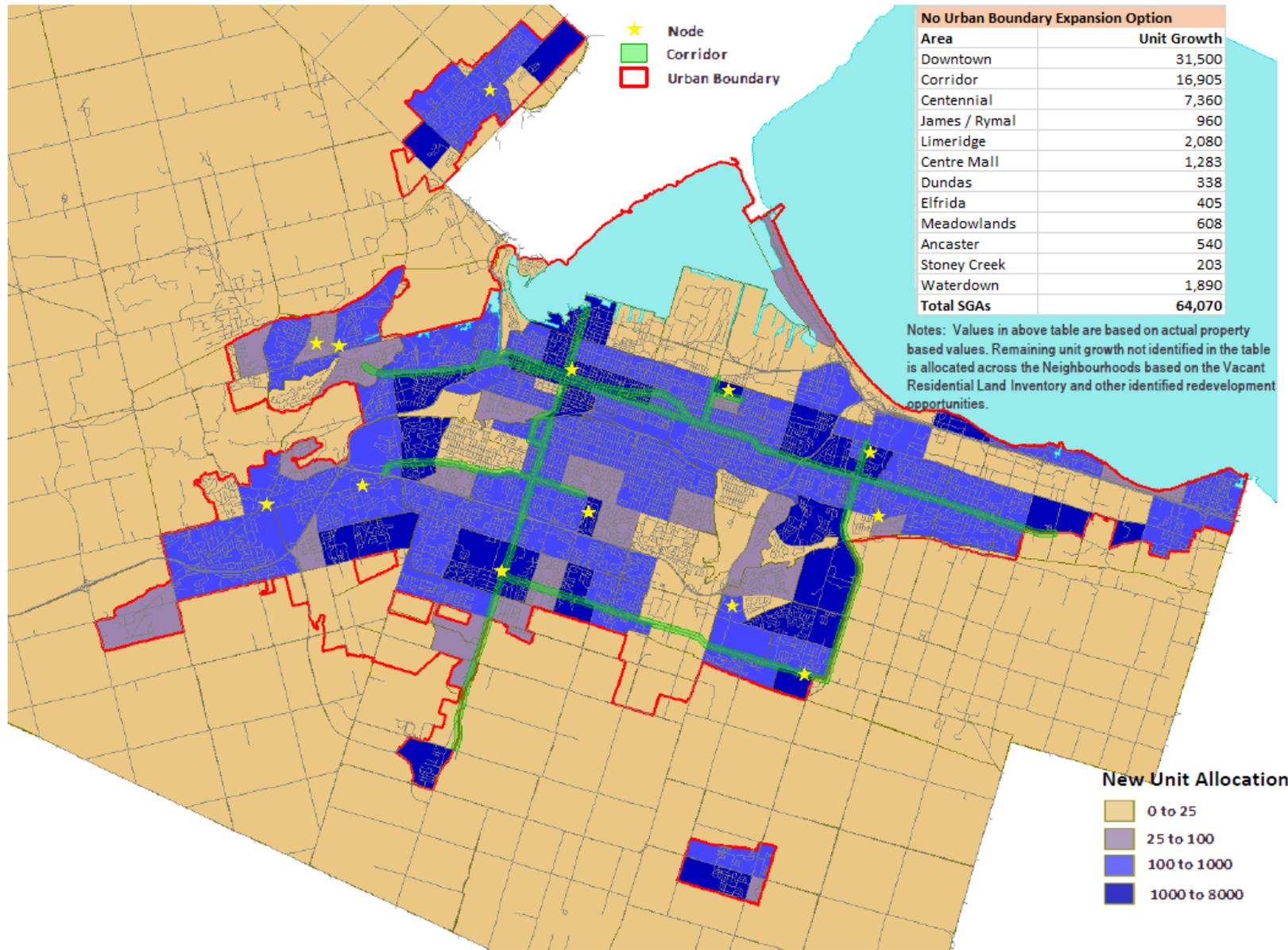


Apartments

55,600 (50%)

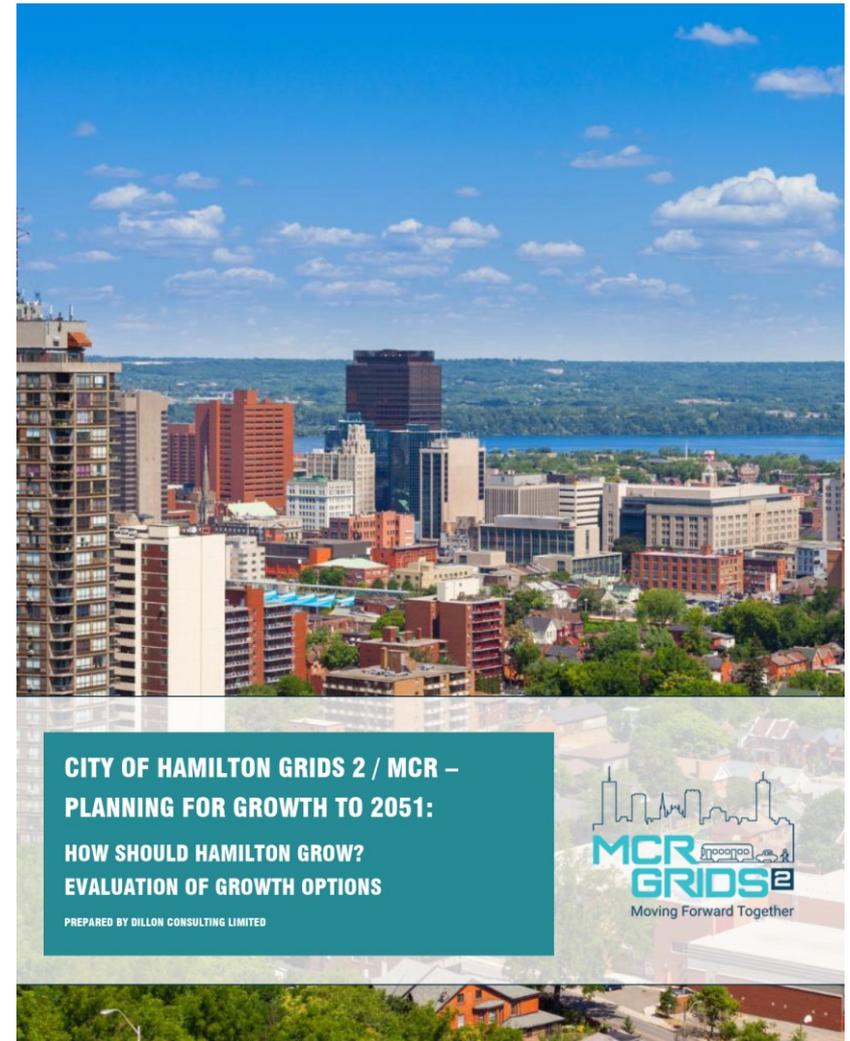
85,985 (78%)





Purpose

- The purpose of our work was to identify **the different implications associated with the two growth options**
- The findings of the evaluation report are intended to **support decision-making**



Evaluation Approach

- The evaluation framework is organized around 11 themes



1. **Growth Allocation**



2. **Climate Change**



3. **Natural Hazards**



4. **Municipal Finance**



5. **Infrastructure & Public Service Facilities**



6. **Transportation Systems**



7. **Natural Heritage and Water Resources**



8. **Complete Communities**



9. **Agricultural System**



10. **Cultural Heritage**



11. **Conformity with Provincial Methodology**

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Evaluation Criteria

- Each theme includes a series of questions/criteria intended to draw out the differences between the two options
- The evaluation framework is informed by specific policies in the Growth Plan (e.g. section 2.2.1 Managing Growth)
- The framework also reflects the Council-approved themes of the GRIDS 2 / MCR 10 Directions to Guide Development and feedback received from stakeholders and the public

Evaluation Criteria

- Comparing growth options is both complex and complicated
- The evaluation framework examines how well each option responds to the criteria
- In reviewing the results there are both subtle and clear differences between the two options

Similarities and Subtle Differences

- Both options are similar in that they both:
 - Exceed the Province's minimum DGA density targets and intensification targets
 - Represent a significant change from past trends and will help to support a more transit-supportive, compact, complete community for the City of Hamilton



Similarities and Subtle Differences



From an infrastructure and public facilities perspective, both options will require significant investment in new public infrastructure and public facilities:

- Growth Option 1 would require new infrastructure to service new expansion lands (greater length of linear networks) and also require upgrades in the built up area to accommodate intensification.
- Growth Option 2 would see a greater portion of the City's population concentrated in the built up area compared to Option 1.
- Growth Option 2 is perceived to have less certainty around cost-recovery and also greater complexity associated with infrastructure provision (e.g. combined sewers, more capacity constraints, etc.), given the scale of development planned for the built up area.

Similarities and Subtle Differences



From a cultural perspective both options will have impacts on protecting and preserving cultural heritage resources.

- Within the Built Up Area, both options will have higher levels of intensification which may result in pressures to redevelop on or adjacent to heritage properties and within cultural heritage landscapes
- There are no known cultural heritage landscapes, individually designated properties or Ontario Heritage Trust Easement (Part IV) in the Candidate Expansion Areas.
- There is archaeological potential adjacent to or within the majority of the Candidate Expansion Areas (any future development would require an Archaeological Assessment)

Similarities and Subtle Differences



From a natural hazard perspective, both options are expected to direct development away from natural hazards:

- Growth Option 1 would see new development in proximity to existing hazards in the expanded DGA area.
- Growth Option 2 would see a greater portion of the City's population concentrated in proximity to existing natural hazards in the urban area.
- There is no significant difference in the perceived risks associated with natural hazards from a growth management perspective.

Differentiators, Growth Option 1

- The strengths of the Ambitious Density Option are:
 -  Less financial risks, (the location, timing and tools required to fund development are well established; infrastructure planning is relatively straight-forward compared to Option 2)
 -  Provides a full range of housing types and a more balanced housing mix that aligns with projected market demand
 -  Meets the Provincial Land Needs Methodology, conforms to Provincial policy

Differentiators, Growth Option 2

- The strengths of the No Urban Boundary Expansion Option are:
 -  Better responds to the overall potential risks associated with climate change and results in a slightly smaller increase in GHG emissions
 -  Maximizes opportunities to support the City's existing and planned transit system
 -  Better protects the existing supply of prime agricultural lands
 -  Better protects natural heritage systems and water resources
 -  Allocates more of the growth to the City's existing settlement area

Conclusions

- While Growth Option 2 has several key strengths, it has several fundamental weaknesses which cannot be mitigated:
 1. Does not conform to Provincial policy and is not likely to be approved by the Province
 2. Uncertain impacts on the local housing market and risks of growth occurring elsewhere (i.e. other municipalities)
 3. Uncertain financial risks related to infrastructure provision

Conclusions

- From a planning perspective, Growth Option 2 is recommended because it:
 - Conforms to provincial policy
 - Provides an ambitious target for urban intensification and supports the City's planned urban structure
 - Agricultural, Climate Change and Natural Heritage Systems impacts can be further assessed and addressed through secondary planning

Staff Recommendations

Staff are recommending adoption of the “**Ambitious Density**” **scenario** as the preferred Community Area land need scenario:

- represents an aggressive and forward thinking approach to growth management;
- represents an achievable, albeit challenging, growth management objective; and,
- conforms to the Provincial Growth Plan and the Provincial LNA Methodology.

Staff Report Recommendations

For the purposes of managing growth, the following **phasing of land need** be endorsed for planning purposes to 2051:

- (i) For the period from 2021 to 2031, a land need of **305 ha**;
- (ii) For the period from 2031 to 2041, a land need of **570 ha**;
- (iii) For the period from 2041 to 2051, a land need of **435 ha**.

Staff Report Recommendations

That Council authorize staff to evaluate phasing of growth options under the Ambitious Density scenario to identify where and when development of the **whitebelt lands**, comprised of one or more of the areas known as Elfrida, Twenty Road East, Twenty Road West and Whitechurch, should occur, in accordance with the GRIDS 2 / MCR Growth Evaluation Framework and Phasing Criteria.

That Council authorize staff to evaluate requests for expansion from **Waterdown and Binbrook**, up to a maximum size of 10 ha, of which 5 ha may be for residential use, as per the Screening Criteria and Evaluation Tool (Waterdown / Binbrook).

Staff Report Recommendations

That Council direct staff to prepare a draft **Official Plan Amendment** as part of the MCR that implements an interim urban boundary expansion to 2031 and that includes policies to ensure that any future urban boundary expansions are controlled and phased, including consideration of options for identifying growth needs beyond 2031 without formally designating the land as urban at this time and that staff be directed and authorized to schedule a public meeting of the Planning Committee to consider an Official Plan Amendment, to give effect to the MCR.

