

History of Greenbelt Plan Boundary reviews - Background reports and Planning Report recommendations

- June 2015 (PED15078)

The City hired Dillon Consulting to assist with several public open houses, the purpose of which was to get feedback on potential changes to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) and the Greenbelt Plan prior to submitting comments to the Province.

Staff explained in this Report that as part of the review of the Provincial Plans, staff have begun to look at potential changes to the Greenbelt boundaries. A number of recommendations for changes to the boundaries were also brought forward by members of the public at the City's public consultation sessions. To help inform this boundary review process, Dillon Consulting has been retained to undertake a preliminary review of the long term land needs in the City to accommodate future growth. Based on this concern, the following recommendation was included in Report PED15078.

"(e) That City staff consult with the Province, the public, and the development community on options for any changes to the Greenbelt boundaries that are necessary to ensure Hamilton has sufficient land to accommodate future growth, while at the same time ensuring there is no net decrease in the size of the Greenbelt in Hamilton, and ensuring that the Greenbelt's goals related to protecting agricultural lands and natural heritage are achieved; and that these options be brought forward for Council's approval, prior to submitting them to the Province for its consideration.

Planning Committee approved the recommendation but the Report PED15078 was sent back to Planning Committee for a further review of the Greenbelt Plan boundaries.

- December 2015 (PED15078(a))

Public events were held to solicit input on changes to the Greenbelt Plan Plan boundaries. Five options were identified for potential changes to these boundaries. The recommendations in the report were two-fold:

(b) That the City of Hamilton requests the Province:

(ii) to defer any decisions on potential changes to the Greenbelt Plan boundaries in the City of Hamilton to allow the City to complete a municipal comprehensive review which will include a full assessment of the opportunities and constraints:

- (1) to determine the amount and location of land (both non-employment and employment) required to meet the 2031 to 2041 Growth Plan forecasts;
 - (2) to identify appropriate lands to add to the Whitebelt area, in the event that additional land is required for an urban boundary expansion to meet targets and based on the principles of cost effective, complete and healthy communities; and,
 - (3) to identify appropriate lands to be added to the Greenbelt Plan area;
- (c) That upon completion of the municipal comprehensive review, City Council request the Province to revise the Greenbelt Plan boundaries prior to the City adopting the Official Plan Amendment relating to Growth Plan conformity and implementation of the Municipal Comprehensive Review.
- (d) That notwithstanding Recommendations (b) and (c), as part of the current Coordinated Provincial Plan Review, the City of Hamilton requests the Province to give consideration to the following modifications to Greenbelt Plan Protected Countryside area as follows:
- (i) remove the Lower Stoney Creek lands (104 ha) and the lands north of Parkside Drive, east of Centre Road in Waterdown (28 ha) from the Greenbelt Plan, as shown on Appendix "B", identified in *Greenbelt Plan Boundary Review Report* prepared by Dillon Consulting, and attached as Appendix "C"; and,
 - ~~(ii) add the lands between Twenty Mile Creek and Airport Road, west and east of Nebo Road (231 ha) to the Greenbelt Plan, as shown on Appendix "B", identified in *Greenbelt Plan Boundary Review Report* prepared by Dillon Consulting, and attached as Appendix "C";~~
 - (ii) add the lands south of Twenty Mile Creek, east of Miles Road, north of Airport Road, and west of Trinity Church Road (approximately 430 ha) to the Greenbelt Plan;**
- (I) That staff be directed to include Coldwater Creek as an addition into the Greenbelt, as part of the City of Hamilton's submission of comments to the Coordinated Provincial Plan Review on the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan Boundary Review.**

Staff's recommendations were modified as identified in the bold text, and supported by Planning Committee and City Council.

- September 2016 (PED15078(b))

The Province released its draft Greenbelt Plan boundary changes for comment in May 2016, which included the following proposed boundary changes:

- (i) the addition of the Book Road lands (450 ha) and only a portion of the Miles road area (330 ha), not the full 430 ha which had been requested (see Appendix "A");
- (ii) the addition of Fifty Creek as an urban river valley; and,
- (iii) removal of a few parcels of land in Lower Stoney Creek (30 ha) that were already in the urban boundary, which is considered a technical amendment only (see Appendix "B").

The removal of the lands in Lower Stoney Creek and Waterdown, as well as the westerly portion of the Miles Road area and Coldwater Creek, as requested by the City, were not included in the May 2016 Greenbelt Plan revisions.

In September, City Council supported the additions to the Greenbelt Plan for Book Road and the Miles Road Area. However, they also reiterated their previous positions to:

- (i) remove the Waterdown and Lower Stoney Creek lands;
- (ii) add more lands to the Miles Road/Nebo Road area, as well as the Coldwater Creek urban river valley.