



City of Hamilton

Report for Consideration

To: Chair and Members
Planning Committee

Date: May 5, 2026

Report No: PED25248(a)

Subject/Title: Comprehensive Neighbourhood Plans Review – Status Update

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

- a) That Planning Division staff **BE DIRECTED** to consult with community partners and the public on the draft criteria for evaluating existing Neighbourhood Plans, as contained in Appendix “A” to Report PED25248.
- b) That Planning Division staff **BE DIRECTED** to report back to Planning Committee with the results of the consultation, the final criteria for evaluating existing Neighbourhood Plans, and the results of a preliminary review of the Neighbourhood Plans against the criteria.

Key Facts

- On November 14, 2025, Planning Committee deferred a decision on Report PED25248 – Comprehensive Neighbourhood Plans Review, requesting a fulsome communication and engagement strategy and plan, and that copies of all Neighbourhood Plans be provided as Appendices to the report as information to Council and the public.
- The purpose of this report is to provide details to Planning Committee on the communication and engagement plan for the Neighbourhood Plans Review, and to provide copies of existing Neighbourhood Plans.

Financial Considerations

Existing funds in Project Account No. 8120955900 (Community Planning Studies) will be used for costs associated with public consultations.

Background

A Neighbourhood Plan is a detailed plan for an individual neighbourhood that provides guidance about intended land uses and may also contain policies that are relevant to that specific area. Neighbourhood Plans are separate from the Official Plan but can be implemented through the Official Plan and amendments to the Official Plan, including Secondary Plans, and through Zoning By-laws, and other strategies and initiatives. They can also be used to assist in evaluating development proposals.

On November 14, 2025, Planning Committee deferred a decision on Report PED25248, which recommended public consultation on the draft criteria for evaluating the future need for the City's 90 Neighbourhood Plans. Planning Committee requested additional information prior to making a decision, including a communication and engagement strategy and plan, and that copies of all Neighbourhood Plans be provided for the information of Council and the public.

Staff anticipate that through the Neighbourhood Plans Review some neighbourhood plans may be recommended for removal. To provide transparency into the process and

decision-making, a set of preliminary review criteria have been developed. To allow the public to provide informed feedback, a major component of this project will also involve informing the public of the history and role of Neighbourhood Plans within the City's land use planning framework.

Appendix "A" contains the Public Engagement and Communication Plan which outlines the scope and the communication goals and objectives of the engagement. The Plan recommends that public engagement be conducted in two phases, the first to gather initial input on the proposed evaluation criteria and the second to report back to the public on how their feedback has been addressed in the decision-making process. Engagement is proposed to take place both virtually and in-person, with opportunities for in-person engagement within all three of the former municipalities (Hamilton, Stoney Creek and Dundas) which contain Neighbourhood Plans.

Appendices "B" and "C" contain a list of all Neighbourhood Plans and a copy of each Neighbourhood Plan map.

Analysis

Neighbourhood Plans do not form part of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, however there are policies in the Official Plan that make reference to the type of guidance that they may provide, and how amendments to Neighbourhood Plans are to be considered. Neighbourhood Plans are referenced in parkland policies and in urban area general provisions, as well as in Chapter F – Implementation. A full list of Official Plan policies which reference Neighbourhood Plans is included in Appendix "C" to Report PED25248.

In Chapter F, the Urban Hamilton Official Plan states that "Neighbourhood plans are policies adopted by council resolution and do not form part of the Official Plan. Any proposal for development or redevelopment must conform to the designations, and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan" (Policy F.1.2.10).

Policy F.1.2.11 directs that any amendments to a Neighbourhood Plan must be evaluated using the provisions of Policies F.1.1.3 and F.1.1.4 and shall require a formal Council decision to enact the amendment.

Staff are completing a review of the Neighbourhood Plans to update them in accordance with new provincial and municipal policies, and to streamline municipal planning processes. This is consistent with the policies of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan regarding making changes to Neighbourhood Plans.

Rationale for Recommendations

Recent changes to zoning and associated official plan changes for Low Density Residential areas have increased permissions within “Neighbourhoods” designated areas to allow for a greater variety of housing types. These changes are meant to provide more diverse and affordable housing options but are now in conflict with more restrictive land use policies found within the City’s Neighbourhood Plans.

To align with the Low Density Residential zoning, a review of existing Neighbourhood Plans is needed to determine the relevance of each of these plans and whether existing Neighbourhood Plans should be retained and updated in accordance with the permissions provided for under the new Low Density Residential zoning.

If the recommendations of this report are approved, staff will advance consultation in accordance with the Public Engagement and Communication Plan attached as Appendix “A”. The public engagement will take place in Q2 of 2026 with a feedback report to be shared in Q3. After the incorporation of feedback, staff will report back to Planning Committee in Q1 2027 with preliminary recommendations for plans to be repealed. Following this, staff will finalize detailed proposed updates for plans recommended to be retained, to implement the new Low Density Residential Zones and make any other required changes needed to align with the Urban Hamilton Official Plan.

Alternatives

1. Council could decide to not conduct public consultation on the criteria and amend all Neighbourhood Plans to comply with updated Low Density Residential zoning, not considering more comprehensive amendments. Staff do not recommend this as many of the Neighbourhood Plans would continue to be misaligned with current Official Plan policies and other Council approved plans and strategies.
2. Council could decide to repeal Neighbourhood Plans that fall within Secondary Plan areas that are still in effect ahead of public consultation on the draft criteria for the Neighbourhood Plans review, as the Council approved Secondary Plan areas provide more detailed and recent planning policy direction for those neighbourhoods. Staff do not recommend this option as it would circumvent a fulsome public engagement process on all plans.
3. Council could decide to repeal all the Neighbourhood Plans instead of going forward with public consultation on the evaluation criteria for Neighbourhood Plans. Staff do not recommend this option as it would not give opportunity to involve the public in the decision-making process.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Priority 3: Responsiveness & Transparency

- 3.1 Prioritize customer service and proactive communication.
 - 3.2 Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving.

Previous Reports Submitted

- [PED22154 Amendments to Expand the Permitted Uses in the Low Density Residential Zones of the Former Community Zoning By-laws of the Town of Ancaster, Township of Glanbrook, City of Hamilton, and City of Stoney Creek and Create Two New Low Density Residential Zones in Zoning By-law No. 05-200](#)

- [PED22154\(a\) Updates and Amendments to the Low Density Residential \(R1\) and Low Density Residential \(R1a\) Zones, and Creation of a New Low Density Residential – Large Lot \(R2\) Zone, Creation of a New Section 5: Parking, and Technical Amendments to Zoning By-law No. 05-200 as Phase 2 of the Residential Zones Project](#)
- [PED25248 Comprehensive Neighbourhood Plans Review](#)

Consultation

The City's internal Technical Advisory Committee was consulted on the Neighbourhood Plans Review project in October 2024. Feedback was provided on the development of draft criteria for the evaluation of Neighbourhood Plans. Staff and members of the Technical Advisory Committee were also consulted on the relevance and significance of Neighbourhood Plans to their work, and potential changes to Neighbourhood Plans including repeal of Neighbourhood Plans or policies. These comments are summarized in Appendix D attached to Report PED25248. The Public Engagement Office was also consulted on the creation of the Public Engagement and Communication Plan.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Public Engagement and Communication Plan

Appendix B: List of Neighbourhood Plans

Appendix C: Existing Neighbourhood Plans

Prepared by:

Dmitriy Kharena, Community Planner 1

Sustainable Communities, Planning and Economic Development.

Submitted and Recommended by:

Anita Fabac, Acting Director of Planning & Chief Planner.

Planning and Economic Development, Planning Division.