

TAKE ACTION – We Stopped Sprawl – What Comes Next?

This action sheet provides information to help you to complete the City of Hamilton's '**Draft Official Plan Amendments' Comment Form**. The city's on-line form gives residents an opportunity to provide feedback on the policy changes city planners are proposing in order to accommodate future population + jobs growth within the existing urban area (No Urban Boundary Expansion). **City planners propose to keep the urban boundary firm by building low, middle + high density neighbourhoods in designated greenfield areas, the Downtown Hamilton Growth Centre, in nodes + corridors, + with gentle infill development in low density urban neighbourhoods.**

Please take a few minutes **before the March 8th comment deadline** to provide your input to city planners regarding their proposed pathway forward by completing '**Draft Official Plan Amendments' Comment Form**.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the city's on-line comment form.

KEY POINTS TO RAISE IN YOUR RESPONSE:

Planning policies are changed via updates to the official plans. In simple terms, an official plan describes **a municipality's policies on how land in the municipality should be used**. In Hamilton, we have an urban and a rural official plan. Changes need to be made to both plans to support Hamilton's 'No Urban Boundary Expansion' decision, but the vast majority of changes must be made to the urban official plan. **We support the majority of the proposed policy changes put forward by city staff and we are encouraging you to do the same. It is important that the city hears from Hamiltonians who support a firm urban boundary and the planning policy changes required to make a firm urban boundary viable!**

The city's on-line comment form is divided into a number of topic areas related to these official plan changes. These topic areas are listed below along with some key points we suggest you consider raising in your feedback to city planners. Please also note that the city's survey includes a link, in each topic area, to a table with the detailed text of the official plan policy changes city planners are proposing to make. If you are keen to dig into the details, these tables will provide you with a very in-depth look at the changes being proposed.

Urban Hamilton Official Plan Proposed Updates

Topic Area 1 – Growth Management

- Support policy changes that ensure no urban boundary expansions occur.
- Support the city's commitment to 80% intensification in the built-up urban area, to be achieved by building low, middle + high density neighbourhoods in the Downtown Hamilton Growth Centre (high density), in nodes + corridors (middle density), + with gentle infill development in low density urban neighbourhoods (low density).
- Urge the city to set higher targets for the number of people + jobs per hectare (p+j/ha) that will be accommodated in 'designated greenfield areas' (undeveloped land within the urban boundary mostly in suburban areas) from the proposed 60 p+j/ha to at least 80 p+j/ha - the minimum density required to support frequent transit service (bus every 10 to 15 minutes). This is critical to avoid building more car-dependent suburban areas.

Topic Area 2 – Employment

- Call for 'employment sprawl' to be addressed by urging the city to plan for higher density (more jobs

per hectare) in employment areas wherever possible in order to make more efficient use of employment lands and to ensure the protection of natural features found within employment lands.

- Support more live/work/play (mixed use) developments that enable people to live close to where they work.

- Support staff-proposed 'employment land conversions' to mixed use higher density/commercial/retail in locations where mixed use development makes more sense (eg. around the new Confederation GO Station in east Hamilton which will have full GO Train service in the future)

- Urge the city to plan to ensure major employment areas are supported by frequent & reliable transit service and good active transportation infrastructure.

Topic Area 3 – Cultural Heritage

- Support acknowledgement and respect for First Nations, First Nations history in our city, and the commitment to meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities.

- Support policies that commit the city to the proper preservation of heritage properties in Hamilton.

Topic Area 4 – Provincial Plans

- Municipalities must bring their plans into conformity with provincial plans. There have been changes made to some provincial policies and these must be reflected in the city's official plans.

Topic Area 5 – Housing

- Support the city's commitment to ensure that it fulfills its housing strategy targets as set out in its Housing Action Plan, and urge the city to take every opportunity to do everything it can to provide more affordable + deeply affordable housing in Hamilton. This should include an ambitious 'inclusionary zoning' policy around all 'major transit station areas' (future LRT stations, existing GO Stations), and a 'community benefits charges' policy that includes affordable housing as an eligible charge.

- Urge the city to adopt policies that require 'family friendly' housing in higher density areas like Downtown Hamilton, and in higher density buildings.

- Support the proposed residential intensification policies as an important way to provide more housing options and options that span a range of affordability.

- Support official plan criteria designed to balance the need for more housing with the importance of building liveable communities (including policies related to green development).

Topic Area 6 – Climate

- Acknowledge that it is good to see reference to climate and need to assess climate impacts recognized in official plan

- But urge the city to finalize key municipal plans - including the Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP) & Urban Forest Strategy which are both still in draft form- and properly reference commitments to these plans in Hamilton's official plans.

- Urge the city to apply a climate lens to all planning decisions as committed to in the Climate Emergency Declaration and reinforced by Direction #1 of the 9 Directions to Guide Development: "Plan for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

Topic Area 7 – Urban Structure/ Zoning By-Law

- Express support for urban structure policies designed to build 'complete communities' – communities that are higher density and, therefore, more transit supportive, walkable/bikeable, able to support neighbourhood amenities.

- Support the city proposal to allow up to fourplexes in urban neighbourhoods & possibility of six-

plexes on a neighbourhood's outer edges.

-Support higher density targets around 'major transit station areas' - but urge city to ensure it is utilizing all tools at its disposal to ensure that deeply affordable/affordable housing is part of the mix - key tools include inclusionary zoning and community benefits charges.

Topic Area 8 – Infrastructure

-Support adaptive reuse of community facilities - if these facilities cannot be maintained for their current uses.

-Support the recognized need for green infrastructure to better manage impacts of the climate crisis - but underscore the need for green infrastructure to be embodied in ambitious plans and policies like an Urban Forest Strategy with a minimum 40% urban canopy cover target, a Green Development Standard that includes incentivized actions, and a stormwater fee that incentivizes green infrastructure/ low impact development.

Topic Area 9 – Transportation

-Support policies focused on ensuring urban Hamilton has extensive active transportation infrastructure (walking, cycling), public transit, and that recognize the health benefits of these forms of mobility.

-Support the call for 'urban form' - including grid patterned streets - that facilitates active transportation and easy access to public transit.

-Support policies designed to ensure mobility justice - easy movement for people of all mobility abilities, and all socio-economic levels.

Rural Hamilton Official Plan Proposed Updates:

Topic Area – Firm Urban Boundary

-Support policy changes in the Rural Official Plan that prohibit the expansion of urban Hamilton into rural Hamilton.

Thank you for your on-going involvement in this important city-building process!

