



Hamilton

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Linkage Assessment

PURPOSE:

This document provides a guideline for the preparation of a Linkage Assessment which may be required for the submission of an application under the *Planning Act*. All Linkage Assessments shall follow the guidelines referenced in this document. Failure to adhere to the guidelines may result in a report being considered unsatisfactory and a submitted application being deemed incomplete.

Linkage Assessments are required when development or site alteration is proposed within a linkage identified in Hamilton's Official Plans.

The purpose of the City's Official Plan policies is to:

- Protect and enhance connections between Core Areas to enhance the ecological functions of the Natural Heritage System.
- Maintain or enhance linkages wherever possible.
- Integrate the design of a development proposal in a manner that protects or enhances the ecological functions of the Linkage.

Linkage Assessments:

- Identify and assess linkages (vegetative/wildlife/landscape features or functions)
- Assess the potential impacts of development/site alteration on the viability and integrity of a linkage
- Recommend how to protect, enhance or mitigate impacts on a linkage and its functions

PREPARED BY:

Assessments must be prepared by a qualified expert in fields relevant to the natural environment, including an ecologist, biologist, hydrogeologist, arborist/forester, or geologist, depending on the area of expertise required. In some cases, expertise in storm water management, geology, aquatic ecology, terrestrial ecology, hydrogeology, or fluvial geomorphology will be required.

CONTENTS INCLUDE:

A Linkage Assessment shall be prepared in accordance with the City of Hamilton's approved Linkage Assessment Guidelines. Where an Environmental Impact Statement

Linkage Assessment – Development Application Guidelines

(EIS) is also required for a proposal, the Linkage Assessment should be included as part of the EIS.

The contents of a Linkage Assessment will be scoped on a site by site basis. The applicant's qualified expert must prepare a Terms of Reference outlining the contents and scope of the Linkage Assessment to the satisfaction of the City. **Natural Heritage staff in the Planning and Economic Development Department must approve a Terms of Reference for a Linkage Assessment prior to the initiation of the study.**

OTHER INFORMATION:

City of Hamilton Linkage Assessment Guidelines

<https://www.hamilton.ca/build-invest-grow/planning-development/planning-policies-guidelines/linkage-assessment-guidelines>

REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:

Natural Heritage staff, Planning and Economic Development Department.
In some cases, the Environmentally Significant Areas Impact Evaluation Group (ESAIEG) also reviews Linkage Assessments.

CONTACT:

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