

## CHAPTER A – INTRODUCTION

Hamilton is a city of many communities: diverse by nature of geography and history; united by a common future. Hamilton has a vision for its future – a vision for a vibrant, healthy, sustainable city. The vision, known as Our Future Hamilton, that builds on Vision 2020, has been shared by citizens, businesses, community groups, organizations and our local government since 2017. (OPA 167)

An Official Plan is a guiding document – its goals and policies move the City towards achieving its visions for the future – visions that are expressed both through Our Future Hamilton and the City's Strategic Plan. The Official Plan provides direction and guidance on the management of our communities, land use change and physical *development* over the next 30 years. The physical development of the City effects and is affected by environmental, social and economic factors; therefore, the decisions we make about our future development directly contribute to the achievement of our vision. This Plan and the policies contained herein implement many of the principles in Our Future Hamilton and the City's Strategic Plan. (OPA 167)

The policies of this Plan express and enable change and transformation. Our challenge lies in implementing change and transforming the City while balancing and respecting the sense of place, history and culture that makes Hamilton a special place to live, visit and experience.

This Plan is the first Official Plan for the amalgamated communities of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, Hamilton and Stoney Creek. This Plan replaces seven former Official Plans – Region of Hamilton-Wentworth Official Plan and six Official Plans representing the former municipalities in the former Region.

## A.1.0 HAMILTON'S OFFICIAL PLAN

### 1.1 Geographic Setting

Hamilton is a dynamic city with unique geographic attributes. Its varied landscape includes an urban area which is the centre for employment uses, community services, and residential dwellings. Surrounding our *urban area* is a strong rural community dominated by agricultural and environmental areas, 19 rural settlement areas, and a variety of recreational and tourism uses that support both the City and the surrounding regions. Woven throughout the rural and *urban area* is a rich and diverse natural heritage system. Anchored by the Niagara Escarpment, Lake Ontario, Hamilton Harbour and Cootes Paradise, the Natural Heritage System connects the many wetlands, woodlands, streams and meadows found throughout the City's rural and open space areas.

Hamilton's strategic location at the western end of Lake Ontario, mid-way between Toronto and the Canada-USA border, provides the City with many economic advantages. This location at the head of the lake has allowed the City to develop a strong industrial base centred on Hamilton Harbour. The growth of existing and future industrial business parks will help strengthen the economic backbone of the City.

The City is connected to other municipalities and regions by major transportation networks including a series of provincial highways, a growing intra-municipal transit system, a major port, an airport and main railway lines.

### 1.2 Hamilton's Future – A Time for Change

By 2051, the City is expected to grow to achieve a population of 820,000 and 360,000 jobs. The shape, look and feel of the City will change - influenced not only by physical growth but by economic, demographic, and climate change as well. An aging population, a declining number of people per household, the effects of the global economy on local companies, increasing pressures on community services, *the impacts of a changing climate*, and urban pressure on rural resources will result in change – physical, economic and social. The City will experience many changes over the lifetime of this Plan. Change brings energy and opportunities. To effect positive change the City must harness that energy, take advantage of the opportunities, and manage any undesirable impacts. (OPA 167)

Responding to the *impacts of a changing climate* is an urgent challenge the City must face now and over the next 30 years. The City has declared a Climate Emergency and established a goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The implications of not responding to the Climate Emergency are dire. It is predicted that the number of very hot days per year (above 30 degrees Celsius) will increase from an average of 16 between 1976 – 2005 to an average of 37 per year. In a high emissions scenario, the Province of Ontario would be anticipated to see an average annual temperature rise of 5.1 degrees Celsius, and Hamilton would be anticipated to see an average annual precipitation increase of 66.7 mm in the 2050s. (OPA 167)

These potentially severe consequences of climate change reinforce that actions to reduce and respond to the *impacts of a changing climate* will be required across all City departments and will include both corporate and community initiatives. A climate change lens must be applied to all planning decisions going forward as per the City's Corporate Goals and Areas of Focus

for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, to plan for a City that is resilient to the *impacts of a changing climate*. (OPA 167)

Our location in the Golden Horseshoe, as well as the City's strengthening relationship with the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) municipalities, provide both benefits and challenges. Hamilton has become an attractive place to live because of its amenities and reasonable housing prices relative to other cities in the region. However, many of our residents commute to jobs outside Hamilton. One of the City's key priorities is to increase employment opportunities within our boundaries. Another challenge is that our strong social service network serves populations who require assistance and reside both within and outside the City. (OPA 167)

Change in our communities is inevitable. Our communities have continued to evolve and change over the years yet Hamilton is still considered to be a 'city of many communities'. 'Community' means different things to different people. It could be physically geographic, representing a former municipality or specific neighbourhood. 'Community' could be ethnic or culturally-based, or even based around shared interests. 'Community' means something different to each of us. Residents of Hamilton often belong to multiple communities.

When, where and how growth will be accommodated and managed is of tremendous importance to the success of Hamilton as a strong, vibrant, healthy, economically and culturally diverse municipal centre. Strength and success will be achieved by recognizing and building upon the many individual community attributes that we have come to value, while at the same time moving forward with carefully planned changes that transform and enhance our built, natural and social environments. These changes will be managed, in part, through a comprehensive and cohesive set of principles and directions for achieving our Vision.

Just as the growth and *development* decisions made 50 years ago have shaped our City and neighbourhoods, the choices we make today will have far reaching impacts for the community's physical, social and cultural, and environmental development for both current and future generations. Informed decisions must be made through civic engagement on issues and integrated decision-making processes and must be based on the benefits and risks of economic, environmental and social parameters.

### 1.3 Function of the Official Plan

This Plan projects a long term vision for the physical *development* of the City to 2051. The policies provide the direction for managing long term *development* to achieve social, economic and environmental objectives of the City's vision. The Plan:

- Implements Our Future Hamilton and the City's Strategic Plan; (OPA 167)
- is a legal document whose origin is derived from the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990 c. P.13;
- builds on the concepts of provincial initiatives that support the building of strong communities [such as the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Niagara Escarpment Plan]; and, (OPA 167)

- is one of the key implementation mechanisms for the City's Growth Strategy (GRIDS 2) and other corporate initiatives including Master Plans (Transportation and Infrastructure, Recreational, Parks), the Social Development Strategy, the corporate Energy and Sustainability Policy and the Community Climate Change Action Plan (OPA 167)

The Urban Hamilton Official Plan applies to lands within the *urban area*.

#### 1.4 Principles of the Official Plan

The Official Plan plays a major role in setting a framework of actions that will lead to the sustainable, healthy future envisioned by Our Future Hamilton and the City's Strategic Plan. The framework of the Official Plan is centred on the following principles: (OPA 167)

- compact and healthy urban communities that provide opportunities to live, work, play, and learn;
- a strong rural community protected by firm urban boundaries;
- environmental systems – land, air and water – that are protected and enhanced;
- balanced transportation networks that offer choice so people can walk, cycle, take transit, or drive, and recognize the importance of goods movement to our local economy;
- reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and adapting to *the impacts of a changing climate*; (OPA 167)
- a growing, strong, prosperous and diverse economy;
- a wide range and healthy supply of housing options for current and future residents; (OPA 167)
- planning for a City that is equitable and inclusive, and which meets the evolving needs of Hamilton's diverse population; (OPA 167)
- financial stability; and,
- strategic and wise use of infrastructure services and existing built environment.

It must be recognized these principles will not always be balanced in every place and at every time. The Plan provides a policy framework for applying these principles, on a case by case basis, to future land use, social and economic development opportunities.

#### 1.5 Structure and Organization of the Official Plan

This Plan is a single-tier plan. It is a hybrid between a regional plan, which takes a broad view of community growth issues, and a local plan which takes the broader objectives and translates those into specific land use designations and implementation policies.

The Plan is intended to be read and interpreted as a whole. The goals, objectives and policies are interconnected, interrelated and build on each other. For ease of use, the Plan has been broken down into three volumes.

**Volume 1** describes the context of the Plan, a vision for our community, city-wide designations and policies, rural designations and policies, urban

designations and policies, infrastructure and community service policies, as well as policies dealing with environmental issues (i.e. water/air quality, noise and vibration), natural systems and implementation policies.

**Volume 2** contains the Secondary Plans and Rural Settlement Area policies and mapping which provide detailed and community specific guidance to growth and change in smaller geographic areas of the City. They identify more detailed land uses, densities, design requirements, infrastructure requirements and other implementing actions appropriate for the community.

**Volume 3** contains the area and site specific policies which incorporate special conditions. Special Policy Areas are geographic areas where either additional studies are required to determine ultimate land uses or where more detailed and specific policies are required. These lands are not contained within a Secondary Plan. Site Specific Areas and Area Specific Policy Areas include specific planning policies to defined properties. These policies provide detailed direction for individual properties or geographic areas of the City where more detailed direction for land use, infrastructure, transportation, environment, urban design or similar issues are required beyond the general framework provided by this Plan due to unique local circumstances not capable of being addressed by the parent Official Plan or Secondary Plans.

### 1.6 Supporting Plans and Strategies

This Official Plan relies on legislation, strategies, plans and guidelines as implementation tools to move the City's communities forward to meet, not only City directions, but also provincial requirements. Examples include:

- Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS 2) - The purpose of GRIDS 2 is to integrate growth management for land use and community services to achieve the City's Vision through the long term *development* of land uses and services based on environmental priorities, social issues, economic opportunities and population studies. (OPA 167)
- Other Initiatives – The City has developed a Corporate Energy and Sustainability Policy, a Community Climate Change Action Plan, and developed Corporate Goals and Areas of Focus for Climate Mitigation and Adaptation to provide a comprehensive, coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation. These plans will require, and where possible, incentivize and encourage environmental sustainability including reducing GHG emissions and improving climate resiliency. (OPA 167)(OPA 239)
- Master Plans – Water/Wastewater, Storm Water, Transportation, Solid Waste. The purpose of the Master Plans was to prepare strategies and policies for the management and expansion of the City's various engineering services over the next 30 years. They were integrated with land use planning and were conducted under the Environmental Assessment Act and the Municipal Engineers Association Municipal Class Environment Assessment.
- Economic Development Strategy – The development and implementation of a community based multi-year strategy is critical for Hamilton to achieve sustainable economic growth and redevelopment. The proposed strategy is developed around a series of components such as labour force, business development, community redevelopment, infrastructure for innovation and marketing and outreach. The success of this Strategy will require the efforts of the City, residents and businesses.

- Human Services Plan – The integration of planning for human service delivery in Hamilton, through collaboration between service delivery organizations including the City, can ensure that human service provision meets the existing and future needs of Hamilton's changing population. Such a plan will also improve the efficiency of service delivery.
- Guidelines – Both the City and Province have adopted subject-based guidelines to provide a greater level of explanation for the implementation of a policy or the completion of a further study. Examples include 'D' Series Guidelines relating to distance separation from *sensitive* land uses, Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines for the assessment of natural heritage features/lands, Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Guidelines for the assessment of *cultural heritage resources*, and Site Plan Guidelines illustrating the City's design preferences for site planning.

## A.2.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The strategic directions for the City have been shaped by several community wide processes. These processes and the resulting strategies and documents were undertaken with extensive citizen engagement and evaluation. These Hamilton-focused strategic directions and several key Provincial initiatives and directions form the basis for the principles, goals and policies of this Plan.

### 2.1 Our Future Hamilton (OPA 167)

The City has long been a leader in the area of community sustainability. In 1992, the former Region of Hamilton-Wentworth adopted Vision 2020. Adopted by Council in 2016, Our Future Hamilton provides a 25-year community vision that builds on the legacy of Vision 2020, and reflects the values and aspirations of the nearly 55,000 residents who participated in the visioning process. (OPA 167)

#### **Our Future Hamilton – Community Priorities (OPA 167)**

Community Engagement and Participation – Our Future Hamilton is a collaborative place where...

- People work together and make a positive impact on the community.
- Citizens are consulted and involved in making the decisions that impact them.
- A passion and sense of pride for the city exists among residents, driving volunteerism and community-based initiatives.

Economic Prosperity & Growth – Our Future Hamilton is an ambitious place where...

- People successfully provide for themselves and their families and have opportunities to grow and develop.
- Post-secondary institutions and businesses collaborate with the City, contributing to the success of our economy.
- Residents can work in the city in one of the increasing number of quality, well-paying local jobs.
- A prosperous and diverse local and regional economy benefits all residents.

Healthy & Safe Communities – our Future Hamilton is a caring place where...

- People lead happy lives in safe neighbourhoods and friendly communities.
- We all have access to the services and supports we need to be healthy and active.
- Our city is safe and inviting, and people continue to work together to take care of and support each other.

Clean & Green – Our Future Hamilton is an environmentally sustainable place where...

- A flourishing natural environment enriches the quality of life for community members.

- Organizations take a leadership role and operate in a sustainable manner.
- Everyone has a deep understanding and respect for the natural environment and its important contribution to our lives.

Built Environment & Infrastructure – Our Future Hamilton is a people friendly place where...

- The quality of life, well-being and enjoyment of its residents influences design and planning.
- It is easy to get around our city and Hamilton's transportation systems are well-connected regionally.
- Hamilton is connected to its rich history through architecture.
- Public spaces are well maintained and vibrant, with greenspace and attractions for residents and visitors.
- Neighbourhoods have a variety of homes and amenities.

Culture & Diversity – Our Future Hamilton is a vibrant place where...

- People of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are accepted and celebrated.
- There is always something to do in Hamilton, with a year-round calendar of events and a thriving local arts scene.
- All of our downtown areas are bustling centres of economic and community activity.
- People of all backgrounds, ages and abilities call Hamilton home and have access to the support and opportunities they need to succeed.

In addition to Our Future Hamilton, the first phase of the City's updated Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS2) identified the following 10 'Directions' endorsed by Council to evaluate decisions related to urban growth and development, and have informed the development options and growth policy concepts provided in the 10-year update to this Official Plan. (OPA 167)

Ten Directions to Guide Development: (OPA 167)

**Direction #1**

Plan for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Direction #2**

Encourage a compatible mix of uses in neighbourhoods, including a range of housing types and affordabilities, that provide opportunities to live, work, learn, shop and play, promoting a healthy, safe and complete community.

**Direction #3**

Concentrate new development and infrastructure within existing built-up areas and within the urban boundary through intensification and adaptive re-use.

**Direction #4**

Protect rural areas for a viable rural economy, agricultural resources, environmentally sensitive recreation and the enjoyment of the rural landscape.

**Direction #5**

Design neighbourhoods to improve access to community life for all, regardless of age, ethnicity, race, gender, ability, income and spirituality.

**Direction #6**

Retain and intensify existing employment land, attract jobs in Hamilton's strength areas and targeted new sectors, and support access to education and training for all residents.

**Direction #7**

Expand transportation options through the development of complete streets that encourage travel by foot, bike and transit, and enhance efficient inter-regional transportation connections.

**Direction #8**

Maximize the use of existing buildings, infrastructure, and vacant or abandoned land.

**Direction #9**

Protect ecological systems and the natural environment, reduce waste, improve air, land and water quality, and encourage the use of green infrastructure.

**Direction #10**

Maintain and create attractive public and private spaces and respect the unique character of existing buildings, neighbourhoods and communities, protect cultural heritage resources, and support arts and culture as an important part of community identity.

## 2.2 City of Hamilton Strategic Plan

In 2008, City Council developed a Strategic Plan to assist in identifying strategic priorities for the City's future. The Strategic Plan and the Official Plan contain similar themes, principles and goals, such as the creation of healthy, sustainable communities and development of a strong economy. Implementation of the Official Plan policies contributes toward the achievement of the Strategic Plan vision.

**Vision**

To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.

**Mission**

- We provide high quality services in a fiscally and socially responsible, environmentally sustainable and compassionate manner in order to ensure a healthy, safe and prosperous community.
- We engage our citizens and promote a fair, diverse and accepting community.
- We are a skilled, knowledgeable, collaborative and respectful organization that thrives on innovation and quality customer service.
- We are lead by a forward thinking Council.
- The team (staff) shows leadership in carrying out their responsibilities and is valued and appreciated for their contributions and accomplishments

**Strategic Themes**

- Image – Changing the perceptions of Hamilton and promoting the City as a great place to live work and play.
- Job Creation – Ensuring the City has a thriving and diverse business economy with sustainable jobs and employment for its residents.

**Focus Areas**

The City's seven *Focus Areas* are:

- Skilled, Innovative and Respective Organization
- Financial Sustainability
- Effective Inter-governmental Relations
- Growing Our Economy
- Social Development
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Community

**2.3 Growth Management - Provincial**

The Province of Ontario's *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019) (Growth Plan)*, as amended, sets out a vision to 2051 for how and how much growth should occur in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). This area is expected to grow by 4.6 million people by 2051 with Hamilton projecting to take a 5.1% share of the GGH growth. (OPA 167)

Although the total population is expected to grow, certain demographic trends will shape Hamilton over the next three decades. These demographic changes will influence how, where, and when we will grow.

Notably, the provincial growth forecasts are based on assumptions that household size [or persons per unit (PPU)] will slowly decline in varying degrees over the next 30 years. This trend is influenced by lower birth rates, an aging population contributing to a growing number of empty nester households and growth in non-traditional households (e.g. single person households, single parent households).

One of the principal components of the *Growth Plan* is a series of population and employment forecasts for upper and single-tier municipalities within the GGH. The *Growth Plan* requires these forecasts be used by municipalities for planning and managing growth. The *Growth Plan* also identifies a series of density and *intensification* targets which municipalities must plan to achieve.

### 2.3.1 Population Forecasts – City Wide

Hamilton's 2051 population forecasts are as follows:

**Table A.1** - Population Forecasts, 2021-2051 (OPA 167)

Year	Population
2021	584,000
2031	652,000
2041	733,000
2051	820,000
Change 2021- 2051	236,000

Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. Based on Statistics Canada Census data and Growth Plan Schedule 3 forecasts for 2051.

#### 2.3.1.1 Population Growth for Rural Hamilton

In Rural Hamilton Official Plan.

### 2.3.2 Household forecasts – City Wide (OPA 167)

Hamilton's 2051 household forecasts are as follows:

**Table A.2** – Household Forecasts, 2021- 2051

Year	Households
2021	222,500
2031	258,100
2041	295,200
2051	332,800
Change 2021-2051	110,300

Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census data and Growth Plan Schedule 3 forecasts for 2051.

### 2.3.3 Employment Forecasts – City Wide

Hamilton's employment forecasts for 2021-2051 are as follows:

**Table A.2.** Employment Forecasts<sup>1</sup> (OPA 167)

Year	Total <sup>1</sup>
2021	238,000
2031	271,000
2041	310,000
2051	357,000
<b>Change 2021- 2051</b>	<b>119,000</b>

Source: Greater Golden Horseshoe: Growth Forecasts to 2051 by Hemson Consulting Ltd., 2020 (OPA 167)

### 2.3.4 Other Targets

#### Downtown Urban Growth Centre Density Target

2.3.4.1 Hamilton's *Downtown Urban Growth Centre* has been planned to achieve a minimum gross density of 500 people and jobs per hectare by 2051. Overall density in excess of this target may be achievable and desirable. (OPA 167)

#### Greenfield Density Target

2.3.4.2 *Greenfield areas* shall be planned to achieve an overall minimum density of 60 people and jobs per hectare. The *greenfield* density target shall be measured over the entirety of Hamilton's *greenfield area*, excluding natural heritage features designated in this Plan, right-of-way for electrical transmission lines, energy transmission pipelines, roads classified as freeways, as defined and mapped as part of the Ontario Road Network, as well as railways, *employment areas*, and cemeteries. (OPA 167)

2.3.4.3 Notwithstanding policy A.2.3.4.2, the lands within the *greenfield area* that are not subject to existing *development* approvals, including lands within the Fruitland-Winona Secondary Plan area, shall be planned to achieve a minimum density of 70 persons and jobs per hectare. (OPA 167)

#### Residential Intensification Target

2.3.4.4 The City shall plan to achieve a minimum of 80% of all residential *development* occurring annually within its *built-up area*. A total of 88,280 units are to be accommodated within the *built-up area* between 2021 and 2051. The *built-up area* for Hamilton is identified on Appendix G. (OPA 167)

#### Employment Area Density Targets (OPA 167)

2.3.4.5 Hamilton's Employment Areas are planned to achieve an overall density target of 29 jobs per hectare by the year 2051. The density target prescribed to each Employment Area land use designation shall be the average of all lands within the designation determined based on the nature of the employment uses anticipated for these areas over the planning horizon, as follows:

**Table A.3.** Employment Area Densities

Designation	Average Density in people and jobs per hectare
Industrial Land	21.0
Business Park	38.0
Airport Employment Growth District	30.0
Shipping and Navigation	21.0

## 2.4 Growth Management - Hamilton

In May 2006, City Council adopted the City's first Growth Management Strategy. The Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS) identified the broad land use structure, associated infrastructure and major transportation networks to be in place for Hamilton by 2031. In November 2021, through the update to GRIDS known as GRIDS 2, City Council endorsed a No Urban Boundary Expansion growth scenario to plan for the City's growth to 2051.

The No Urban Boundary Expansion scenario accommodates the City's growth to 2051 within the existing Urban Area through intensification and development of existing designated greenfield lands, and a limited amount of infill development within *Rural Hamilton*. The City will be required to accommodate 109,880 new housing units within the existing Urban Area, of which 88,280 will be within the *built-up area* and 21,600 will be within the *greenfield area*. An additional 440 housing units will be developed through limited infill within *Rural Hamilton*. (OPA 167)

- 2.4.1 While the City's strategy for accommodating growth to 2051 is based on a No Urban Boundary Expansion approach which includes *intensification* and *redevelopment* within the *built-up area*, and *development* within *greenfield areas*. Provincial legislation, plans and policies allow for the submission of privately initiated applications for urban boundary expansions. If an urban expansion area is established by a privately initiated application, a coordinated approach to planning for the new Urban Expansion Area, shall be taken to ensure *residential intensification* targets for development within the *built-up area* are prioritized in accordance with this plan. (OPA 185)(OPA 218)
- 2.4.2 Secondary plans and development proposals for Urban Expansion Areas shall implement the goals, objectives and policies of this Plan, including but not limited to: (OPA 185)(OPA 218)
- a) The creation of *complete communities* that have a strong sense of place and enable residents to meet most of their daily needs within a short distance of their home.
  - b) Provision for a range of housing types, forms, and tenures, including *affordable housing* and *housing with supports*.
  - c) Development of an integrated transportation network that is planned based on a *Complete Streets* approach, which prioritizes *transit* and *active transportation*, provides safe and accessible travel options, accounts for equity, and prioritizes connectivity.
  - d) Street design and street layouts that provide for urban greening and supports *active transportation* and *transit* use while minimizing reliance on single occupant vehicles.
  - e) Protection and enhancement of the Natural Heritage System, including preserving *ecological functions* and the natural beauty and distinctive character of the landscape, adopting a design with nature approach.
  - f) Adaptation to climate change, including innovative approaches to storm water management and protection of communities and *infrastructure* from risks associated with natural hazards.
  - g) Implementation of strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through enhancement of the tree canopy, energy efficiency, electricity generation, and approaches to design that reduce reliance on single occupant vehicles.
  - h) Development of financial strategies to recover the lifecycle costs of *infrastructure* and *community facilities*.

## **2.5 Provincial Legislation, Plans and Policies**

The planning regime within the City is affected and, in many ways, directed by provincial legislation, plans and policies, including the Provincial Policy Statement, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Parkway Belt West Plan, and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

### **2.5.1 Provincial Policy Statement**

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 was issued under the authority of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990 c. P.13, and provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and *development*. It promotes a provincially 'policy-led' planning system in which municipal Official Plans and any planning decisions are consistent with the objectives and details of provincial policy, as required by Section 3 of the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990 c. P.13. (OPA 167)

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) sets the policy foundation for regulating the *development* and use of land. It provides for appropriate *development* while protecting resources of provincial interest, public health and safety, and the quality of the natural environment. The PPS supports improved land use planning and management, which contributes to a more effective and efficient land use planning system. It includes enhanced policies on issues that affect communities, such as: the efficient use and management of land and infrastructure; improving air quality, energy conservancy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions; protection of the environment and resources, including agricultural resources and *mineral aggregate resources*; and ensuring appropriate opportunities are provided for employment and residential *development*, including support for a mix of uses. The Official Plan must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. (OPA 167)

### **2.5.2 The Niagara Escarpment Plan**

The Niagara Escarpment includes a variety of topographic features and land uses extending 725 kilometres from Queenston on the Niagara River to the islands off Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula. The Niagara Escarpment is the most prominent natural feature that traverses the City and divides its urban communities into two groups with very different characteristics. The objectives and policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (1985, last amended 2017) strike a balance between *development*, preservation and the enjoyment of this important resource. (OPA 167)

### **2.5.3 The Greenbelt Plan**

In the Rural Hamilton Official Plan.

### **2.5.4 The Parkway Belt West Plan**

Parkway Belt West Plan was created in 1978 for the purposes of creating a multi-purpose utility corridor, urban separator and linked open space system. It is a system of linked natural areas and projected utility corridors which extends from Dundas through the Regions of Halton, Peel and York.

### **2.5.5 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe**

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was originally released in June 2006 to build stronger and more prosperous communities by better

managing growth by 2031. The current Plan (2019 as amended) extended the timeframe to the year 2051, and is based on a series of guiding principles which are aimed at building compact, complete and vibrant communities; providing a range of housing options including affordable housing; managing growth to support a strong competitive economy; making more efficient and effective use of infrastructure and public service facilities; conserving and promoting cultural heritage resources; protecting and enhancing our natural resources including land, air and water; and planning for more resilient communities and infrastructure that are adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate and incorporate approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This vision will be realized through partnerships with other levels of government, the private sector, residents and non-profit agencies. The Official Plan must conform to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. (OPA 167)