

Planning Justification Report

Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan Update to Implement the Transportation Master Plan

June 2026

[This page is left intentionally blank]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. Study Area and Surroundings.....	3
2.1 Transportation Master Plan Study Area Description	3
2.2 Transportation Network.....	4
2.3 Natural Heritage System	6
3. Summary of Proposed Changes.....	9
3.1 Transportation Policy Amendments	9
3.2 Natural Heritage System Amendments	10
4. Policy and Regulatory Context	12
4.1 Planning Act, R.S.O, 1990, c. P.13	12
4.2 Provincial Planning Statement (2024)	14
4.3 Urban Hamilton Official Plan (2013).....	27
4.4 Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan (2015).....	41
5. Conclusion	48

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1 – Airport Employment Growth District Transportation Master Plan Study Area
Figure 2 – Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan Area
Figure 3 – Map of the HSR BLAST Network
Figure 4 – Airport Employment Growth District Proposed Road Network
Figure 5 – Proposed Updates to Airport Growth Employment District Natural Heritage System
Figure 6 – Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule B: Natural Heritage System
Figure 7 – Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule C: Functional Road Classification
Figure 8 – Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule E: Urban Structure

LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Policy Changes Summary
Appendix 2 – Map Changes Summary

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the related plans which supports the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan is the Airport Employment Growth District Transportation Master Plan. It was originally completed in 2011, and an implementation update was subsequently completed in 2016 to reflect the Ontario Municipal Board decision for the Secondary Plan. As best practices and standards for roads change over time and are not the same as when the Transportation Master Plan was originally created, a new update to the Transportation Master Plan was undertaken in 2023 to reflect updated information and assumptions. It was approved by Council on November 8, 2023.

A supporting Subwatershed Study and Stormwater Master Plan for the Airport Employment Growth District area was completed in 2011 and updated in 2017. The 2011 Subwatershed Study defined aquatic and terrestrial resources based on scoped field investigations, aerial survey, modeling, and monitoring. The Natural Heritage System mapping in the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan is based on this information. The 2017 update to the Subwatershed Study identifies some potential changes to the Natural Heritage System. A concurrent review of updates needed for the area's Natural Heritage System mapping is being undertaken to ensure features on the City's policy mapping show all identified features from the Subwatershed Study where these have been verified, and reflect recent development approvals, which are based on more up-to-date natural heritage investigations. This update was prepared without undertaking additional fieldwork.

As a result of this work, a series of amendments to the Urban Hamilton Official Plan and its Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan are required and recommended to serve two purposes:

1. Incorporate the recommendations and revised design vision approved by Council in the Transportation Master Plan Update. The key objectives of this proposal include modifying right-of-way widths, updating road classifications, designating specific rights-of-way for future transit use, and updating transportation-related design policies for both vehicular and active transportation. These modifications reflect the conceptual cross sections developed through the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update, which justified the increase in right-of-way widths based on the implementation of Complete Street Guidelines and the need to accommodate stormwater management infrastructure. Additionally, the update aims to enhance the active transportation network by adding additional policy supporting trails and pedestrian pathways.

2. Update the natural heritage system maps to reflect features identification based on Council-approved environmental studies.

These changes are designed to support anticipated growth and development within the Airport Employment Growth District, ensuring efficient transportation infrastructure that facilitates the movement of people and goods, enhances connectivity, and promotes sustainable and environmentally responsible development.

2. STUDY AREA AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The study area for the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update is in the southwest part of the City of Hamilton, encircling the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport as shown on Figure 1 below. The Airport Employment Growth District encompasses a significant area designated for employment and industrial uses, designed to leverage the proximity to the airport for logistics, transportation, and related industries. The Transportation Master Plan study area encompasses a larger land base to recognize transportation networks that exist beyond the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan boundaries, which are shown on Figure 2.

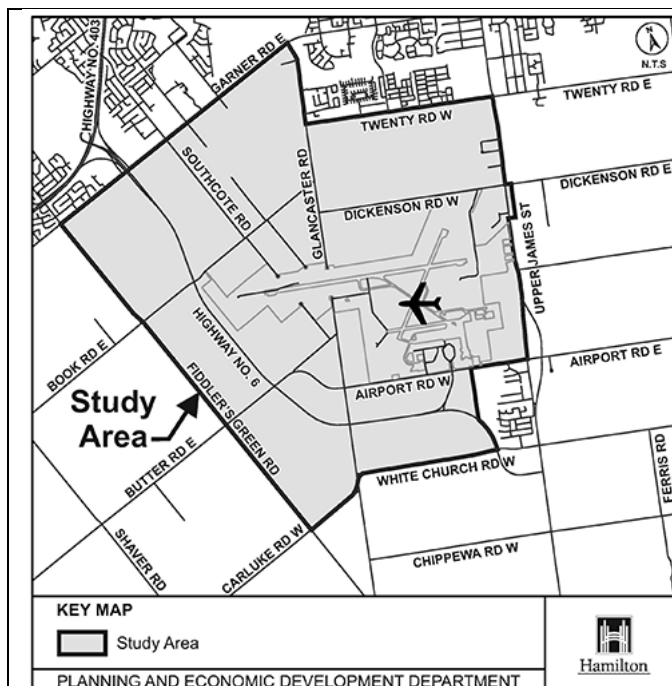


Figure 1: Airport Employment Growth District Transportation Master Plan Study Area

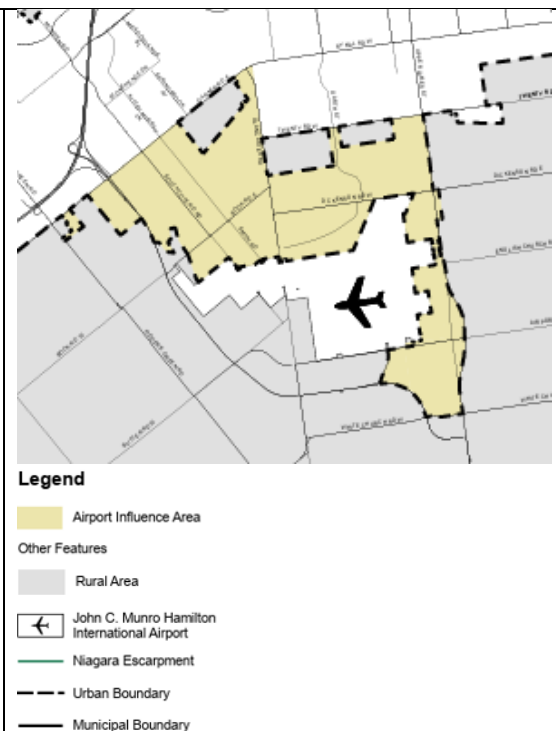


Figure 2: Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan Area

The boundaries of the Transportation Master Plan study area are defined as follows: to the north by Garner Road East and Twenty Road West, to the east by Upper James Street, to the south by White Church Road and Carluke Road, and to the west by Fiddlers Green Road. This area encompasses a total of approximately 1,204 hectares of land, characterized predominantly by agricultural and rural residential lands, though it is primarily zoned for industrial use.

More specifically, to the north of the Transportation Master Plan study area, the area is characterized by a mix of residential neighbourhoods and commercial establishments. These neighbourhoods are well-established, providing a range of housing options and local amenities. Major roadways such as Upper James Street and Rymal Road provide vital connections to the northern parts of Hamilton and beyond. The eastern boundary of the Airport Employment Growth District Transportation Master Plan study area is defined by a combination of residential areas and agricultural lands, including the community of Mount Hope to the southeast. To the south, the landscape transitions into rural and agricultural lands. This area includes a mix of farmland and natural heritage features. The western edge of the Airport Employment Growth District Transportation Master Plan study area is predominantly characterized by agricultural lands and rural residential properties. The proximity to Highway 6 provides an essential transportation link to the broader region as it links with Highway 403.

To ensure a comprehensive approach, the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update study area included roads outside of the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan area. Specifically, lands southwest of the airport were included in the Transportation Master Plan study to ensure that Highway 6 was considered.

2.2 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The Airport Employment Growth District is currently serviced by several bus routes operated by the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR). The primary routes serving the area include Routes 20, 27, and 44. The A-Line Express (Route 20) provides north-south service along Upper James Street, connecting the district with downtown Hamilton and the Hamilton GO Centre. The A-Line Express is part of Hamilton's BLAST network (shown on Figure 3), which is a future-planned rapid transit network for the city. This rapid transit route has fewer stops, designed to offer faster service for commuters. Additionally, Route 27 (Upper James) runs along Upper James Street, offering more frequent stops compared to the A-Line Express. This route serves local transit needs, connecting residents and workers to various points along Upper James Street and providing access to other parts of Hamilton.

Route 44 (Rymal) starts at Confederation GO Station and travels north-south along Centennial Parkway (Highway 20) before turning into an east-west line along Rymal Road, which becomes Garner Road East within the Airport Employment Growth District. It offers 15-minute service frequency during peak periods on weekdays and 30-minute frequencies during off-peak times, connecting the Airport Employment Growth District with residential areas. Route 44 is also part of Hamilton's BLAST network, shown on Figure 3 of this Report, identified as the S-Line.



Figure 3: Map of the Hamilton Street Railway BLAST network

The A-Line is identified for future potential upgrade to Light Rail Transit to provide even more efficient and high-capacity transit service. These transit services and future plans ensure that the Airport Employment Growth District is well-connected to the rest of Hamilton, supporting the district's growth and providing sustainable transportation options for employees and residents. While the approved 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update includes an expanded listing of future transit routes through the Secondary Plan area, some of these routes were developed conceptually and may require confirmation through coordination with the Hamilton Street Railway, especially as transportation demand management strategies are implemented alongside new development.

In addition to public transit, the Airport Employment Growth District is served by a network of arterial and collector roads that provide access to major highways, John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport, and employment lands within the district. These roads play a critical role in supporting goods movement and employee travel. They are also integral to the long-term functionality of the area. However, many of the existing roads currently lack sidewalks, cycling lanes, or dedicated multi-use trails, limiting infrastructure for active transportation and posing challenges for non-vehicular travel. The 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update recognizes these deficiencies and proposes improvements to enhance pedestrian and cycling networks. The proposed road network, as illustrated in Figure 4, outlines the future vision for road connections and improvements to support these goals.

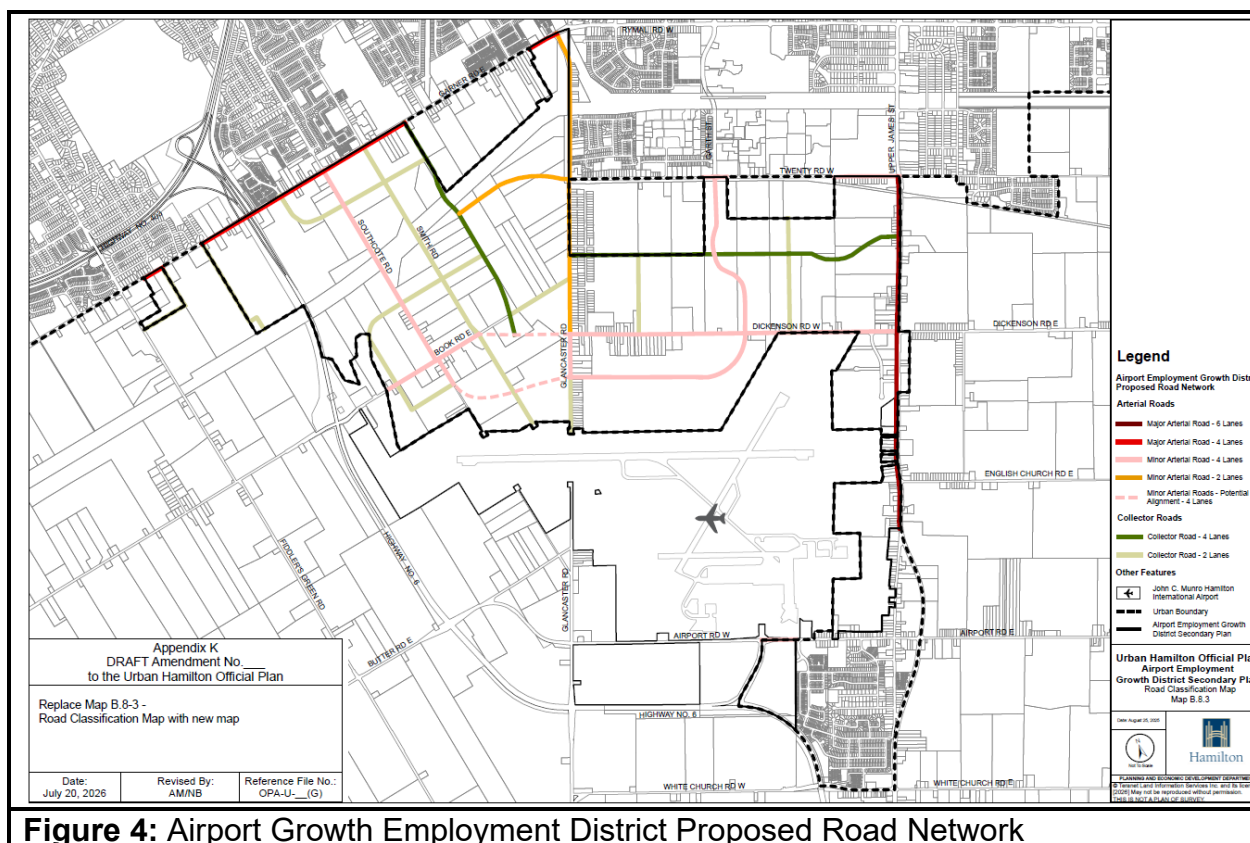


Figure 4: Airport Growth Employment District Proposed Road Network

2.3 NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM

The Natural Heritage System within the Urban Area is comprised of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, Core Areas, and Linkages. The system approach was selected for the City of Hamilton as it recognizes the importance of both features and their functions. It is important to recognize that there are Core Areas which are not mapped on

any Schedules within the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, including Significant Wildlife Habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species, Significant Valleylands, Seeps, and Springs.

A comprehensive Natural Heritage System for the Airport Employment Growth District was approved by Council in 2011 and incorporated into the Secondary Plan mapping at that time. This Natural Heritage System was reconfirmed through the April 2017 Subwatershed Study and Stormwater Master Plan Implementation Guide. The 2017 work was an update to the original 2011 study and did not include additional fieldwork. The findings reaffirmed the same Natural Heritage System, which includes a series of core features, linkages, and hydrological features (streams) that form the basis for a healthy and sustainable urban expansion area. These larger features are additionally identified in Volume 1 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan's schedules, and finer details are shown on the Schedule B – Natural Heritage System.

An audit of the Secondary Plan mapping was requested by City staff to ensure all data remained accurate and up-to-date based on available, approved, and Council-endorsed information. This audit involved comparing the 2017 Implementation Guide (Subwatershed Study and Stormwater Master Plan) and other approved studies completed for individual development proposals against the previously approved Secondary Plan, which was finalized through several Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) decisions. Data from the Green Analytics collaboration with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) on the Innovative Natural Asset Analysis and Valuation Project was reviewed at a high-level while completing the update. However, the data cannot be directly converted and applied to the Natural Heritage System features as they are defined in the Official Plan.

Key to the Secondary Plan Update is ensuring that all features are appropriately reflected across all volumes of the City's Official Plan mapping and as reflected in recently approved studies (being two Environmental Impact Studies prepared for individual development approvals) and Ontario Land Tribunal decisions for case numbers OLT-24-000803 and OLT-21-001788. It is important to note that the update did not include any new fieldwork or investigations to refine the boundaries of natural features. Proposed updates to the natural heritage system are shown on Figure 5 within this Report.

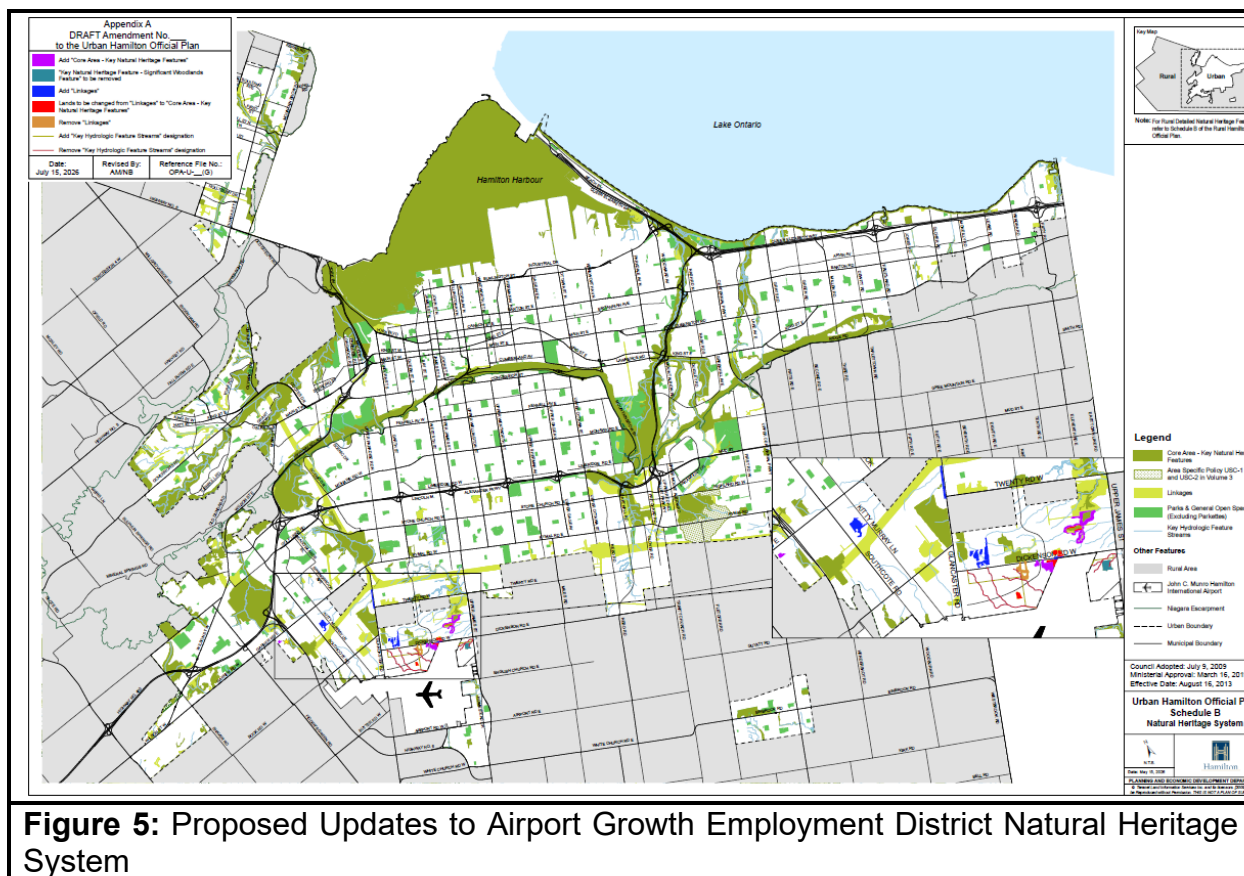


Figure 5: Proposed Updates to Airport Growth Employment District Natural Heritage System

As noted, the features identified through available data sources have been incorporated into the mapping; however, it is possible that not all core areas have been captured in this update. The policies of the Official Plan recognize that nature is dynamic and changes over time, and thus environmental studies are required to be completed as part of a development application to refine the boundaries of features. This process ensures that all core areas and linkages are appropriately recognized. Further refinements will also be addressed through the Environmental Assessment process for road infrastructure projects identified through the Transportation Master Plan, as well as through site-specific environmental studies required as part of future development applications. Updates to the revised Schedules to implement the findings of approved studies do not require official plan amendments.

3. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

The proposed Official Plan Amendment updates the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan to align with the recommendations of the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update, and with mapping recommendations of the 2011 and 2017 Subwatershed Study and Stormwater Masterplan and other recently approved studies and Ontario Land Tribunal decisions. The Amendments reflect both infrastructure and policy changes required to implement the transportation network envisioned for the area. It includes modifications to the road network, refinements to land use mapping, and minor technical policy adjustments to support long-term growth and ensure consistency with current City standards and Council-approved environmental data.

To support transparency and implementation, detailed tables have been included as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report, identifying each proposed policy and mapping change.

3.1 TRANSPORTATION POLICY AMENDMENTS

The transportation-related changes include updates to the road network mapping and design standards. Several corridors have been revised to reflect updated functional classifications, with new road connections added or realigned based on the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update. Right-of-way widths have been adjusted for various road types to support future needs for transit, cycling, and the movement of goods. These changes facilitate the development of a multimodal transportation system that integrates road, transit, and active transportation networks, improving connectivity both within the Airport Employment Growth District and to adjacent areas. The update also included additional changes to promote greater accessibility to the district transportation network by planning for a range of transportation options, including public transit, cycling, walking, carpooling, and ridesharing, to accommodate varied needs and preferences.

Building on these updates, the amendments also modernize parking and active transportation design policies to better reflect contemporary mobility needs as emphasized in the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update. Parking design policies have been refined to encourage shared facilities, prioritize walkability, and support emerging micromobility options while balancing the needs of employers and employees. The amendments also enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity by introducing stronger policies for multimodal integration and ensuring active transportation links are coordinated with the revised road framework.

Policy updates to the Secondary Plan are proposed to support these infrastructure changes and to reflect contemporary transportation planning practices that promote sustainable travel options, reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, and improve overall accessibility. As part of these updates, references to the Niagara to Greater

Toronto Area transportation corridor in the Secondary Plan are proposed to be removed, as the project is no longer under consideration. Additionally, rapid transit policy has been updated to identify major arterial roads as the anticipated corridors for future rapid transit infrastructure, while maintaining flexibility for its final location and design to be determined through future feasibility studies and detailed planning exercises.

3.2 NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM POLICY AMENDMENTS

The proposed amendments include revisions to the Natural Heritage System schedules and mapping to reflect recent Council-approved environmental information and studies, including those prepared for development proposals, Subwatershed and Stormwater Studies, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Natural Asset Valuation Study, relevant Ontario Municipal Board and Ontario Land Tribunal decisions, and input from the applicable conservation authorities. These refinements do not alter the level of protection currently provided by the Secondary Plan, rather they ensure that the mapping is accurate and consistent with approved technical work. It is important to recognize that many of the lands within the Secondary Plan area are subject to development applications and detailed studies with fieldwork are to be submitted in support of the development applications, and as such, this update did not involve detailed fieldwork.

In addition to these updates, the amendments integrate data from recent development applications where site-specific studies have confirmed core area boundaries, identified new core areas, or identified refinements to buffers and the location of natural features. Incorporating this updated technical information ensures the mapping reflects the best available science and avoids inconsistencies between approved studies and policy schedules. This approach also improves clarity for landowners and developers by aligning the Secondary Plan with field-verified conditions and previously endorsed environmental assessments. While some residents and community groups have advocated for additional field investigations and the incorporation of more recent environmental datasets, the purpose of this exercise was not to undertake a comprehensive re-evaluation of the Natural Heritage System. Rather, the amendments focus on incorporating the most recent Council-approved environmental information, approved development-related studies, and technical information available through the planning process.

One housekeeping amendment is proposed: deleting a stream identification and study policy from the Secondary Plan (Volume 2, Policy B.8.12.2) that is already contained in the parent Urban Hamilton Official Plan (Volume 1, Policy C.2.5.7).

Minor adjustments to natural feature boundaries can occur without an amendment to the Official Plan Schedules if supported by approved studies, whereas major additions or

removals still require formal amendments, as outlined in Volume 1 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan.

Further review of policies and mapping for natural heritage systems City-wide is planned as part of Phase 2 of the City's larger Official Plan Review project.

4. POLICY AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

This section outlines the policy and legislative framework that guides land use planning in the City of Hamilton and informs the proposed amendments to the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan. The analysis considers relevant provincial and municipal planning documents, including the *Planning Act*, the Provincial Planning Statement (2024), the Urban Hamilton Official Plan (2013), and the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan (2015). These documents establish the broader planning context and provide direction on matters such as land use, transportation, infrastructure, and environmental protection.

The policies summarized in the following subsections provide the basis for assessing conformity and consistency and demonstrate how the proposed amendments support the City's planning objectives and policy intent.

4.1 PLANNING ACT, R.S.O, 1990, c. P.13

The *Planning Act* is provincial legislation that sets out the provisions for land use planning in Ontario and provides for a land use planning system led by provincial policy.

The *Planning Act* promotes sustainable economic development and integrates matters of provincial interest into provincial and municipal planning decisions by requiring that all decisions be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement and conform to, or not conflict with, provincial plans.

Section 2 of the *Planning Act* requires that an approval authority, in carrying out its responsibilities under the Act, “shall have regard to” matters of provincial interest. The relevant matters of provincial interest and the way they have been taken into consideration with respect to the proposed Secondary Plan Update are as follows:

- (a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features, and functions;
- (d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological, or scientific interest;
- (f) the adequate provision and efficient use of communication, transportation, sewage and water services, and waste management systems;
- (h) the orderly development of safe and healthy communities;
- (k) the adequate provision of employment opportunities;
- (o) the protection of public health and safety;
- (p) the appropriate location of growth and development;
- (q) the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit, and to be oriented to pedestrians.

Response: Commitment to the protection of ecological systems, natural areas, features, and functions is demonstrated through the proposed amendments. The amendments incorporate updated natural heritage system mapping, which delineate the features of the Natural Heritage System.

A strong emphasis on the adequate provision and efficient use of transportation services is also evident in the amendments, ensuring that the Airport Employment Growth District remains a well-connected and accessible employment district. The proposal designates specific rights-of-ways for future priority transit use, particularly along major corridors such as Garner Road East, Upper James Street, and Airport Road West. This ensures that public transit services can be expanded and improved, providing reliable and efficient transportation options for employees and visitors to the Airport Employment Growth District. Additionally, the amendments promote the development of pedestrian and cycling networks, encouraging sustainable and accessible transportation options. By enhancing sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails, the plan supports active transportation and reduces reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, contributing to a more efficient transportation system.

The strategic location of the Airport Employment Growth District continues to make it an ideal hub for employment. The proximity to the airport facilitates logistics, warehousing, and other transportation-related industries, leveraging the existing infrastructure and enhancing economic opportunities. The amendments promote the efficient use of land by concentrating development in areas that are already designated for employment purposes. This minimizes urban sprawl, preserves surrounding agricultural and natural lands, and supports the principles of smart growth and intensification. The amendment will provide an efficient transportation network for goods movement and all other modes of transportation, as well as for stormwater management along roadways in lieu of new wet stormwater ponds around the airport.

Overall, the proposed amendments to the schedules (maps) of Volume 1 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan and the text and schedules of the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan are in alignment with the provincial interests outlined in the *Planning Act*. The amendments ensure the protection of ecological systems, promotes efficient transportation services, support sustainable and orderly development, supports employment opportunities, and appropriately locates growth and development. The amendments will contribute to creating a well-planned, sustainable, accessible, and economically vibrant employment district that meets the needs of current and future generations.

4.2 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT (2024)

The Provincial Planning Statement (2024) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. It was issued under the authority of Section 3 of the *Planning Act* and came into effect on October 20, 2024. It replaces the Provincial Policy Statement that came into effect on May 1, 2020, and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which came into effect in August 2020. The Provincial Planning Statement sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land.

The Provincial Planning Statement provides for, and encourages, appropriate development and long-term economic prosperity while ensuring the protection of resources of provincial interest, promoting responsible development forms, ensuring public health and safety, and the quality of the natural and built environment. The Provincial Planning Statement encourages the development of strong and healthy communities. The following policies support the amendments:

2.3 Settlement Areas and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

1. *Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development. Within settlement areas, growth should be focused in, where applicable, strategic growth areas, including major transit station areas.*
2. *Land use patterns within settlement areas should be based on densities and a mix of land uses which:*
 - a) *efficiently use land and resources;*
 - b) *optimize existing and planned infrastructure and public service facilities;*
 - c) *support active transportation;*
 - d) *are transit-supportive, as appropriate; and*
 - e) *are freight-supportive.*
3. *Planning authorities shall support general intensification and redevelopment to support the achievement of complete communities, including by planning for a range and mix of housing options and prioritizing planning and investment in the necessary infrastructure and public service facilities.*

Response: The proposed amendments support the direction of the Provincial Planning Statement by focusing growth within the existing settlement area boundary and enhancing the functionality of the Airport Employment Growth District as a key employment area. The amendments build on the district's strategic location adjacent to John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and near major transportation corridors to optimize land use, infrastructure, and public service facilities. By identifying road improvements, multimodal connections, and transit-supportive policies, as per the Transportation Master Plan, the amendments support compact development patterns, encourage active transportation, and maintain freight connectivity. These directions contribute to a complete community framework by integrating land use and infrastructure planning to support long-term employment growth and the efficient movement of goods and people.

2.4.3 Frequent Transit Corridors

- 1. Planning authorities shall plan for intensification on lands that are adjacent to existing and planned frequent transit corridors, where appropriate.*

Response: The proposed amendments support the policy direction for strategic growth areas by reinforcing the Airport Employment Growth District as a key area for employment growth and infrastructure investment within the City of Hamilton.

2.8 Employment

2.8.1 Supporting a Modern Economy

- 1. Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:*
 - a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment, institutional, and broader mixed uses to meet long-term needs;*
 - b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;*
 - c) identifying strategic sites for investment, monitoring the availability and suitability of employment sites, including market-ready sites, and seeking to address potential barriers to investment;*

- d) *encouraging intensification of employment uses and compatible, compact, mixed-use development to support the achievement of complete communities; and*
 - e) *addressing land use compatibility adjacent to employment areas by providing an appropriate transition to sensitive land uses.*
2. *Industrial, manufacturing and small-scale warehousing uses that could be located adjacent to sensitive land uses without adverse effects are encouraged in strategic growth areas and other mixed-use areas where frequent transit service is available, outside of employment areas.*
 3. *In addition to policy 3.5, on lands within 300 metres of employment areas, development shall avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate potential impacts on the long-term economic viability of employment uses within existing or planned employment areas, in accordance with provincial guidelines.*
 4. *Major office and major institutional development should be directed to major transit station areas or other strategic growth areas where frequent transit service is available.*

2.8.2 *Employment Areas*

1. *Planning authorities shall plan for, protect and preserve employment areas for current and future uses, and ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs.*
2. *Planning authorities shall protect employment areas that are located in proximity to major goods movement facilities and corridors, including facilities and corridors identified in provincial transportation plans, for the employment area uses that require those locations.*
3. *Planning authorities shall designate, protect and plan for all employment areas in settlement areas by:*
 - a) *planning for employment area uses over the long-term that require those locations including manufacturing, research and development in connection*

with manufacturing, warehousing and goods movement, and associated retail and office uses and ancillary facilities;

- b) prohibiting residential uses, commercial uses, public service facilities and other institutional uses;*
- c) prohibiting retail and office uses that are not associated with the primary employment use;*
- d) prohibiting other sensitive land uses that are not ancillary to uses permitted in the employment area; and*
- e) including an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment areas to ensure land use compatibility and economic viability.*

Response: The proposed amendments are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement's direction for employment by protecting and enhancing the long-term viability of the Airport Employment Growth District as a key employment area in Hamilton. The district plays an essential role in supporting complete communities by accommodating long-term employment needs and facilitating the efficient movement of goods and people. The amendments maintain the area's exclusive focus on employment uses and support infrastructure improvements to facilitate goods movement, warehousing, and industrial activity. It also ensures sufficient land and road capacity to meet the needs of existing and future businesses, particularly those reliant on proximity to John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and major goods movement corridors. By planning for compact and functional built-form, freight-supportive development and identifying strategic infrastructure upgrades, the amendments help remove barriers to investment and reinforce the districts role in supporting a modern and diversified economy.

3.2 *Transportation Systems*

1. *Transportation systems should be provided which are safe, energy efficient, facilitate the movement of people and goods, are appropriate to address projected needs, and support the use of zero-and low-emission vehicles.*
2. *Efficient use should be made of existing and planned infrastructure, including through the use of transportation demand management strategies, where feasible.*
3. *As part of a multimodal transportation system, connectivity within and among transportation systems and modes should be planned for, maintained and, where possible, improved, including connections which cross jurisdictional boundaries.*

Response: The proposed amendments support the transportation policies of the Provincial Planning Statement by advancing a safe, connected, accessible, and energy-efficient multimodal transportation network within the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan. They incorporate planned improvements that facilitate the movement of people and goods, accommodate projected growth, and support the use of zero- and low-emission vehicles through protected transit corridors and active transportation infrastructure. The amendments also ensure the efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure by aligning road improvements with the City's broader transportation planning and by supporting future transportation demand management strategies. Overall connectivity within and beyond the district is strengthened, supporting both regional access and integration with transportation systems across jurisdictional boundaries.

3.3 *Transportation and Infrastructure Corridors*

1. *Planning authorities shall plan for and protect corridors and rights-of-way for infrastructure, including transportation, transit, and electricity generation facilities and transmission systems to meet current and projected needs.*
2. *Major goods movement facilities and corridors shall be protected for the long term.*
3. *Planning authorities shall not permit development in planned corridors that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.*

New development proposed on adjacent lands to existing or planned corridors and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of, the long-term purposes of the corridor and should be designed to avoid, or where avoidance is

not possible, minimize and mitigate negative impacts on and adverse effects from the corridor and transportation facilities.

- 4. The preservation and reuse of abandoned corridors for purposes that maintain the corridor's integrity and continuous linear characteristics should be encouraged, wherever feasible.*
- 5. The co-location of linear infrastructure should be promoted, where appropriate.*

Response: The proposed amendments support the transportation and infrastructure corridor policies of the Provincial Planning Statement by protecting rights-of-way for current and future infrastructure needs, including transit, roads, and goods movement corridors within the Airport Employment Growth District. The amendments reinforce the long-term role of key corridors such as Upper James Street, Garner Road East, and Airport Road West by safeguarding them for future transit and freight-supportive functions. They also ensure that adjacent development remains compatible with the intended function of these corridors by integrating right-of-way protections, and land use designations. The proposed policies discourage any development that could preclude the use of planned corridors and support the continued integrity and connectivity of Hamilton's infrastructure network, including opportunities for co-location and long-term reuse where feasible.

3.4 Airports, Rail and Marine Facilities

- 1. Planning for land uses in the vicinity of airports, rail facilities and marine facilities shall be undertaken so that:*
 - a) their long-term operation and economic role is protected; and*
 - b) airports, rail facilities and marine facilities, and sensitive land uses are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other, in accordance with policy 3.5.*
- 2. Airports shall be protected from incompatible land uses and development by:*
 - a) prohibiting new residential development and other sensitive land uses in areas near airports above 30 NEF/NEP;*
 - b) considering redevelopment of existing residential uses and other sensitive land uses or infilling of residential and other sensitive land uses in areas*

above 30 NEF/NEP only if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the long-term function of the airport; and

c) prohibiting land uses which may cause a potential aviation safety hazard.

Response: The proposed amendments support the Provincial Planning Statement's policies on airports by ensuring that land use planning within the Airport Employment Growth District protects the long-term operation and economic role of John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport. The amendments maintain the employment-focused designation of the area, ensuring compatibility with airport operations. By protecting key transportation corridors and maintaining appropriate land use buffers, the amendments help avoid land use conflicts and support aviation safety. The policies also align with [Land Use In the Vicinity of Aerodromes Federal Guidelines](#) on land use in proximity to airports and reinforce the City's broader strategy to preserve the airport as a vital regional asset.

3.5 Land Use Compatibility

- 1. Major facilities and sensitive land uses shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of major facilities in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.*
- 2. Where avoidance is not possible in accordance with policy 3.5.1, planning authorities shall protect the long-term viability of existing or planned industrial, manufacturing or other major facilities that are vulnerable to encroachment by ensuring that the planning and development of proposed adjacent sensitive land uses is only permitted if potential adverse effects to the proposed sensitive land use are minimized and mitigated, and potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other major facilities are minimized and mitigated in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.*

Response: The proposed amendments are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement's direction on land use compatibility by ensuring that the Airport Employment Growth District remains designated for employment uses and is protected from the introduction of sensitive land uses that could compromise the long-term viability of industrial and transportation-related operations. The amendments reinforce land use patterns that prevent encroachment by residential, institutional, or other incompatible uses, thereby minimizing the risk of adverse effects from odour, noise, and other potential contaminants. This approach supports public health and safety while maintaining the

operational efficiency and economic function of major facilities such as John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and associated industrial and goods movement infrastructure.

3.9 Public Spaces, Recreation Parks, Trails and Open Space

1. Healthy, active, and inclusive communities should be promoted by:

- a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of persons of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;*
- b) planning and providing for the needs of persons of all ages and abilities in the distribution of a full range of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;*
- c) providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and*
- d) recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.*

Response: The proposed amendments support the Provincial Planning Statement's policies on public spaces, recreation, parks, trails, and open space by reinforcing the integration of the natural heritage system and open space corridors within the Airport Employment Growth District. The amendments retain and refine the boundaries of designated Natural Open Space areas and identify opportunities for pedestrian and cycling linkages through multi-use trails and streetscape improvements. These elements promote active transportation, enhance community connectivity, and contribute to a safe and inclusive public realm that supports the needs of people of all ages and abilities. By incorporating updated environmental mapping and protecting natural features, the amendments also contribute to the long-term health of natural systems and minimize impacts on nearby protected areas.

4.1 Natural Heritage

- 1. Natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term.*
- 2. The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, should be*

maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features.

3. *Natural heritage systems shall be identified in Ecoregions 6E & 7E¹, recognizing that natural heritage systems will vary in size and form in settlement areas, rural areas, and prime agricultural areas.*

4. *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in:*

- a) significant wetlands in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E¹; and*
- b) significant coastal wetlands.*

5. *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in :*

- a) significant wetlands in the Canadian Shield north of Ecoregions 5E, 6E, 7E;*
- b) significant woodlands in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and the St. Marys River);*
- c) significant valleylands in Ecoregions 6E and 7E (excluding islands in Lake Huron and St. Marys River);*
- d) significant wildlife habitat;*
- e) significant areas of natural and scientific interest; and*
- f) coastal wetlands in Ecoregions 5E, 6E, and 7E that are not subject to policy 4.1.4.b,*

unless it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or their ecological functions.

6. *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in fish habitat except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.*

7. *Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in habitat of endangered species and threatened species, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.*

Development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the natural heritage features and areas identified in policies 4.1.4, 4.1.5, and 4.1.6 unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated, and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.

Response: The proposed amendments are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement's natural heritage policies by protecting natural features within the Airport Employment Growth District for the long term and ensuring that development is directed away from sensitive areas. The amendments include updated mapping of the Natural Heritage System to reflect Council-approved environmental studies, including Environmental Impact Studies and watershed-related technical work, ensuring accurate identification. These refinements support the maintenance and enhancement of ecological function and biodiversity by reinforcing connectivity between natural features and integrating buffers and linkages throughout the Secondary Plan.

All development within or adjacent to natural heritage features in the Airport Employment Growth District will continue to be subject to municipal, provincial, and federal requirements, including the requirement to demonstrate no negative impacts on ecological functions through appropriate technical evaluations when applications for development are considered.

4.2 Water

1. *Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by:*
 - a) *Using the watershed as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning, which can be a foundation for considering cumulative impacts of development;*
 - b) *Minimizing potential negative impacts, including cross-jurisdictional and cross-watershed impacts;*
 - c) *Identifying water resource systems;*
 - d) *Maintaining linkages and functions of water resource systems;*
 - e) *Implementing necessary restrictions on development and site alteration to:*
 - i. *Protect all municipal drinking water supplies and designated vulnerable areas; and*
 - ii. *Protect, improve, or restore vulnerable surface and ground water, and their hydrologic functions;*
 - f) *Planning for efficient and sustainable uses of water resources, through practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality; and*
 - g) *Ensuring consideration of environmental lake capacity, where applicable.*
2. *Development and site alteration shall be restricted in or near sensitive surface water features and sensitive ground water features such that these features and*

their related hydrologic functions will be protected, improved, or restored, which may require mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches.

- 3. Municipalities are encouraged to undertake, and large and fast-growing municipalities shall undertake watershed planning to inform planning for sewage and water services and stormwater management, including low impact development, and the protection, improvement or restoration of the quality and quantity of water.*
- 5. All municipalities undertaking watershed planning are encouraged to collaborate with applicable conservation authorities.*

Response: The proposed amendments to the Secondary Plan are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement's policies for water as they implement required policy language to protect, improve, or restore the quality and quantity of water through watershed planning. The amendments include updated mapping of the Natural Heritage System that were informed by Council approved environmental studies, environmental impact studies and watershed-related technical work.

5.2 Natural Hazards

- 1. Planning Authorities shall, in collaboration with conservation authorities where they exist, identify hazardous lands and hazardous sites and manage development in these areas, in accordance with provincial guidance.*
- 2. Development shall generally be directed to areas outside of:*
 - h) Hazardous lands adjacent to the shorelines of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River System and large inland lakes which are impacted by flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards;*
 - i) Hazardous lands adjacent to river, stream and small inland lake systems which are impacted by flooding hazards and/or erosion hazards; and*
 - j) Hazardous sites.*
- 3. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted within:*
 - a) The dynamic beach hazard;*
 - b) Defined portions of the flooding hazard along connection channels (the St. Marys, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers);*
 - c) Areas that would be rendered inaccessible to people and vehicles during times of flooding hazards, erosion hazards and/or dynamic beach hazards,*

unless it has been demonstrated that the site has safe access appropriate for the nature of the development and natural hazard; and

- d) A floodway regardless of whether the area or inundation contains high points of land not subject to flooding.*

- 4. Planning authorities shall prepare for the impacts of a changing climate that may increase the risk associated with natural hazards.*

Response: The proposed updates to the Secondary Plan are consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement's policies for natural hazards to ensure safe and sustainable development in areas of hazardous lands and sites. The updates do not remove or reduce protections for hazardous lands or hazardous sites, nor do they direct development into areas subject to flooding, erosion, or other natural hazards. Rather, the proposed amendments improve the accuracy of the Secondary Plan schedules by reflecting current available information while maintaining existing policy framework that requires natural hazards to be identified, evaluated, and addressed through the development review process.

6.1 General Policies for Implementation and Interpretation

- 5. Official Plans shall identify provincial interests and set out appropriate land use designations and policies. Official Plans shall provide clear, reasonable and attainable policies to protect provincial interests and facilitate development in suitable areas.*

In order to protect provincial interests, planning authorities shall keep their official plans up-to-date with the Provincial Planning Statement. The policies of the Provincial Planning Statement continue to apply after adoption and approval of an official plan.

- 7. Where a planning authority must decide on a planning matter before their official plan has been updated to be consistent with the Provincial Planning Statement, or before other applicable planning instruments have been updated accordingly, it must still make a decision that is consistent with the provincial planning statement.*
- 8. In addition to land use approvals under the Planning Act, infrastructure may also have requirements under other legislation and regulations. For example, an environmental assessment process may be required for new infrastructure and modifications to existing infrastructure under applicable legislation.*

Response: The proposed amendments to the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan are aligned with the general policies for implementation and interpretation of the Provincial Planning Statement. The updates reflect the Provincial direction to keep Official Plans up-to-date, and consistent with, the Provincial Planning Statement in order to protect provincial interests related to transportation infrastructure, employment lands, natural heritage features, and sustainable growth. The proposed amendments improve consistency between the Secondary Plan and the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, as well as other Council-approved planning documents, supporting effective implementation of planning policies.

6.2 Coordination

1. *A coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach should be used when dealing with planning matters within municipalities, across lower, single and/or upper-tier municipal boundaries, and with other orders of government, agencies, boards, and Service Managers including:*
 - a) *managing and/or promoting growth and development that is integrated with planning for infrastructure and public service facilities, including schools and associated child care facilities;*
 - b) *economic development strategies;*
 - c) *managing natural heritage, water, agricultural, mineral, and cultural heritage and archaeological resources;*
 - d) *infrastructure, multimodal transportation systems, public service facilities and waste management systems;*
 - e) *ecosystem, shoreline, watershed, and Great Lakes related issues;*
 - f) *natural and human-made hazards;*
 - g) *population, housing and employment projections, based on regional market areas, as appropriate; and*
 - h) *addressing housing needs in accordance with provincial housing policies and plans, including those that address homelessness.*

2. *Planning authorities shall undertake early engagement with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters to facilitate knowledge-sharing, support consideration of Indigenous interests in land use decision-making and support the identification of potential impacts of decisions on the exercise of Aboriginal or treaty rights.*
3. *Planning authorities are encouraged to engage the public and stakeholders early in local efforts to implement the Provincial Planning Statement, and to provide the necessary information to ensure the informed involvement of local citizens, including equity-deserving groups.*

Response: The proposed amendments reflect a coordinated and comprehensive approach to planning within the Airport Employment Growth District by integrating land use, infrastructure, natural heritage, and transportation policy updates in alignment with municipal and provincial planning frameworks. The proposed amendments are informed by technical studies, including Council-approved environmental studies completed for individual development proposals, Subwatershed and Stormwater Studies, and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Natural Asset Valuation Study, which were prepared in consultation with various City departments, ensuring that infrastructure and environmental protection measures are aligned with broader regional planning objectives. Public engagement occurred throughout the process, including open houses and online consultation. Indigenous Communities were consulted as part of this project and will be consulted again on the final recommended amendment for a second review.

4.3 URBAN HAMILTON OFFICIAL PLAN (2013)

The Urban Hamilton Official Plan establishes a framework to guide the city's development in alignment with its long-term vision and strategic objectives. Designed to integrate the diverse communities of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, Hamilton, and Stoney Creek, this Plan consolidates, and advances principles set forth in the Our Future Hamilton Community Vision and the City's Strategic Plan. It provides a comprehensive policy framework to guide land use, infrastructure, and environmental planning decisions within the City of Hamilton. It is structured in three volumes: Volume 1 contains city-wide policies that apply to all areas of the city, Volume 2 contains area-specific policies, including Secondary Plans such as the Airport Employment Growth District, and Volume 3 contains policies for special policy areas, area specific and site-specific policies which incorporate special conditions. Volume 1 policies offer guidance on a range of matters including natural heritage protection, infrastructure, transportation, and growth management. The proposed amendments must be consistent with these policies to support the City's long-term vision for sustainable and coordinated development. Key policies from Volume 1 relevant to this update are summarized below.

Chapter 3 – City wide Systems and Designations

Policies in Chapter C detail the interrelationship between various provincial documents applicable to the planning regime in the City, including the Greenbelt Plan. As shown in Figure 6, the Natural Heritage System implements the policies for the Protected Countryside in the Greenbelt Plan. The Natural Heritage System approach includes Core Areas, as well as supportive features (linkages) that maintain the ecological functionality and connectivity of the natural systems.

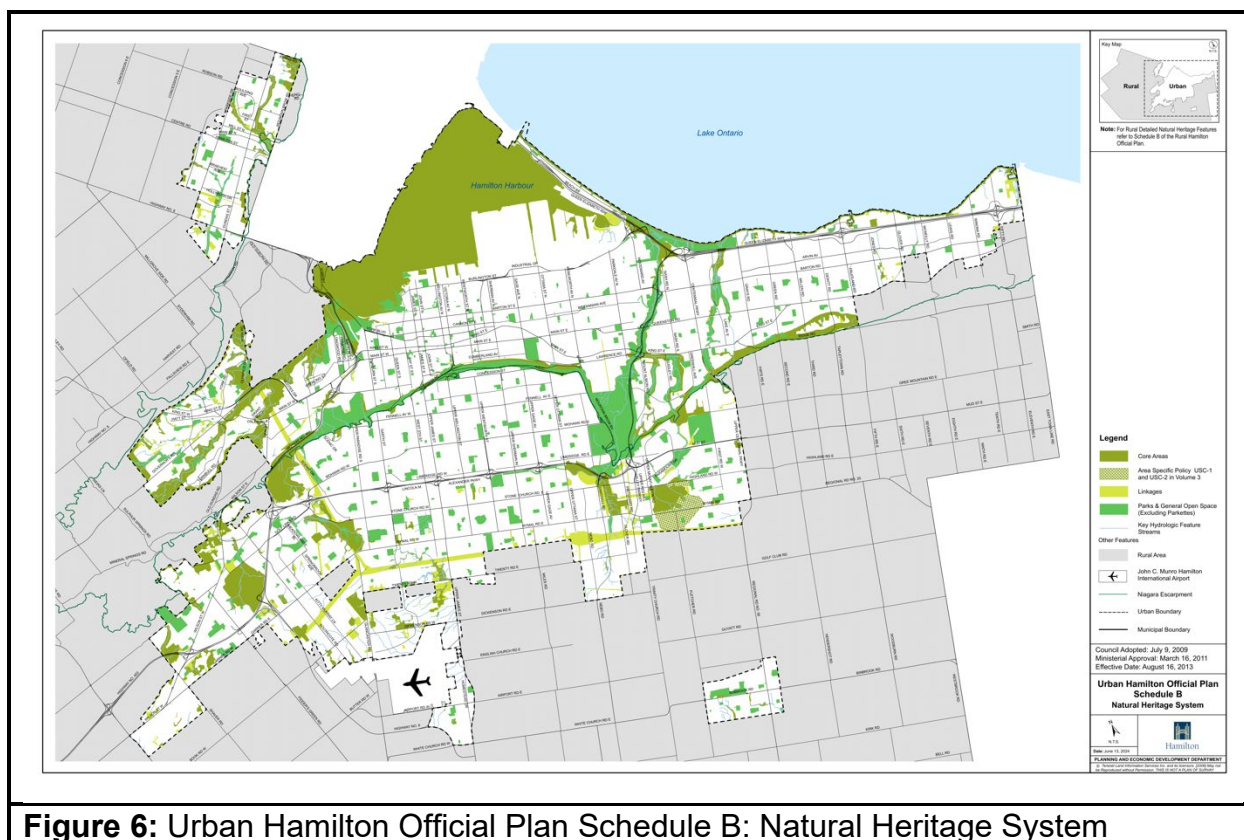


Figure 6: Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule B: Natural Heritage System

C.2.0 Natural Heritage System

2.1 Policy Goals

The following goals apply to designation and management of the Natural Heritage System in Urban Hamilton.

C.2.1.1 *Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological functions.*

- C.2.1.2 *Achieve a healthy, functional ecosystem.*
- C.2.1.3 *Conserve the natural beauty and distinctive character of Hamilton's landscape.*
- C.2.1.4 *Maintain and enhance the contribution made by the Natural Heritage System to the quality of life of Hamilton's residents.*
- C.2.1.5 *Restore and enhance connections, quality and amount of natural habitat.*

C.2.2 General Policies

- C.2.2.2 *The boundaries of Core Areas and Linkages, shown on Schedule B - Natural Heritage System, are general in nature. Minor refinements to such boundaries may occur through Environmental Impact Statements, watershed studies or other appropriate studies accepted by the City without an amendment to this Plan. Major changes to boundaries, the removal or addition of Core Areas and Linkages identified on Schedule B - Natural Heritage System and Schedules B-1-8 – Detailed Natural Heritage Features require an amendment to this Plan.*
- C.2.2.4 *Notwithstanding the designations on Schedule E-1 - Urban Land Use Designations, the policies of this Plan shall apply to Core Areas not currently identified on Schedule B - Natural Heritage System and Schedules B-1 to B-8 - Detailed Natural Heritage Features. Additional Core Areas may be mapped and identified or Core Area boundaries may be refined under the following circumstances and may require an amendment to this Plan:*
 - a) *Individual Environmental Impact Statements;*
 - b) *Watershed or subwatershed studies;*
 - c) *Natural areas inventories;*
 - d) *Environmental Assessments; or,*
 - e) *Other similar studies.*
- C.2.2.7 *Where properties contain two or more overlapping natural features of differing significance which overlap in the Natural Heritage System, the more restrictive policies pertaining to those natural*

features shall apply. If more than one policy applies to a natural feature the more restrictive policy shall apply.

C.2.3 Natural Heritage Systems – Core Areas

It is the intent of this policy to preserve and enhance Core Areas and to ensure that any development or site alteration within or adjacent to them shall not negatively impact their natural features or their ecological functions.

C.2.3.1 In accordance with the policies of this Plan, Schedule B – Natural Heritage System, identifies Core Areas to include key natural heritage features and key hydrological features. Core Areas of the City’s Natural Heritage System also include other locally and provincially significant natural areas. Schedule B – Natural Heritage System shall be amended when new Core Areas are identified.

C.2.3.2 Core Areas include key natural heritage features, key hydrological feature and provincially significant and local natural areas that are specifically identified on Schedule B-1-8 Detailed Natural Heritage Features. Core Areas are the most important components in terms of biodiversity, productivity, and ecological and hydrological functions.

C.2.3.3 The natural features and ecological functions of Core Areas shall be protected and where possible and deemed feasible to the satisfaction of the City enhanced. To accomplish this protection and enhancement, vegetation removal and encroachment into Core Areas shall generally not be permitted, and appropriate vegetation protection zones shall be applied to all Core Areas.

C.2.5 Core Areas – Outside the Greenbelt Plan Area

C.2.5.2 New development and site alteration shall not be permitted within provincially significant wetlands, significant coastal wetlands or significant habitat of threatened and endangered species.

C.2.5.3 New development and site alteration shall not be permitted within fish habitat, except in accordance with provincial and federal requirements.

- C.2.5.4 New development and site alteration shall not be permitted within significant woodlands, significant valleylands, significant wildlife habitat and significant areas of natural and scientific interest unless it has been demonstrated that there shall be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.*
- C.2.5.5 New development and site alteration shall not be permitted on adjacent lands to the natural heritage features and areas identified in Section C.2.5.2 to C.2.5.4 unless the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated, and it has been demonstrated that there shall be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.*
- C.2.5.7 Streams are mapped in Schedule B - Natural Heritage System. Streams have been separated into two classes: Coldwater Watercourse/Critical Habitat and Warmwater Watercourse/Important/Marginal Habitat. If the stream has not been classified as part of an EIS, subwatershed study, or other study, a scoped EIS is required to determine the classification.*

Response: The proposed amendments align with the policy goals of Section C.2.0 Natural Heritage System of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan to prioritize the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, by updating natural heritage maps to ensure the City's natural heritage system is protected.

The updated policy framework will continue to require a scoped Environmental Impact Statement where a stream is identified on Map B.8-2 if the stream has not been classified as part of an Environmental Impact Study, Subwatershed Study, or other study, to determine the classification. A technical change is proposed to the Secondary Plan to remove Policy B.8.12.2 as the policy is duplicated in Volume 1 Policy C.2.5.7. The proposed deletion does not affect the policy framework and the current practice of requiring a scoped Environmental Impact Statement is maintained through the amendment.

C.2.5 Core Areas – Outside the Greenbelt Plan Area

- C.2.5.8 New development or site alteration subject to Policies C.2.5.3 to C.2.5.7 requires, prior to approval, the submission and approval of an Environmental Impact Statement which demonstrates to the satisfaction of the City and the relevant Conservation Authority that:*

- a) *There shall be no negative impacts on the Core Area's natural features or their ecological functions.*
- b) *Connectivity between Core Areas shall be maintained, or where possible, enhanced for the movement of surface and ground water, plants and wildlife across the landscape.*
- c) *The removal of other natural features shall be avoided or minimized by the planning and design of the proposed use or site alteration wherever possible.*

C.2.5.9 *An Environmental Impact Statement shall propose a vegetation protection zone which:*

- a) *has sufficient width to protect the Core Area and its ecological functions from impacts of the proposed land use or site alteration occurring during and after construction, and where possible and deemed feasible to the satisfaction of the City, restores or enhances the Core Area and/or its ecological functions; and,*
- b) *is established to achieve, and be maintained as natural self-sustaining vegetation.*

Response: Development applications on undeveloped lands within the Airport Employment Growth District require an Environmental Impact Statement to be prepared as part of a submission, and any features requiring investigation would be identified with the application as part of confirming the scope of that study. The studies are also required to identify appropriate vegetation protection zones to buffer and protect features from future development.

C.2.5 Core Areas – Outside the Greenbelt Plan Area

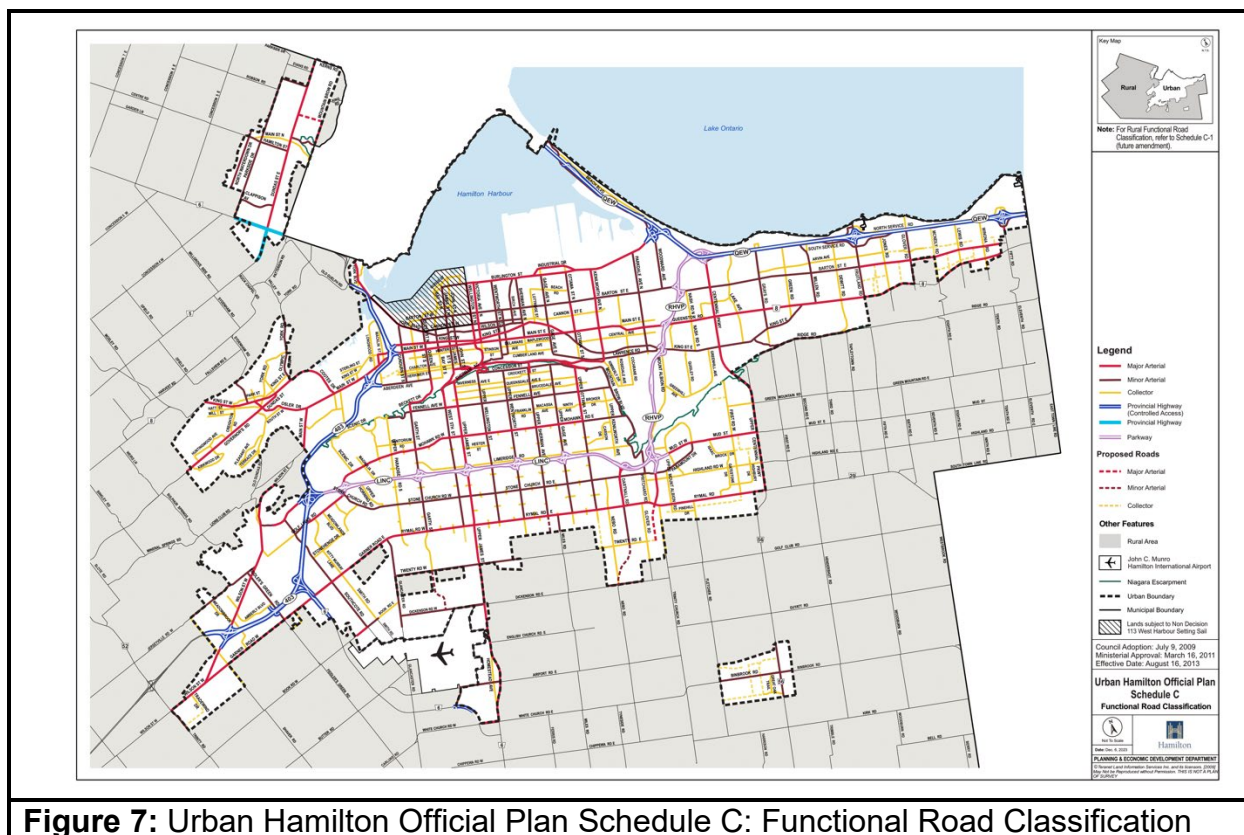
C.2.5.10 *Where vegetation protection zone widths have not been specified by watershed and sub-watershed plans, secondary plans, Environmental assessments and other studies, the following vegetation protection zone widths shall be evaluated and addressed by Environmental Impact Statements. Other agencies, such as Conservation Authorities, may have different vegetation protection zone requirements.*

- a) *Coldwater Watercourse and Critical Habitat – 30-metre vegetation protection zone on each side of the watercourse, measured from the bankfull channel.*
- b) *Warmwater Watercourse and Important and Marginal Habitat – 15 metre vegetation protection zone on each side of the watercourse, measured from the bankfull channel.*
- c) *Provincially Significant Wetlands – 30-metre vegetation protection zone, measured from the boundary of the wetland, as approved by the Conservation Authority or Ministry of Natural Resources.*
- d) *Unevaluated wetlands – Unevaluated wetlands and locally significant wetlands require a 15 metre vegetation protection zone, measured from the boundary of the wetland, as approved by the Conservation Authority or Ministry of Natural Resources, unless an Environmental Impact Statement recommends a more appropriate vegetation protection zone.*
- e) *Woodlands – 10-metre vegetation protection zone, measured from the edge (drip line) of the woodland.*
- f) *Significant woodlands – 15-metre vegetation protection zone, measured from the edge (drip line) of the significant woodland.*

Response: Both the text of the 2011 Subwatershed Study and Stormwater Master Plan (Section 6.2) and the 2017 AEGD Subwatershed Study and Stormwater Master Plan Implementation Document (Section 2.8.1.1), and other Council-approved studies utilize the Urban Hamilton Official Plan vegetative protection zones. These parent Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies apply to identify appropriate buffers and protection zones within the Secondary Plan area.

C.4.0 Integrated Transportation Network

The City of Hamilton's transportation policies are found in Volume 1 Chapter C of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan. The City of Hamilton's integrated transportation network offers a range of travel options for moving both people and goods on roads, rail, air and water. The options on the roadway network include transit, active transportation (non-motorized movements), commercial vehicles and automobiles. The transportation network is characterized by the following classification of functional roads: major arterial, minor arterial, collector, provincial highway (controlled access), provincial highway, and parkway. The functional road classification is shown on Figure 7 of this Report.



C.4.1 Policy Goals

The following goals apply to the integrated transportation network in Hamilton:

- C.4.1.1 *Provide a balanced, sustainable and integrated transportation network which includes all modes of transportation such as active transportation, transit, automobiles, goods movement vehicles, rail, air marine, and emerging modes of transportation and technology. (OPA 167)*
- C.4.1.2 *Recognize the relationship of transportation, public health and land use planning in connecting communities, land uses and activities and the role of the integrated transportation network in creating complete communities and improving overall quality of life. (OPA 167)*
- C.4.1.3 *Facilitate investment in major goods movement facilities and corridors and employment areas for the safe and efficient movement of goods and services within and between Hamilton, neighbouring*

municipalities and regions through various modes within the integrated transportation network. (OPA 167)

C.4.1.4 Plan urban areas so that travel by automobile is an option not a necessity.

C.4.1.6 Provide a safe, convenient, fast, frequent and affordable public transportation service that adapts to a changing climate, features adequate carrying capacity and serves all residents and businesses. (OPA 167)

C.4.1.7 Facilitate an increase in active transportation in the City and contribute to transportation demand management initiatives.

C.4.2 Integrated Transportation Network

C.4.2.6 Public transit shall be an integral component of planning for new development and redevelopment of residential uses and all new commercial, employment, institutional and mixed-use centres within the urban areas of the City. Accordingly, new secondary plans shall include provisions for safe, convenient, accessible and direct access to the public transit network via active transportation.

Urban Design and Complete Streets

C.4.2.10 New secondary plans and designs for major trip generators shall incorporate the following design directions: (OPA 167)

- a) establishment of a continuous grid road network as the preferred street layout to allow pedestrians, cyclists, transit vehicles, automobiles and goods and services vehicles to move efficiently through communities;*
- b) efficient spacing of arterial and collector roads within the grid network;*
- c) organization of land uses in a manner that reduces automobile dependence and improves modal choice and the movement of goods;*

- d) *placement of higher density land uses near existing and planned transit stop/station locations;*
- e) *establish appropriate rights-of-way that support complete streets and supporting place-making opportunities within communities; (OPA 167)*
- f) *complete street designs and layout which reduces and minimizes the need for future traffic calming and/or unnecessary traffic control devices; and (OPA 167)*
- g) *all other applicable design guidelines and design policies of Volume 1, including Section B.3.3 – Urban Design Policies and Chapter E - Urban Systems and Designations.*

C.4.2.14 *The road network shall be planned and designed to:*

- a) *be shared by all modes of transportation;*
- b) *maximize safety for all uses; and,*
 - 1. *minimize lifecycle environmental impacts in accordance with Section C.4.5 - Road Network.*

New Transportation Corridors

C.4.2.18 *Additional transportation corridors may be added to the integrated transportation network in Hamilton in the future. Recognizing the need to plan proactively for future infrastructure requirements and sustainable transportation solutions, the City supports active participation with provincial, inter-provincial and federal transportation planning studies such as the Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan and the Ontario Quebec Continental Gateway and Trade Corridor Study. (OPA 167)*

C.4.2.19 *The City shall plan for and protect corridors and rights-of-way for transportation, transit and infrastructure facilities to meet current and projected needs and not permit development in planned corridors that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.*

C.4.3 Active Transportation Network

C.4.3.3 The City shall build and maintain the active transportation network which recognizes the importance of the sidewalk and cycling network while achieving a high standard of connectivity. Active Transportation shall be prioritized and accommodated in complete streets design and operation through: (OPA 167)

- a) continuous improvement and expansion of the existing network of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including multi-use paths, bike lanes, and other emerging design trends as appropriate; (OPA 167)*
- b) establishment of pedestrian-oriented design guidelines in secondary plans and undeveloped areas that promote active transportation; and,*
- c) provision of traffic calming and management measures, where appropriate. (OPA 167)*

C.4.4 Public Transit Network

C.4.4.4 The City shall improve the speed and reliability of transit service by providing transit-priority measures to lessen delays on transit vehicles caused by other traffic and traffic control signals where feasible.

C.4.4.7 The City shall introduce transit service/infrastructure as early as possible to newly developed residential, commercial, employment and mixed use areas to promote the use of public transportation and reduce the need for automobiles.

C.4.6 Goods Movement Network

C.4.6.1 The major goods movement facilities and corridors in Hamilton shall be maintained, protected and enhanced to support Hamilton's economic development strategy. (OPA 167)

C.4.6.3 The City shall prioritize the investment and development of major goods movement facilities and corridors, including inter-modal facilities, for the transfer of goods between rail, air, marine and truck modes of transportation in appropriate locations such as designated Employment Areas. (OPA 167)

C.4.6.4 The City shall encourage the movement of goods to fully utilize John C. Munro International Airport and the Port of Hamilton, where feasible and in accordance with Sections C.4.8 – Airport and C.4.9 - Marine Network.

C.4.8 Airport

C.4.8.1 It is the objective of this Plan to support John C. Munro International Airport as a 24-hour, seven day a week operation. The Airport and the adjacent Airport Business Park is one of the City's major economic nodes and a valued transportation facility which links the movement of goods and people.

Response: The proposed amendments are designed to create a balanced transportation network that includes public roads, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and future transit routes to support a high-transit modal split, including a future rapid transit connection from downtown to the airport. The amendments encourage cycling by developing a system of on-street and off-street cycling trails, and promote walking through the creation of sidewalks, pedestrian trails, and multi-use paths. The plan prioritizes the development of a safe, convenient, fast, frequent, and affordable public transportation service that adapts to changing climate conditions and meets the needs of all residents and businesses. Furthermore, the plan emphasizes maintaining, protecting, and enhancing major goods movement facilities and corridors to support Hamilton's economic development strategy.

Chapter E – Urban Systems and Designations

Chapter E of Volume 1 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan contains the city's sustainable development framework, which is guided by nine directions, and the policies and goals contained within this chapter provide further direction for growth and development within the Urban Area. Figure 8 illustrates the urban structure elements, nodes, corridors, and other features which implement the policies within this Chapter.

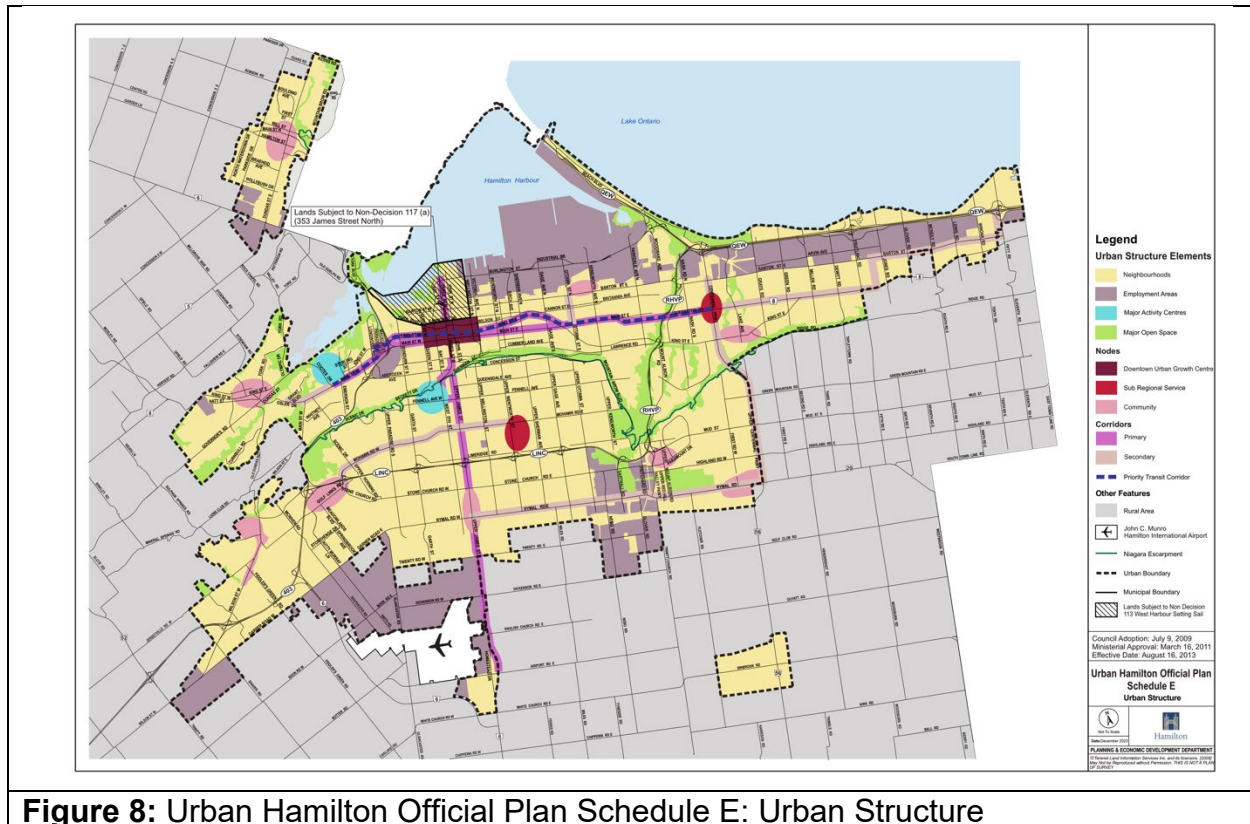


Figure 8: Urban Hamilton Official Plan Schedule E: Urban Structure

E.2.4 Urban Corridors

Function

E.2.4.4 *Primary Corridors shall serve to link two or more nodes, major activity centres, or employment areas.*

E.2.4.6 *Urban Corridors shall function as commercial spines providing retail stores and commercial services that cater primarily to the weekly and daily needs of residents within the surrounding neighbourhoods. Small-scale retail stores that cater to a broader regional market may be also permitted.*

E.2.4.8 *Primary Corridors shall be served by the higher order transit service.*

Design

E.2.4.15 Corridor studies and secondary planning shall make recommendations for active transportation connections including pedestrian improvement to individual sections of a corridor.

Response: The proposed amendments align with the policies for Urban Corridors by ensuring that the corridors serve their intended functions within the urban fabric of Hamilton. The Primary Corridor within the Airport Employment Growth District is designed to link multiple nodes, major activity centers, and employment areas, facilitating seamless connectivity and supporting the movement of people and goods. This linkage enhances accessibility to key destinations such as the downtown area and John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport, promoting economic activity and integration within the city.

Chapter F – Implementation

F.1.0 Planning Act Implementation Tools

F.1.1.5 When considering amendments to this Plan, including secondary plans, the City shall have regard to, among other things, the following criteria:

- a) the impact of the proposed change on the City’s vision for a sustainable community, as it relates to the objectives, policies and targets established in this Plan; and,*
- b) the impact of the proposed change on the City’s communities, environment and economy and the effective administration of the public service.*

Response: The proposed amendments align with the criteria set out in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies for considering amendments to this Plan. They support the City’s vision for a sustainable community by enhancing the use of sustainable transportation modes, protecting natural heritage features, and encouraging efficient land use, thereby contributing to long-term environmental sustainability. The amendments also positively impact the City’s communities by improving accessibility and connectivity, supporting the local economy through increased economic opportunities, and protecting the natural environment by guiding development away from the natural heritage system. These measures collectively ensure effective administration of public services and promote a balanced approach to growth and development within Hamilton.

4.4 AIRPORT EMPLOYMENT GROWTH DISTRICT SECONDARY PLAN (2015)

The Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan is a strategic planning document, which is located within Volume 2 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, designed to guide the development of a significant employment area within Hamilton, centered around John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport. The Secondary Plan aims to create a sustainable, well-connected, and economically vibrant district that supports long-term employment growth, efficient land use, and enhanced transportation infrastructure. By aligning with broader municipal and provincial policies, the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan seeks to balance economic development with environmental stewardship and community well-being. The following sections outline specific relevant policies within the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan and provide detailed responses on how the proposed amendments align with and support these policies.

Chapter B – Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan

B.8.2 Vision and Principles

Vision

B.8.2.1 The Secondary Plan is based upon, and future development should be guided by, the following vision:

The Hamilton Airport Employment Growth District is vibrant and visually appealing and the natural and cultural heritage resources in the area have been preserved and used to establish a distinct character for the area. It is a working community that attracts a range of airport related and other businesses providing both conventional and knowledge-based services. The environmental footprint of the district has been managed through a range of sustainable design techniques and the character of the surrounding land uses have been protected through appropriate land use transitions and transportation planning.

Sense of Place Principles

B.8.2.2 The employment district is vibrant and visually appealing. It is a working community with a unique sense of place derived from a strong connection to its natural setting and the existing airport. The intent is to:

- a) *Balance a high intensity of use with large conserved natural areas;*
- b) *Design with nature by protecting streams, mature trees, wetlands, significant habitat and integrating topography into developments;*
- c) *Integrate the open space system with the Greenbelt and other natural areas;*

Public Realm Principles

B.8.2.3 *Beautiful public spaces, streets and parks reinforce the employment district's character as a green, vibrant and prosperous community. The public realm provides structure and amenity to the employment district. The intent is to:*

- a) *Integrate nature into the public realm by retaining natural areas for use as buffers, open space, and trail systems;*
- b) *Provide a variety of public spaces throughout the employment district differing in size and use;*
- c) *Create walkable places that provide employees an opportunity to come together;*
- d) *Integrate innovative storm water management infrastructure; and,*
- e) *Use native species in landscaping.*

Movement & Connections Principles

B.8.2.5 *The employment district is well connected to the city and region by a seamless, multi-modal transportation network providing a high level of service for goods movement, automobiles, active transportation and transit. Movement within and to the industrial park is an easy experience due to the variety of options. The intent is to:*

- a) *Ensure transportation infrastructure and connections allow for efficient movement of goods and people to, from and within the employment lands;*
- b) *Design the transportation network to accommodate innovations in goods / people movement (e.g., changes in truck sizes, small electric vehicles, etc.);*
- c) *Create a sense of continuity when connecting the employment district to its surroundings;*
- d) *Create a well connected and permeable street pattern but also protect adjacent residential areas from truck traffic;*
- e) *Provide convenient, comfortable and efficient transit connections to the wider city;*
- f) *Create an employment lands enhanced transit stop;*
- g) *Provide goods movement connections to the Hamilton Port area;*
- h) *Provide efficient movement of goods with minimum conflict with other modes of travel;*
- i) *Facilitate pedestrian and cycling movement via an effective network of sidewalks, bike lanes and off-street paths;*
- j) *Provide convenient arterial road connections between the employment district and 400 series highways;*
- k) *Provide convenient connections between the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and the employment district;*
- l) *Integrate with future provincial transportation initiatives (e.g., Niagara to GTA transportation corridor); and,*
- m) *Ensure parking areas are compact, attractive and sustainably designed (e.g., by minimizing storm water and heat island effects and minimizing the footprint of parking areas).*

Natural Heritage Principles

B.8.2.11 Through sustainable design and appropriate development the employment district protects and enhances the natural environment. The intent is to:

- a) Develop in a manner that is sensitive to the natural environment;*
- b) Use innovative, sustainable storm and wastewater infrastructure to protect water quality and source water;*
- c) Protect and integrate provincially and municipally significant natural features, such as streams, valleylands, wetlands, mature trees and forests into the employment district's development, implement provincial policy and meet municipal policy;*
- d) Use sustainable design to limit the emissions, water and energy consumption of buildings within the employment district; and*
- e) Connect the employment district's open space system to surrounding natural areas to allow employees to enjoy and explore the region's natural heritage.*

Response: The proposed amendments align with the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan's vision and principles by ensuring the development of a vibrant and well-connected employment district. The transportation network is planned to support efficient movement of goods and people, accommodate future transportation innovations, and ensure seamless connectivity within and beyond the district. This includes creating convenient transit connections, pedestrian and cycling networks, and efficient links to major highways and the Hamilton Port area. Parking areas are designed to be compact and sustainable, further contributing to the environmental goals of the district. The policies of the Secondary Plan also promote and prioritize sustainable development which is sensitive to the natural environment. These measures collectively support the economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and community well-being envisioned in the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan.

A note that reference to the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area transportation corridor referenced in subsection (l) is proposed to be deleted as a technical change, as the Transportation Master Plan confirmed that this project is no longer being contemplated.

B.8.5 Natural Open Space

B.8.5.1 Lands designated Natural Open Space on Map B.8-1 – Airport Employment Growth District Land Use Plan shall comply with Section B.3.5.3 – Parkland Policies, Section C.2 – Natural Heritage System and Section C.3.3 – Open Space Designations of Volume 1.

B.8.5.2 Minor refinements to boundaries of the Natural Open Space designation may be permitted without amendment to this Secondary Plan provided the change is justified by an Environmental Impact Statement to the satisfaction of the City.

Response: The updated mapping consolidates data from approved Environmental Impact Statement, Subwatershed Studies, and stormwater management plans to ensure consistency with the most current Council-approved environmental information.

B.8.10 Transportation

B.8.10.1 In addition to the policies of Section C.4 – Transportation of Volume 1:

- a) The proposed transportation network servicing this Secondary Plan Area shall include public roads, pedestrian/bicycle pathways and future transit routes supporting a high transit modal split. It shall also include a connection to future rapid transit extending from downtown to the airport.*
- b) Development of the transportation network shall include an allowance in the right-of-way for a green servicing corridor which would support the eco-industrial design of the business park and be capable of accommodating sustainable design elements such as but not limited to distribution of renewable energy, distribution of district energy, water recirculation systems, or light rail transit.*

- B.8.10.2 The City shall encourage cycling as a mode of transportation within and to the Airport Employment Growth District. A system of on-street and off-street cycling trails shall be developed in order to support cycling, in accordance with Map B.8-3 – Airport Employment Growth District Road Classification Map and Appendix ‘A’.*
- B.8.10.4 The City shall encourage walking within and to the Airport Employment Growth District. A system of sidewalks within the right-of-way, pedestrian trails and/or multi-use trails shall be developed in order to support walking, in accordance with Map B.8-3 – Airport Employment Growth District Road Classification Map and Appendix ‘A’.*
- B.8.10.7 The Airport Employment Growth District shall be served by transit service that is accessible to the majority of employees. Places of employment shall be developed so that they are no further than 400 metres from a transit stop measured by a pedestrian walking route from the main entrance of a proposed building to the transit stop.*

Response: The proposed amendments align with the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan's transportation policies and Transportation Master Plan Update by promoting a comprehensive transportation network that includes public roads, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and future transit routes to support a high-transit modal split, including a future rapid transit connection from downtown to the airport. The proposed amendments encourage cycling through a system of on-street and off-street cycling trails, and promote walking with the development of sidewalks, pedestrian trails, and multi-use trails. Furthermore, the proposed amendments ensure that the Airport Employment Growth District is served by accessible transit, with employment areas designed so that no building is further than 400 meters from a transit stop, thereby supporting convenient and efficient movement within the district.

B.8.12 Natural Heritage System

- B.8.12.1 Within the Airport Employment Growth District, there are wetlands, streams, woodlands, meadows, successional areas and hedgerows which are identified as Core Areas, Linkages, and Hedgerows in Map B.8-2 – Airport Employment Growth District Natural Heritage System. The policies of Volume 1 Section C.2.0 – Natural Heritage System apply, with the exception of Section C.2.4.*

Response: The proposed amendments will continue to rely upon the Volume 1 of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan policies for natural heritage, which include study requirements and direction for identifying and studying unmapped features on the landscape to determine if they are core features.

A note that an amendment is proposed to delete Volume 2, Policy B.8.12.2 regarding stream classification, as the policy is duplicated in Urban Hamilton Official Plan (Volume 1, Policy C.2.5.7) that is otherwise already applicable to the Secondary Plan area.

5. CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments to the Urban Hamilton Official Plan, including the Airport Employment Growth District Secondary Plan, support a comprehensive strategy to enhance Hamilton's economic vitality and community well-being within the Airport Employment Growth District area. The proposed amendments align with provincial policies, ensuring that development within the Airport Employment Growth District supports long-term economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and efficient land use.

The proposed amendments align with the objectives of the Urban Hamilton Official Plan by promoting a balanced, integrated, and multimodal transportation network that enhances connectivity and accessibility. By designating specific right-of-way widths for future priority transit use and improving active transportation infrastructure, the Plan encourages the use of sustainable transportation modes and reduces reliance on single-occupancy vehicles. This approach not only supports the efficient movement of people and goods but also contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the mitigation of a changing climate. The Transportation Master Plan Update further supports these goals by incorporating sustainable infrastructure design approaches, including low-impact development (LID) and other best practices, to improve environmental performance and climate resilience across the transportation network.

The proposal emphasizes the protection and enhancement of natural heritage features, ensuring that development maintains the features and function of the natural heritage system. This commitment to ecological preservation aligns with both provincial and local environmental policies, contributing to the conservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of a healthy, functional ecosystem.

In summary, the proposed amendments to the Urban Hamilton Official Plan represents good planning and is in the public interest. It supports provincial and local policy objectives, promotes sustainable and efficient development, enhances economic opportunities, and improves quality of life for Hamilton's residents. These measures ensure that the Airport Employment Growth District can accommodate future growth in a manner that is environmentally responsible, economically viable, and socially inclusive.