



City of Hamilton

**Development of Policy Papers for Phase Two of the  
Transportation Master Plan for the City of Hamilton  
URBAN STRUCTURE AND LAND USE POLICY PAPER**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Study Background and Objectives

The City of Hamilton *City-wide Transportation Master Plan* will provide inputs to the *Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy* (GRIDS) and make recommendations to Council on the adoption of a City-wide Transportation Policy that is cognisant of Vision 2020 and other City of Hamilton long-term planning objectives. The project has been divided into three distinct phases. The first phase consisted of the technical calibration of the existing transportation model to reflect current transportation conditions in Hamilton. The second phase, which is the object of this and other policy papers, will focus on the development of 23 policy papers in the following areas: Travel Demand, Urban Development, System Performance, Infrastructure Planning and Infrastructure Financing. Following the completion of the Policy Papers, the City will proceed to develop transportation scenarios (Phase 3 of the project) based upon the results of the policy work performed in Phase 2 and the land use scenarios developed through the broader GRIDS study and will test the efficiency and viability of these scenarios by integrating them into the calibrated model.

This policy paper addresses the issue of **Urban Structure and Land Use**. The remainder of this introduction provides a description of the relationship between urban structure, land use and transportation. Section 2 provides an overview of the existing situation in Hamilton while Section 3 provides supporting information on existing and future trends and issues. Section 4 highlights experience and practices from other jurisdictions. Sections 5, 6 and 7 outline the development and refinement of policy options, the recommended policies and the potential impacts of each policy recommendation.

### 1.2 Transportation, Urban Development and Land Use

Transportation is a key driver of Hamilton's community form and character. Conversely, urban structure and land use also has a significant impact on transportation infrastructure requirements and travel mode choices. The interplay of urban development and transportation can be understood at three scales.

- **At the regional level, transportation influences economic development, society, and the environment.** Transportation policy should support Hamilton's eight major economic sectors, as identified in the city's Economic Development Strategy (2004). These included the significant industrial, port and manufacturing sector, where the emphasis is shifting from large multinational firms to value-added manufacturing by mid-sized firms. The agricultural sector, which occupies 65% of the city's area and enjoyed cash receipts of \$182.7 million in 1999<sup>1</sup>, may be affected by changes in urban boundaries, land use designations and the location and character of major roads. Transportation should also recognise established and emerging regional interactions, current growth patterns and their impact on environmental and agricultural reserves.
- **At the community level, transportation influences urban form, structure, and health.** Hamilton's important community centres (e.g. Ancaster, Stoney Creek, Dundas and Hamilton), its extensive rural community, and its various urban and suburban areas are changing in different ways. In the next few years, major land use decisions will define areas of growth and intensification, and protect rural and open spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Hamilton. Economic Development Strategy for City of Hamilton, Draft Dec. 2001.

Transportation policies and investment strategies will have a central role in shaping the mix of land uses (e.g. residential, institutional, commercial, industrial, park, open space) that make the city more vibrant and successful. They can directly influence urban form as well as other priorities like intensification, environmental protection, landscape and vista preservation, and community connections. In particular, transit policies can actively support dense, vibrant urban areas where places of work and residence are brought together when combined with land use policies that promote mixed-use nodes and corridors. Transportation can also contribute to the creation of 'healthy', sustainable urban form, as recognised by the World Health Organisation and more locally, the City's Public Health Department. There is growing recognition that current urban planning is failing to explicitly consider the impacts of the built environment on health and well-being, which are wide-ranging and include cardiovascular diseases, psychological distress, reduced physical activity and increased obesity<sup>2</sup>.

- **At the neighbourhood level, transportation influences aesthetics, accessibility, mobility, safety, and quality of life.** Official Plan, zoning and design guidelines determine acceptable forms of development and streetscaping for different road types. In doing so, they influence mobility, accessibility, safety and neighbourhood aesthetics. Pedestrians, cyclists and transit users are directly affected by urban design elements such as sidewalks, shelters, on-street and off-street parking, building orientation (i.e. fronting or backing to streets), vegetation and lighting.

This paper explores the mutually determinant roles of transportation and urban structure by describing existing conditions, exploring innovative practices, and proposing policy options.

The general focus of this paper is on Urban Form and Structure. The issues of Economic Development as well as Urban Design are addressed in companion policy papers, although they are discussed where relevant in this paper. A

It is also noted that the issue of Urban Structure and Land Use is being addressed more comprehensively as part of a separate exercise under the GRIDS process. Therefore, this paper attempts to focus on the interaction between urban structure and transportation.

### 1.3 Existing Urban Structure

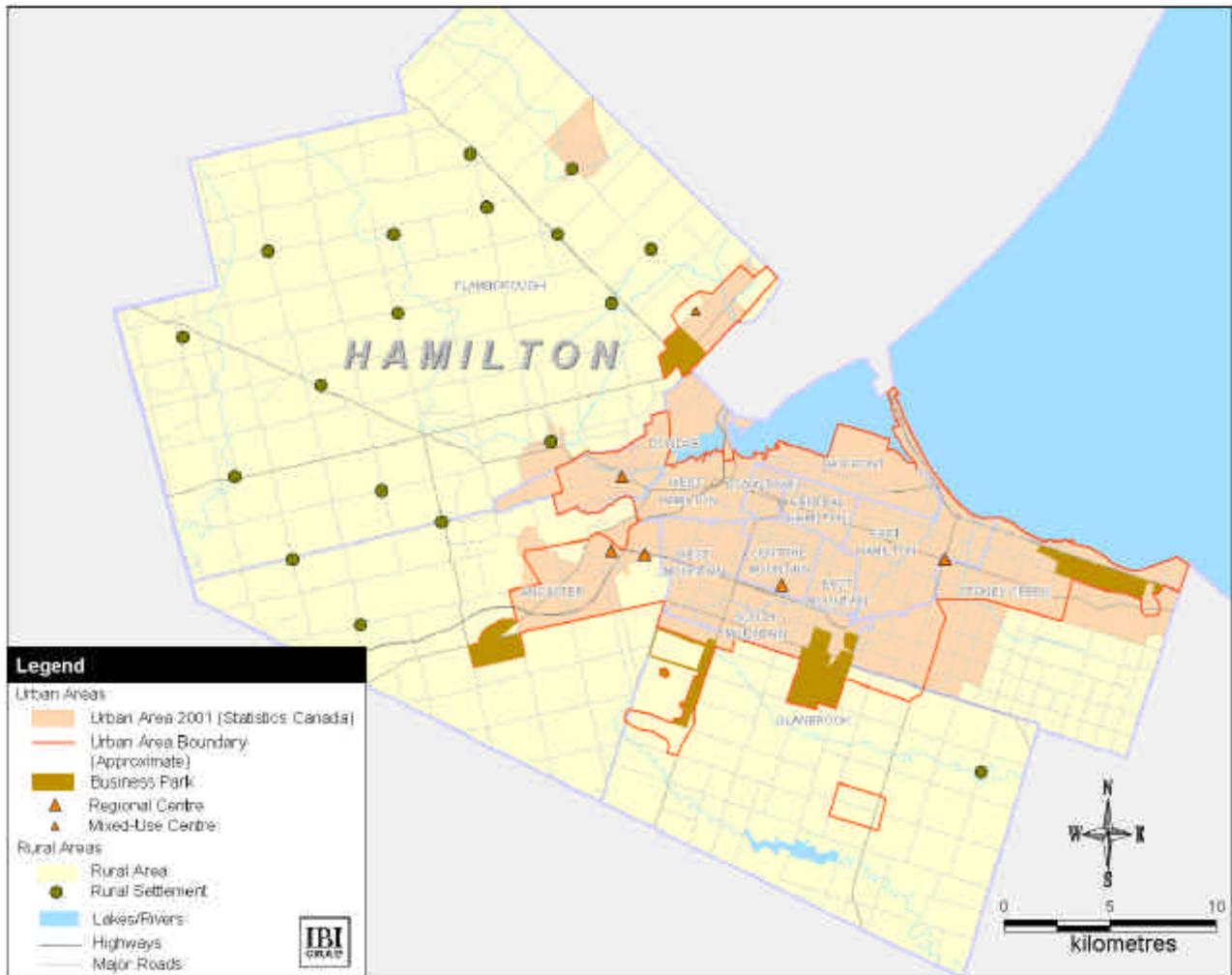
Exhibit 1.1 illustrates the existing urban structure of Hamilton. The urbanized area of Hamilton is generally comprised of the former City of Hamilton and surrounding municipalities (Stoney Creek, Dundas and, Ancaster). The former municipalities of Flamborough and Glanbrook, and parts of Ancaster are much less urbanized and consist mainly of smaller rural communities.

With the exception of Binbrook, most of the land within the urban boundary identified in the Hamilton-Wentworth Official Plan has been developed or urbanized.

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<sup>2</sup> Northridge, M., Sclar, E., and Biswas, P., Sorting out the Connections Between the Built Environment and Health: A Conceptual Framework for Navigating Pathways and Planning Healthy Cities, *Journal of Urban Health*, Vol. 80, No. 4, December 2003.

Exhibit 1.1: Existing Regional Structure



Source: Compiled by IBI Group based on the Hamilton-Wentworth Official Plan, Statistics Canada Census Data and various transportation network files.

Note: Urban boundary shown is approximate.

## 2. REVIEW OF EXISTING CITY OF HAMILTON POLICIES

### 2.1 Current Roles and Responsibilities

The City of Hamilton's Planning and Development Department is responsible for planning, land development, property management, and downtown renewal. Its main divisions are described below.

**Building and Licensing Division.** This division provides services through the Engineering & Zoning Section, the Building Construction Section and the Standards & Licensing Section. This Division is responsible for final approvals for construction.

**Development and Real Estate Division.** This division is divided into three geographic teams, namely Central (Wards 1 to 8), East (Wards 9 to 11), and West (Wards 12 to 15). Its mandate is to implement long-range plans affecting community form, including the following responsibilities:

- City Development Planning
- Zoning By-law Reform
- City plan(s)<sup>3</sup>
- Assigned approvals

**Downtown Renewal Division.** This division promotes rehabilitation and development of properties in all former downtowns of the new City of Hamilton. As the single point of contact with developers, the division administers and implements long-term capital investment/development plans, and prepares urban design and streetscape plans for the downtowns and Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).

**Long Range Planning and Design Division.** This division has three sections:

- Heritage and Urban Design Section Official Plan Reform Section — Responsible for preparing a consolidated Official Plan (OP) from the former Official Plans of Hamilton-Wentworth Region, and the Municipalities of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook and Stoney Creek.
- Community Planning and Design Section — Responsible for various functions including Information Resources, Community Partnerships, Neighbourhood Planning and Downtown Planning.

Additionally, the Public Health and Social Services Department are positioned to contribute to urban development through a number of units such as Culture and Recreation, who administer recreational parks, trails, and facilities and the **Housing Division**. The Housing Division manages the city's affordable housing stock, developing and administering a range of programs, services and policies to meet demands for affordable housing.

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<sup>3</sup> The City is currently applying the Plans from the former municipalities that now make up the City of Hamilton until the new OP is complete. Development is restricted during this period, but a number of short-term projects have been approved by Council to respond to opportunities or significant and immediate issues.

## 2.2 Review of Existing City of Hamilton Policies

This section summarizes key existing policies related to urban development, land use and transportation issues. The policies generally reflect a desire to move towards mixed-use communities that support walking, cycling and public transit.

### Current Planning Initiatives - Vision 2020

Vision 2020, first adopted in 1992 and then re-adopted by council in 2003, is Hamilton's guiding value statement. Encapsulating policies for all areas of development in Hamilton – social, environmental and economic, the Vision depicts a healthy, equitable, and sustainable Hamilton. Its values and goals aim for the development of a superior quality of life, the Hamilton today's residents would like to bequeath to their grandchildren.

Guided by this Vision, Hamilton has undertaken a 30-year integrated planning process based in public consultation: the Growth-Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS). The study design objectives for implementation are:

*Direction #1 – Encourage a compatible mix of uses in neighbourhoods that provide opportunities to live, work and play.*

*Direction #2 – Concentrate new development within existing built-up areas and within a firm urban boundary.*

*Direction #3 – Protect rural areas for a viable rural economy, agricultural resources, environmentally sensitive recreation and enjoyment of the rural landscape.*

*Direction #4 – Design neighbourhoods to improve access to community life.*

*Direction #5 – Retain and attract jobs in Hamilton's strength areas and in targeted new sectors.*

*Direction #6 – Expand transportation options that encourage travel by foot, bike and transit and enhance efficient inter-regional transportation connections.*

*Direction #7 – Maximize the use of existing buildings, infrastructure and vacant or abandoned land.*

*Direction #8 – Protect ecological systems and improve air, land and water quality.*

*Direction #9 – Maintain and create attractive public and private spaces and respect the unique character of existing buildings, neighbourhoods and settlements.*

A number of plans, including the city's new Official Plan and the Transportation Master Plan are concurrently being developed.

### 2.2.1 REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH — OFFICIAL PLAN

The following policies are excerpted from the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Plan (Office Consolidation, July 2003). They address quality of life, employment, land use and infrastructure in combination with current and future transportation needs. Their emphasis is on strengthening the role of the airport as a major transportation and development node, defining targets for future residential and mixed-use developments, and ensuring that transit and transportation corridors are integrated and meet the demands for the movement of people and goods.

**Part B: Quality of Life**

**4. Economic Opportunities**

*Another shift in traditional employment, partially a result of improved telecommunications, is the trend of people working at home in what is called "work at home or cottage type industries or service operations". Working at home is desirable from an environmental perspective, as fewer commuters mean reduced emissions and traffic congestion. Working at home may be considered in neighbourhoods where it can be integrated into the residential community.*

4.1.1 *Economic Action Plan*

*h) developing community infrastructure that is supportive of economic development activities.*

**Part C: Land Use Strategy**

3.1.1 *Compact Mixed Use Form*

*A compact higher density urban form, with mixed use development in identified Regional and Municipal centres and along corridors, best meets the environmental, social and economic principles of sustainable development. Mixed forms of development within an Urban Area is preferable to widespread, low density residential development and scattered rural development, because:*

- growth can be accommodated by building on vacant or redeveloped land, without taking up agricultural lands or natural areas;*
- higher density development can reduce per capita servicing costs and makes more efficient use of existing services;*
- efficient and affordable public transit systems can be established;*
- effective community design can ensure people are close to recreation, natural areas, shopping and their workplace; and,*
- a compact community makes walking and bicycling viable options for movement.*

*To ensure that development opportunities create a desirable urban form, the Region will:*

*3.1.1.2 Plan transportation and waste water and water supply services within the Urban Area to support a pattern of mixed use, higher density activity centres and corridors.*

*3.1.1.6 be easily accessible to public transit and provide for good internal pedestrian movements;*

*3.1.1.8 Promote the integration of transit plans into the design of neighbourhood and secondary plans to achieve a distance of approximately 400 metres or a five minute walk between 90% of residential units and transit stops.*

**4. Infrastructure**

*In order that the infrastructure necessary to sustain anticipated growth be provided, a strategy is required that:*

- *Creates an integrated transportation system that promotes public transit; ensures an efficient roads network that can accommodate vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles; and enhances the existing air, water and rail transportation networks; and*

#### 4.3 *Integrated Transportation System*

*The movement of people and goods is vital to the prosperity of this Region. An integrated transportation system (combining transit, vehicles, bicycles, air and water transport and pedestrian movements) is required which stresses easy pedestrian, transit and vehicular access to all basic needs and supports a sustainable development pattern.*

*Because there is a direct link between land use planning (densities, mix and proximity of uses) and transportation, emphasis will be placed on accessibility and reducing reliance on the automobile by promoting alternative modes of transportation, such as public transit, walking, and cycling to all urbanized areas of the Region.*

*The Region must ensure efficient use of existing transportation resources and infrastructure and the best utilization of available public funds to provide a fully integrated transportation system.*

### 2.2.2 CITY OF HAMILTON — OFFICIAL PLAN

The City of Hamilton's Official Plan (July 1999) establishes key transportation policies as they relate to land use. These include policies providing for efficiencies in future land development (i.e., clustering of units and shorter road lengths), and providing direction for neighbourhood plans to identify link-node systems for pedestrians. It also supports the efficient development of Hamilton Harbour lands as an economic node by restricting land use to marine-type uses and supporting them with appropriate transportation choices.

#### **Subsection A.2.1 – Residential Uses**

2.1.9.1 *Council will encourage the design of Residential areas which complement the natural features of the area and utilize energy saving measures such as, but not limited to:*

- *Reduces road lengths;*
- *Building operations;*
- *Retention of existing trees and other vegetation;*
- *Clustering of units; and*
- *Such matters as Council deems necessary; and which are in keeping with the provisions of Subsection C.8, Energy.*

#### **Subsection A.2.11 – Shipping and Navigation Uses**

2.11.3 *In order to enhance the viability of the Shipping and Navigation Uses or Special Shipping and Navigation Uses designation, Council, where feasible and deemed appropriate, shall encourage and assist in the establishment and/or maintenance of the Port through the provision of highways, arterial roads, rail and public transit services.*

#### **Subsection B.3.2 – Public Transit**

*Council will promote Sub-Regional Centres as secondary focal points for local Transit service and, further, will co-operate with other levels of government in any investigation to increase Transit capacity linking the Central Policy Area and the Sub-Regional Centres to other land uses.*

#### **Subsection B.3.4 – Pedestrian Cycle Circulation**

3.4.1 *Council will promote the development of a “link-node” system which will link major Pedestrian destinations such as Schools, Parks and Commercial areas (e.g. the Central Policy Area) by Pedestrian paths, sidewalks along certain road, or Bicycle routes. The location of bikeways, and pedestrian paths may be detailed through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Further, where feasible, Council will continue to implement a “link-node” system.*

#### **Subsection B.3.6 – Marine Service**

3.6.1 *Council will encourage and support the Hamilton Harbour Commissioners in the development of land for bona fide shipping and navigation purposes in a manner consistent with the economic and environmental goals of the City.*

### **2.2.3 CITY OF STONEY CREEK – OFFICIAL PLAN**

The Stoney Creek Official Plan (November 18, 1999) delegates detailed planning to the Neighbourhood Planning level, and does little to address how land development affects transportation. Some discussion and direction is provided for considering higher densities in the vicinity of major corridors.

#### **Public Transit – D.3.2**

3.2.2.3 *The concentration of high density residential development in the immediate proximity of major transit corridors and transit points in the transit system may be permitted in accordance with the relevant policies of this plan.*

#### **Subsection F.7 – Neighbourhood Plans**

7.3 *Neighbourhood Plans will indicate the location of existing and proposed Arterial, Collector and Local roads; the ultimate population and number of residential units to be expected in the Neighbourhood; the location and extent of land for community facilities, open space, school, institutional, commercial and residential uses; the distribution and mix of housing of various densities; the location of major redevelopment areas and the location and design of basic engineering services and public utilities. Neighbourhood Plans will also form a basis for the maintenance of relevant statistical data.*

### **2.2.4 THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF GLANBROOK – OFFICIAL PLAN**

The Glanbrook Official Plan (December 1998) provides little direction overall regarding land use development and transportation policies, however, considerable attention is given to the role and use of the Airport. The Airport is seen as a regional node with a vibrant surrounding industrial-business area. Policies are provided to ensure that the Airport area is well served, and to provide for future growth.

#### **B.2.1 Residential General Policies**

B.2.1.7 *With respect to residential design Council shall encourage:*

- d) *The provision of internal walkways and bikeways in the residential areas to provide access to commercial, community, institutional and open space uses.*

### **B.2.6 Airport industrial-Business Park**

*B.2.6.6 The Airport Industrial-Business Park shall be developed in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. Wherever possible, regard shall be given to reducing the number of access points to major boundary and major internal roadways, and to providing efficient internal traffic circulation, adequate off-street parking and loading facilities, adequate restrictions and screening of outside storage, and adequate landscaping, and buffering requirements.*

## **Section E: Transportation Policies**

*Although the proposed Hamilton Mountain East-West and North-South Transportation Corridor is not geographically located within the Township of Glanbrook, the proposed facility does have a substantial impact on future development, especially industrial and commercial development, in the Township. In this regard, the Township supports the development of the Mountain East-West and North-South Transportation Corridor.*

### **2.2.5 TOWN OF FLAMBOROUGH — OFFICIAL PLAN**

The Flamborough Official Plan (March 1997 consolidation) provides for detailed streetscape and design requirements (section A.6.9 Streetscape Policy) as well as direction for the consideration of pedestrian and bicycle movement in new housing developments.

### **E.3 Housing**

#### **E.3.1.1 Housing Supply**

*xii) When considering all new housing development or redevelopment, Council will require consideration of the following:*

- *that the existing pattern of the streetscape and landscape is maintained or improved*
- *that consideration be given to the provision of pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths, where feasible, to facilitate access to the various land use areas and provide physical separation between vehicular and pedestrian traffic.*

### **2.2.6 TOWN OF ANCASTER — OFFICIAL PLAN**

The Ancaster Official Plan (February 1999 consolidation) offers an emphasis on the design of the road pattern and its role in making public transit more accessible. It also considers the need for walking and cycling links to commercial and community facilities in new developments.

## **2.4 Transportation**

### **2.4.2 Objectives**

- ii) To maintain the functional integrity of the various land uses served by the system*
- iv) To ensure that the local street system design enhances the amenity and environmental value of the Village Core*

### **3.2.3 Public Transit**

- iii) *Council shall encourage the incorporation of public transportation concepts in the road pattern of plans of subdivision, wherever applicable, to allow for convenient access to public transit service.*

#### **4.4 Residential**

*4.4.11 A system of walkways and bikeways shall be designed to integrate new Residential areas and to provide linkages to Commercial and community facilities, Institutional uses and Open Space and Conservation areas and where possible to existing Residential areas.*

#### **2.2.7 TOWN OF DUNDAS — OFFICIAL PLAN**

The Dundas Official Plan (June 1999) goes into great detail on how alternative development standards, in combination with mixed uses and pedestrian-oriented development, can provide for more intense development that can support public transit.

#### **2.5 Urban Design**

*To improve the character, appearance and safety of streetscapes and other elements of the public realm.*

##### *General Policies*

*It is the policy of the Town to consider “Alternative Development Standards” in new development/redevelopment, as set out in the document making Choices: Alternative Development Standards Guideline. Alternative development standards refers to a variety of infrastructure and design strategies, which may include, but not limited to:*

- *Reduced road right-of-way and pavement widths*
- *Reduced boulevard widths*
- *Reduced lot sizes*
- *Use of rear garages to promote more compact residential development and to provide more attractive streetscapes in residential areas*
- *Greater reliance on common open space areas to facilitate more compact development patterns*
- *Use of alternative standards for the spacing and location of underground services*

##### **Downtown Mixed Use**

*3.5.3.4 Council shall support a pedestrian-oriented environment, retail stores, restaurants, entertainment uses, and community services to locate at grade in the Downtown Mixed Use Area.*

#### **3.7 Residential/Commercial Mixed Use**

##### *Goal*

*To encourage attractive redevelopment at the primary entry point into the Town*

##### **3.7.2 Objectives**

3.7.2.3 *To encourage this area to evolve from its present auto-oriented form into a more pedestrian, street-oriented node*

3.7.2.4 *To allow for higher intensity residential redevelopment in conjunction with commercial uses.*

## **4.2 Transportation System**

### **4.2.2 Objectives**

4.2.2.1 *To maximize accessibility from residential neighbourhoods to employment, shopping and community services*

4.2.2.2 *To reroute through traffic away from stable residential neighbourhoods*

4.2.2.3 *To create a safer pedestrian environment and to minimize the inherent conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular traffic*

4.2.2.4 *To promote a more transit supportive urban environment*

### **4.2.4 Public Transit**

4.2.4.3 *The Town shall promote the use of transit-supportive land use planning and design principles when considering proposals for new development. Along major transit routes, council shall encourage:*

*a) intensification and mixed use development*

*b) locating building as close as possible to the streetlines*

*c) locating parking lots in the rear or side yards*

*d) locating pedestrian-oriented uses such as restaurants, service shops, and stores at grade*

*e) providing amenities such as continuous sidewalks, canopies, arcades, shade trees and seating to improve the pedestrian environment along major shopping streets*

*f) providing amenities such as shelters and seats at major transit stops.*

### 3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION AND ANALYSES

#### 3.1 Land Use and Employment

In October 2002, Hamilton completed a report on population, household and employment projections. This section summarizes some key conclusions of that report<sup>4</sup>.

Over the last 25 years, Hamilton's population has grown by 19% from 423,000 to 503,000 (see Exhibit 3.1). This is slower than Ontario as a whole, which grew by 39% over the same period. Between 1996 and 2001, Hamilton grew by 4.8% while Ontario grew by 9.9%.

**Exhibit 3.1: Population Growth in Hamilton, 1976 to 2001**

Period	Population growth (%)
1976-1981	0.5
1981-1986	2.9
1986-1991	6.7
1991-1996	3.6
1996-2001	4.8

Population growth has considerably outpaced job growth in Hamilton. (Report PD 02232 to Mayor and Members of Committee of the Whole from Lee Ann Coveyduck Planning and Development Department, Nov. 1, 2002). Over the past 30 years, the city has shifted from a net commuter surplus to a net commuter deficit—in other words, the number of people who live in Hamilton and work elsewhere is greater than the number of people who live elsewhere and work in Hamilton.

Exhibit 3.2 shows that the majority of Hamilton's population growth from 1996 to 2001 occurred outside Lower Hamilton in the areas of Ancaster (18% of overall growth), Waterdown (15%) and the Hamilton Mountain (27%). Ancaster and Waterdown were also the fastest growing communities.

The changing age and cultural profiles of Hamilton's population are consistent with trends across Ontario. The size of the most senior age groups is growing, while the 25-34 age cohort has declined by 11% between 1996 and 2001. The number of single-parent families has increased over time, and children are living at home longer. Immigration to Hamilton increased significantly during the 1990s, with the number of immigrants between 1991 and 2001 exceeding the previous decade's total by almost 60%. In 2001, almost one-quarter of Hamilton's population were immigrants, similar to the provincial average.

<sup>4</sup> Centre for Spatial Economics, Summary Report, City of Hamilton – Population, Household and Employment Projections, Appendix A to Report PD 02232, October 28, 2002.