APPENDIX B
SUMMARY OF EXISTING POLICIES AND PLANS
B.1 Federal Policies and Plans

1. Transport Canada

In 2005 Transport Canada released the study Strategies for Sustainable Transportation Planning, a review of practices and options. The study established guidelines for incorporating sustainable transportation principles into municipal plans. The guidelines can be applied throughout the land development process to promote the use of sustainable modes of transportation, such as walking and cycling. Policies and strategies identified within the study illustrate the federal government’s commitment to developing national standards and practices which will help to improve conditions for walking and cycling in Hamilton. The strategies and policies most relevant to the Recreational Trails Master Plan include:

Land Use Planning Integration
Encourage desirable land use form and design (e.g. compact, mixed-use, pedestrian or bike-friendly) through transportation plan policies.

Modal Sustainability
Identify strategies, policies, facilities and services to enhance the sustainability, attractiveness, convenience and safety of walking, cycling, and transit use while at the same time not compromising the travel efficiency of other transportation modes.

2. Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)

The FCM has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901. With over 2,000 members, FCM represents municipal interests on policy and program matters that fall within federal jurisdiction. Members include Canada’s largest cities, small urban and rural communities, and 19 provincial and territorial municipal associations.

In 2008 the FCM produced a document titled Communities in Motion: Bringing active transportation to life. This document encourages municipalities to support active transportation (e.g. walking and cycling) and identifies barriers municipalities have to overcome to integrate active transportation into Canadians everyday activities. The document provides information on how municipalities like Hamilton can commit, plan, provide appropriate facilities and promote active transportation.

B.2 Provincial Policies and Plans

The City of Hamilton’s planning regime is affected and in many ways directed by provincial plans and policies, some of which are explained below.

1. Ontario Trails Act

In 2015 Ontario introduced new legislation to protect, improve and encourage the expansion of thousands of kilometers of the province’s urban, suburban, rural and remote land and water trails networks. If passed, the Ontario’s Trails Act would:

- Provide enhanced tools to effectively develop, operate and promote trails
- Remove barriers to aid trail connection and expansion
- Increase trail awareness and promote local tourism
- Enable development of a classification system to help users find trails that match their interest and ability

2. Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

The 2014 PPS provides policy direction on provincial interest matters where municipal decisions are made. Ontario’s vision for efficient development patterns promotes a mix of housing, employment, parks and open spaces and transportation choices that facilitate pedestrian mobility and other travel modes (Part V: Vision for Land Use Planning System). With respect to healthy communities (Policy 1.5,
Public Spaces, Recreation, Parks, Trails, and Open Space) should be promoted by:

- Planning safe public streets, spaces and facilities that meet pedestrians needs, foster social interaction, and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;
- Planning and providing a full range and equitable distribution 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;
- Providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and
- Recognizing and minimizing negative impacts on provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas.

In addition, long term prosperity (Policy 1.7, Long-Term Economic Prosperity) involves providing for an efficient, cost-effective, reliable multi-modal transportation system that is integrated with the adjacent systems and those of other jurisdictions, and is appropriate to address projected needs to support the movement of goods and people.

A multi-modal transportation system comprises several transportation forms (e.g. automobiles, walking, trucks, cycling, buses, rapid transit, rail, air and marine).

3. **Bill 51 – Plan Reform**

Bill 51 reforms the Planning Act strengthening municipal Council’s role in land use planning in Ontario more responsive to municipal needs and contributed to creating more environmentally sustainable communities. The Bill amendments most relevant to municipalities, in regards to trails, include:

- Support of Sustainable Design and Public Transit. Under section 2, the promotion of development that is designed to be sustainable, to support public transit and to be pedestrian-oriented is now an enumerated matter of provincial interest.
- Dedications of lands under subdivision plans for pathways, bikeways and transit right-of-ways can now be required under subsection 21(4).

4. **Municipal Act**

The 2001 Municipal Act recognizes municipalities as being accountable and responsible levels of government with respect to issues within their jurisdictions. The Municipal Act contains policies that affect municipalities’ jurisdiction over municipal highways and their maintenance. To operate safely, bicycles may require better road conditions than other vehicles. As municipalities improve cycling infrastructure by putting in bike lanes, designated bike routes, and sharrows they must ensure that bike routes are safe. This could lead to modifying the design of intersections, providing cyclist specific signage, etc.

5. **Highway Traffic Act (HTA)**

The HTA recognizes bicycles as vehicles that are permitted to operate on public roadways (with some exceptions concerning higher order highways) therefore they must follow motor vehicles rules. Several policies relating to bicycles are contained in the HTA as such; The City of Hamilton may come across conflicts with respect to the appropriate use of cycling space.

6. **The Planning Act**

Planning Act approvals may be required for the designation and zoning of lands for open space trail purposes. In neighbourhood and secondary plans, to encourage greater cycling and pedestrian activity, it is recommended that more attention be placed on development of trails and trail facilities, distribution of land uses and transportation facilities. Secondary plans can indicate the potential of utilizing utility corridors, road allowances and open space for planning recreational trails. Provided that trails are shown on a draft plan of subdivision or secondary it can be dedicated to the City.

7. **Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care**

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care serves as Ontario’s main ministry for trails. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care believes trails serve as an inexpensive means for Ontarians to be more active. By raising trail awareness and providing well developed trail systems Ontarians can live a healthy lifestyle while enjoying nature and Ontario’s natural landscape diversity and beauty. Trails also attract visitors to communities and help strengthen local economies.
8. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

The AODA was enacted in 2005. The standards under this legislation apply to private, public, and non-profit organizations and are mandatory standards that identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility by 2025. Built environment accessibility standards focus on removing building and public space barriers. The standards contain technical accessibility requirements that pertain to the development and design of recreational trails and beach access routes, outdoor public use eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, accessible parking, obtaining services and maintenance. The standards do not apply to trails solely intended for cross-country skiing, mountain biking, motorized snow vehicles, off-road vehicles and wilderness trails, backcountry trails and portage routes. Refer to Section 2.4 of this report for more information on how the AODA affects trail development in Hamilton.

9. ACTIVE2010, Ontario Trails Strategy

The Ontario Trails Strategy is a long-term plan providing strategic direction for planning, managing and promoting Ontario trails. The Ontario Trails Strategy envisions a coordinated and collaborative approach to meeting the challenges that face the trails community.

Trends affecting trails are identified as the following:

- Stakeholders report that the cost of liability insurance for trail organizations is becoming prohibitive.
- Although ownership of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) in Ontario has increased, the development of ATV trails has not kept pace with the growth in demand. With few designated ATV trails, many ATV users frequent trails that are not suitable for their vehicles.
- 52% of Ontarians are still not active enough to realize optimum health benefits.
- A 2001 study found that twenty-eight per cent of Ontarians cited lack of pleasant places to walk or bicycle as a barrier to physical activity participation.

- While Ontario’s trails have traditionally been developed independently, trails organizations increasingly recognize that they must work together to use their resources more efficiently, make the most of their trails investment and effectively educate the public and trail users.
- There are increasing pressures on the natural and cultural features of trails because of growing population and densities around the Province and increasing numbers of off-road vehicles, many of which are used off trail as well.

Five key strategic directions mentioned in the document and designed to respond to the various challenges are:

- Improving stakeholder collaboration
- Enhancing trail sustainability
- Improving trail experience
- Trail education
- Fostering good health and a strong economy.

10. Metrolinx: The Big Move – Transforming Transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (The Big Move)

The Big Move 2008, is the Greater Toronto and Hamilton’s (GTHA’s) multi modal long range regional transportation plan. It provides strategic direction for planning, designing and building a regional transportation network that improves quality of life, the environment and prosperity. The Big Move sets out an action plan which guides transforming the transportation system in the GTHA. The ten strategies below will in some manner effect trails planning and development in the City of Hamilton:

- Build a comprehensive regional rapid transit network
- Enhance and expand active transportation
- Improve efficiency of road and highway networks
- Create a transportation demand management program
- Create a customer first transportation system
• Implement an integrated transit fare system
• Build pedestrian, cycling and transit supportive communities
• Plan for universal access
• Improve the GTHA and adjacent regions goods movement
• Commit to continuous improvement

The Big Move plans to revitalize communities into places where people can take transit, ride a bicycle or walk to fulfill their day’s activities. Over 7,000 kilometers of new lanes, trails and pathways will encourage healthy lifestyles and make walking and cycling safer.

Light Rail Transit (LRT) is more than a transit project it is a community and City shaping tool. LRT will connect key City destination by providing travel modes choices that support and interconnect at local and regional transportation levels.

11. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan)

The 2006 Growth Plan encourages communities to grow in a more complete way, integrating transportation and improving access to a greater range of options, including transit, walking and cycling. The following sections are most relevant to the Recreational Trails Master Plan:

3.2.2 Transportation – General
The transportation system within the Growth Plan will be planned and managed to:
• Provide connectivity among transportation modes for moving people and goods
• Offer balanced transportation choices that reduces reliance on single mode and promotes transit, cycling and walking
• Be sustainable, by encouraging the most financially and environmentally appropriate mode for trip-making
• Offer multi-modal access to jobs, housing, schools, cultural and recreational opportunities, and goods and services
• Provide for the safety of system users.

3.2.3 Moving People
Municipalities will ensure integration of pedestrian and bicycle networks into transportation planning to:
• Provide safe, comfortable travel for pedestrians and bicyclists within existing communities and new developments
• Provide linkages between intensification areas, adjacent neighbourhoods, and transit stations, including dedicated lane space for bicyclists on the major street network where feasible.

4.2.1 Natural Systems
Municipalities, conservation authorities, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties are encouraged to develop a system of publicly accessible parkland, open space and trails, including shoreline areas, within the Greater Golden Horseshoe that:
• Clearly marks out where public access is an is not permitted
• Is based on a coordinated trail planning and development approach
• Is based on good land stewardship practices for public and private lands.
12. The Greenbelt Plan

The 2005 Greenbelt Plan protects agricultural lands from fragmentation and nonagricultural uses, protects vital natural heritage and water resources and allows for other activities typically found in rural areas such as recreation, agriculture, and resource extraction.

The Greenbelt Plan is comprised of two existing Plans – the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan (not applicable in the City of Hamilton) as well as a new designation and policies referred to as Protected Countryside. In addition the Greenbelt Plan establishes a Natural Heritage System for the Greenbelt Planning Area.

Section 3.3.3 Parkland, Open Space and Trails are most pertinent to the updated Recreational Trails Master Plan and indicate that the following considerations should be included in municipal trail strategies:

- Preserving the continuous integrity of corridors (e.g. abandoned railway rights-of-way and utility corridors);
- Planning trails on a cross-boundary basis to enhance interconnectivity where practical;
- Incorporating the existing system of parklands and trails where practical;
- Restricting trail uses that are inappropriate to the reasonable capacity of the site (notwithstanding the ability to continue existing trail uses);
- Providing for multi-use trail systems which establish a safe system for both motorized and non-motorized uses;
- Supporting and ensuring compatibility with agriculture; and
- Ensuring the protection of the sensitive key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features and functions of the landscape.

13. The Parkway Belt West Plan

 Implemented in 1978 the Parkway Belt Master Plan is a system of connected natural areas and protected utility corridors which extends from Dundas though the regions of Halton, Peel and York. Its purpose was to develop a multi-purpose utility corridor, urban separator and linked open space system.

14. The Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP)

The NEP was published in June 2005 and last updated in October 2012. The NEP includes a variety of topographic features and land uses and extends 725 kilometres from Queenston on the Niagara River to the islands off Tobermory on the Bruce Peninsula. The Niagara Escarpment is the most prominent natural feature that traverses the City of Hamilton. Where development is proposed including recreational trails, changes to existing trails or proposed structures in the NEP the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) must be consulted. In all cases the interpretation of when a Permit or NEP Amendment is required is determined by the NEC. Regardless of the land use designation or Development Control status (Niagara Escarpment Commission, 1990) the NEC must be consulted to advise if a trail development proposal meets the policies of the NEP. Where a proposal does meet the policies of the NEP and are in Development Control the NEC will advise whether a permit is required or if the project meets an exemption listed under Ontario Regulation 828/90.

The NEP is comprised of three parts:

- Part 1 - Land Use Policies
- Part 2 - Development Criteria
- Part 3 - Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System

Part 2 Development Criteria applies to all forms of development within the NEP regardless of whether they are found within the area of Development Control or outside the area of Development Control. Part 2 also describes development criteria which may be applied to trail development where a development permit is required. Development criteria that may apply to trail development in Hamilton include but are not limited to:
• Recreation - 2.2.13
• Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest - 2.2.14
• The Bruce Trail - 2.2.16
• The General Development Criteria - 2.2.1a) through f), 2.2.4, 2.2.8, 2.2.11
• Other criteria that apply when specific features such as steep slopes, natural heritage features and cultural heritage features are present - 2.2.5, 2.2.6, 2.2.7, 2.2.8, 2.2.9 and 2.2.12.

More specific to the Recreational Trails Master Plan section 2.1.2, Open Space Networks, describes that the way a community's open spaces are laid out and designed can have an impact on transit use. Improving transit connections and integrating stations into their surroundings can enhance user experience and encourage people to take transit. Plazas, parks, and trails help make higher-density, transit friendly environments more appealing and liveable. Linking transit systems to park and open space networks can allow users to access off-street trail systems, extending the reach of station catchment areas.

The guidelines also list strategies that can be considered when designing open space networks such as:
• Link transit stops and station areas by extending existing park and open space networks.
• Where off street transit investments occur explore the potential for transit corridors to act as extensions of open space networks.
• Pursue opportunities to co-locate destination open spaces and transit networks.
• Coordinating new park planning and open spaces with new transit system planning to maximize mutual benefit.
• Include open spaces, amenities and transit links on transit websites and other resources allowing residents to plan outings without using a car.

15. Ministry of Transportation – Transit Supportive Guidelines

These guidelines are based on a collection of transit friendly land-use planning, urban design and operational best-practices. The guidelines aid urban and transit planners, developers and other community members in creating a supportive public transport environment and developing promotional transit ridership services and programs. Creating transit friendly communities requires a balance between all modes of transportation.

16. #CycleON: Ontario Cycling Strategy

Published in 2013 the Ontario Cycling Strategy is a 20 year vision for cycling in Ontario and outlines what needs to be done to promote cycling as a viable form of transportation. The Ontario Cycling Strategy supports Ontarians adopting healthier active lifestyles, the tourism industry, as well as the achievement of environmental and economic objectives. The guiding principles of the strategy are:
• Safety - safety of all road users, including cyclists, is paramount.
• Accessibility and Connectivity - Cycling in Ontario is accessible to all people of all ages and abilities. Networks are interconnected and integrated with other modes of transportation.
• Developing Partnerships - Partnerships and
collaborations among all stakeholders – cyclists, governments at all levels, industry and researchers.

B.3 Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Organizations

Federal
1. Trans-Canada Trail Association

Across greater Hamilton, over 70 kilometres of pathways and converted rail corridors have been registered as part of the Trans-Canada Trail. These include the Hamilton-Brantford Rail Trail, the Chippawa Rail Trail, Escarpment Rail Trail, and a proposed route through the city. When completed, the Trans-Canada Trail will touch all three oceans bordering Canada and become the longest shared-use trail in the world at 16,000 kilometres.

Provincial
1. Ontario Trails Council (OTC)

Established in 1988 the OTC is a charity, a major stakeholder in the development of the Ontario Trails Strategy and the largest trail association of its type in Canada. The OTC promotes the development, preservation, management and use of Ontario recreational trails. Part of its mandate is to be the voice of Ontario trail owners, organizations and users.

2. Share the Road Coalition

The Share the Road Coalition was launched in 2008 and is provincial advocacy organization dedicated to building a bicycle friendly Ontario. The organization works to build partnerships with active transportation stakeholders to enhance access for bicyclists on roads and trails, improve safety and educate the public about the value of safety bicycling. The organization’s mandate is province-wide with a focus on the development of public policy at the provincial level in order to provide the kind of legislative, programmatic and funding that exists in British Columbia and Quebec.

3. The Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC)

The Bruce Trail is one of Canada’s oldest and longest marked footpaths and stretches from Niagara to Tobermory, covering almost 890 kilometers of main trails and 400 kilometers of associated trails. This continuous footpath follows the Niagara Escarpment through Southern Ontario, from Queenston Heights to Tobermory. The portion through Hamilton-Wentworth is known as the Iroquoia section. It travels largely across parks, private land and Hamilton Conservation Authority areas including Devil’s Punchbowl (Stoney Creek) and Spencer Gorge Wilderness Area (Dundas). The Iroquoia Club (the local Hamilton area chapter) has 13 properties that it continually maintains and stewards. Stewardship of the land is carried out by volunteers and includes trail maintenance, brush clearance, invasive species removal.
The BTC is a charitable organization committed to establishing a conservation corridor containing public footpaths along the Niagara Escarpment in order to protect the natural ecosystems and promote environmentally responsible public access. The BTC is composed of 9 regional volunteer run Bruce Trail Clubs that contribute to this vision.

**Municipal**

**1. Hamilton Burlington Trails Council (HBTC)**

The HBTC mission is to serve as a trail alliance in developing and communicating a first class trail system in the Hamilton Burlington region, which promotes the health benefits of recreational trail use to residents and visitors while conserving valuable natural ecosystems. Their goals and objectives are as follows:

- Facilitate trail development, linkages and networks and accessibility
- Assist the Hamilton and Burlington region by hosting a well-connected, heavily used, and easily accessible trail system
- Foster effective communication between trail users and stakeholders
- Advocate for the needs of citizens in regards to trails and pathways
- Advocate for trail funding and development
- Provide a forum to discuss harmonized trail rules, trail issues and classification schemes
- Provide fully comprehensive and up to date trail information and mapping

In November 2015 the City of Hamilton put a motion forward for staff to regularly attend Hamilton Burlington Trails Council meetings. Recommendations on trail connections from the HBTC have been incorporated into this report.

**2. Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG)**

![Royal Botanical Gardens](https://www.rbg.ca)

The RBG is the largest of its kind in Canada and is a National Historic Site. Covering over 1100 hectares the RBG has 4 distinct formal gardens; Hendrie Park, Laking Garden, Rock Garden, Arboretum – and 27 kilometers of nature trails. The RBG’s mission is to promote public understanding of the relationship between the plant world, society and the environment, and strive to be a global leader in the use of plants to bring people, places and sustainable behaviour together. In doing so RBG has worked hard to protect and restore over 992 hectares of nature sanctuaries and sensitive habitats. The RBG also fosters the relationship between nature and human society through various community and volunteer events.

**3. McMaster University**

![McMaster University](https://www.mcmaster.ca)

McMaster University is located in an area that is ecological and geological diverse. Within Hamilton alone there are more than 81 environmentally significant areas ranging from wetlands, marsh, and hardwood forests to prairie, alvar and escarpment habitat. McMaster University’s website highlights and showcases some of the City of Hamilton’s natural areas and includes links to key Conservation organizations and partners who preserve and protect Hamilton’s rich natural heritage, including trails.

**4. Hamilton Cycling Club (HCC)**

![Hamilton Cycling Club](https://www.hamiltoncycling.ca)

Founded in 1881 the HCC is an amateur club with more than 130 members. The club has an active road racing background, running weekly club events as well as regional events such as the Good Friday Road Race, an Ontario Cup.
series event. In addition its road cycling history, the HCC has become an advocate for mountain biking and sustainable trail building in Hamilton.

5. Hamilton Naturalists Club (HNC)

The HNC is a not for profit organization dedicated to the appreciation and conservation of wild plants and animals. Its purpose is to encourage and protect Hamilton’s natural resources, including trails, through public education and interest.

6. The Hamilton Waterfront Trust (HWT)

The HWT is dedicated to search for ways to aid residents and visitors experience and enjoy the City of Hamilton’s waterfront. Both the Hamilton Harbour Waterfront Trail extension and the Hamilton Beach Recreational Trail are joint efforts of the HWT. The City of Hamilton and the Waterfront Regeneration Trust assisted in obtaining funding from the Canada Ontario Infrastructure Program. This funding aided in connecting the City of Hamilton with other municipalities and surrounding trail networks. Some of HWT goals related to trails include:

- Creating trails and linkages which include the development, expansion and refinement of public access and linkages to Hamilton’s Waterfront
- Strongly connected integrated trail systems
- Building amenities

7. Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan

The Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan is a detailed strategy to clean up Hamilton Harbour. While the Action Plan focuses on improvements to water quality, toxic sediment remediation and fish and wildlife restoration, it contains recommendations regarding public access to the Harbour. The Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan has been a catalyst for the development of parks and trails.

8. Hamilton Port Authority Land Use Plan

The Hamilton Port Authority Land Use Plan was completed in 2002 by the Hamilton Port Authority in compliance with the requirements of the Canada Marine Act. It contains objectives and policies for the development of property the Port Authority manages, holds or occupies.

In addition to providing for the Port’s industrial and transportation uses, the Hamilton Port Authority is a stakeholder for the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan. The Hamilton Port Authority supports efforts to develop a safe and fully connected multi-use trail around the Hamilton Harbour, recognizing that public access cannot always be accommodated to the water’s edge.

9. Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System

The Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System is a combined initiative of ten local government and non-profit organizations in the Hamilton-
Burlington area. Together these organizations protect, restore and manage close to 1900 hectares of natural lands and open spaces connecting the Niagara Escarpment to the Hamilton Harbour.

The Cootes to Escarpment objectives are:
- **Natural Heritage** - to protect, restore and enhance the ecological system. This includes consideration of linkages through urban areas and natural lands outside the Park System boundaries.
- **Recreation Objective** - to provide opportunities for passive recreation that supports active living and also maintains the areas biological and physical integrity.
- **Cultural Heritage** - to identify, protect and preserve cultural heritage features for their reflection of historical use and occupancy of the area.
- **Interpretation** - to provide educational opportunities that promote knowledge, understanding and appreciation of natural and cultural values, environmental sensitivity and significance, and associated conservation needs.
- **Management** - to manage the public lands through partner collaboration. Owners of the park lands will promote responsible stewardship through community involvement in park planning and management.

**B.4 Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA)**

HCA is the area’s largest environmental management agency, and is dedicated to the conservation and enjoyment of watershed lands and water resources. HCA’s mandate includes flood forecasting and warning, issuing permits for planning and engineering regulations, preserving environmentally significant natural lands, promoting stewardship and conservation, outdoor education and providing recreational opportunities. HCA owns and manages nearly 4000 hectares of environmentally significant lands within the boundaries of its watershed. Some HCA’s trails are:
- Lafarge 2000 Trail

- Dofasco 2000 Trail
- Hamilton Brantford Rail Trail
- Chippawa Rail Trail (Hamilton to Caledonia)
- Dundas Valley Trails
- Valens Lake & Christie Lake Conservation Area Trails
- Westfield Heritage Village
- Confederation Park Trails

**B.5 City of Hamilton**

1. **Urban Hamilton Official Plan (UHOP)**
   **Volume 1, Chapter C, Section 4.0—Integrated Transportation Network Policies**

**Urban Design and Complete Streets**

4.2.8 New secondary plans and designs for major transit generators shall incorporate the following design directions:
- 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;
- Efficient spacing of arterial and collector roads within the grid network;
- Organization of land uses in a manner that reduces automobile dependence and improves modal choice and the movement of goods;
- Placement of higher density land uses near existing and planned transit stop or station locations;
- Street design and layout which reduces and minimizes the need for future traffic calming or unnecessary traffic control devices; and,
- 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.

4.2.9 Direct access to transit facilities shall be provided via sidewalks and walkways from
the interior block areas of neighbourhoods. Within existing and planned development, the City shall encourage the creation of mid-block connections for pedestrians, transit, and active transportation modes.

4.2.10 Development of major transit generators shall provide safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling environments and access through building orientation, site layout, traffic management, and the provision of facilities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes and trails, bicycle parking and loading, and connections to transit service.

4.2.11 The City shall encourage new development to be located and designed to minimize walking distances to existing or planned transit and facilitate the efficient movement of goods where feasible.

4.2.12 The road network shall be planned and designed to:

- Be shared by all modes of transportation;
- Maximize safety for all uses; and,
- Minimize lifecycle environmental impacts in accordance with Section C.4.5 - Road Network.

Barrier Free Transportation

4.2.13 Hamilton’s transportation network shall be developed to be inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities, seniors, children and those with reduced mobility through the following provisions:

- Ensuring that new transit facilities, transit stops, and vehicles are accessible and utilize barrier free design principles in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
- Ensuring that sidewalks are accessible and accommodate people with impaired or reduced mobility using techniques including curb cuts, urban braille, and appropriately designed crosswalks at intersections and roundabouts;
- Encouraging the use of voice signals at crosswalks to allow for safe passage for persons with limited vision;
- Modifying existing transportation facilities over time to enhance accessibility;
- Requiring minimum off-street parking spaces for the disabled regulated through the Zoning By-Law; and,
- Taking accessibility considerations into account for the design of new developments in accordance with Policy B.3.3.11 - Barrier Free Design.

4.2.14 The City shall continue to be a leader in providing accessible sidewalks and other public spaces by maintaining and expanding the urban braille network.

4.2.14.1 Priority areas for expanding the City’s urban braille network shall be within the Downtown Urban Growth Centre and within Sub-Regional Service Nodes in accordance with Policy B.3.3.11 – Barrier Free Design and Section E.2.0 – Urban Structure, and in areas that will create connections to existing urban braille areas.

4.2.15 In accordance with Policy C.4.1.6, recognizing that an increasing proportion of the population is aging and many will possess mobility challenges, the City shall continue to ensure that it is able to provide an appropriate range of public transit services and programs on the conventional, specialized and rapid transit networks in an efficient and effective manner to all existing and planned trip generators throughout the urban area.

New Transportation Corridors

4.2.16 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 ongoing Niagara to Greater Toronto Area (NGTA) corridor planning and Environmental Assessment study and the Ontario-Quebec Continental Gateway and Trade Corridor Study.

- The NGTA study will address congestion, economic growth, and better gauge a long term land use and transportation framework extending from the Niagara Peninsula to the Greater Toronto Area.
- The Ontario-Quebec Continental Gateway
and Trade Corridor Study will develop a multi-modal strategy to improve goods movement and trade.

4.2.17 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.

4.3 Active Transportation Network

Active transportation which includes pedestrian movement, cycling and any other non-motorized modes of transportation, is a key component of the City’s transportation network. Active Transportation provides a sustainable alternative to travel by private automobile, resulting in physical, economic and social benefits from improved air quality, reduced energy consumption and increased physical activity. This Plan recognizes that active transportation is an essential component of the overall integrated transportation network. Together, land use planning, transportation planning and the design of the built form creates an environment that encourages and enables people to use active transportation for travel to work, school, exercise, recreation and social interaction.

4.3.1 The City shall require, provide, and maintain infrastructure that maximizes safe and convenient passage for pedestrians and cyclists along streets.

4.3.2 The City shall accommodate commuter cycling needs on the road network and major recreational pathways to the greatest extent possible in accordance with the City’s Cycling Master Plan and Trails Master Plan.

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 promoted and accommodated in street design and operation through:

- Continuous improvement and expansion of the existing network of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including multi-use paths, bike lanes, and on-street bike routes;
- Establishment of pedestrian-oriented design guidelines in secondary plans and undeveloped areas that promote active transportation; and,
- Provision of traffic calming measures and signage, where appropriate.

4.3.4 Within the designated right-of-way, the design of streets and sidewalks shall provide a buffer between vehicular and pedestrian flow where feasible.

4.3.5 The City shall design pedestrian friendly streets by:

- Making streetscapes visually appealing to make walking more inviting;
- Discouraging the placement of objects which will impede pedestrian movements;
- Reducing motor vehicle traffic in areas of high pedestrian activity by design or other means;
- Establishing exclusive pedestrian links in areas of high pedestrian activity and vehicular traffic;
- Distinctly separating vehicular, pedestrian and cycling traffic to the fullest extent possible;
- Providing adequate lighting;
- Applying other means as specified in the policies of Section B.3.3 – Urban Design, where applicable; and,
- Applying 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.

4.5 Roads Network

The road network is a component of the overall transportation network. The City shall provide an efficient road network that will accommodate anticipated traffic volumes at a reasonable level of service while balancing the needs of all road users and vehicles for the efficient movement of people and goods and providing a right-of-way for underground utilities.
Hamilton’s Urban Natural Heritage System

Within the urban boundary, Hamilton has a variety of unique natural areas and features including the Niagara Escarpment, Hamilton Harbour, beach and ravine habitats, interior forests of Dundas Valley, and Carolinian forests. It is important that natural heritage features are protected for their ecological functions and for the many benefits which they provide such as wildlife habitat, improved air quality, surface and groundwater quality and quantity, flood and erosion control, improved aesthetics, and general health and quality of life of urban settings.

Using the systems approach, the City will look at the restoration potential of natural areas adjacent to Core Areas. The systems approach also involves setting targets for the amount of habitat Hamilton needs for a healthy, functioning ecosystem. Looking beyond what exists to consider what could or should exist moves habitat protection towards a fully sustainable natural heritage system.

For more information on the urban natural heritage system policies please refer for the City of Hamilton report PED08285 Proposed Urban Official Plan Policies for the Natural Heritage System (November 2008).

2. Rural Hamilton Official Plan (RHOP) Volume 1, Chapter C, Section 4.0—Integrated Transportation Network Policies

Barrier Free Transportation

4.2.8 Hamilton’s transportation network shall be developed to be inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities, seniors, and those with reduced mobility through the following provisions:

- Ensuring that sidewalks, where they are appropriate, are accessible and accommodate people with impaired or reduced mobility using techniques including curb cuts and appropriately designed crosswalks at intersections and roundabouts;
- Encouraging the use of voice signals at crosswalks to allow for safe passage for persons with limited vision;
- Modifying existing transportation facilities over time to provide barrier free accessibility;
- Requiring minimum off-street parking spaces for the disabled regulated through the Zoning By-Law; and,
- Taking accessibility requirements into account for the design of new developments in accordance with Policy B.3.3.11 - Barrier Free Design.

New Transportation Corridors

4.2.9 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.

4.2.10 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.

4.3 Active Transportation Network

Active transportation which includes pedestrian movement, cycling and any other non-motorized modes of transportation, is a key component of the City’s transportation network. Active Transportation provides a sustainable alternative to travel by private automobile, resulting in health, economic and social benefits from improved air quality, reduced energy consumption, reduced injuries, and increased physical activity. This Active Transportation Plan recognizes that active transportation is an essential component of the overall integrated transportation network. Some rural area facilities for active transportation, such as paved road
shoulders, also improve the road infrastructure for farm vehicles, farm equipment, and large vehicles for transporting other rural resources.

4.3.1 When roads and other infrastructure are replaced or upgraded, where feasible the City shall accommodate commuter cycling needs on the road network and major recreational pathways in accordance with the City’s Cycling Master Plan.

4.3.2 The City shall maintain and, where feasible during replacement or upgrading of infrastructure, build the active transportation network which recognizes the importance of the active transportation network while achieving a high standard of connectivity and protecting agriculture. Active transportation shall be promoted and accommodated in road design and operation through:

• Continuous improvement and expansion of the existing network of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including paved road shoulders, multi-use paths, bike lanes, and on-street bike routes;
• Establishment of pedestrian-oriented design guidelines where appropriate in rural settlement area plans that promote active transportation; and,
• Provision of traffic calming measures and signage, where appropriate.

4.3.3 The City shall design pedestrian friendly streets where appropriate within large Rural Settlement Areas by:

• Making streetscapes visually appealing to make walking more inviting;
• Discouraging the placement of objects which will impede pedestrian movements;
• Reducing motor vehicle traffic in areas of high pedestrian activity by design or other means;
• Establishing exclusive pedestrian links in areas of high pedestrian activity and vehicular traffic;
• Providing adequate lighting;
• Providing active transportation facilities; and,
• Applying other means as specified in the policies of Section B.3.3 – Design, where applicable.

4.5 Roads Network

The road network is a component of the overall transportation network. The City shall provide an efficient road network that will accommodate anticipated traffic volumes at a reasonable level of service while balancing the needs of all road users and vehicles for the safe and efficient movement of people, farm equipment, and goods and providing a right-of-way for underground utilities.

Hamilton’s Rural Natural Heritage System

Within Hamilton there are a variety of diverse natural areas that contribute to the City’s unique character and quality of life. The City values these natural areas and recognizes that there is a connection among the features and surrounding landscape. These connections are important for maintaining biodiversity, long-term health and movement of wildlife and plants between habitats. The Natural Heritage System consists of the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System, Niagara Escarpment Plan area and Core areas. Core areas are the most important components of the Natural Heritage System in terms of biodiversity, productivity and ecological and hydrological functions. Linkages are natural areas within the landscape that ecologically connect Core Areas.

3. Secondary Plans and Neighbourhood Plans

Secondary Plan policies provide further direction for implementing policies. Secondary Plan policies relevant to the Recreational Trails Master Plan are extensive, and are therefore not included in this report. These polices are available upon request by contacting the City of Hamilton Planning Division but their recommended trail network is incorporated in the trail initiatives.

Neighbourhood Plans also contain policies pertaining to trails and active transportation. Secondary Plans are developed concurrently with Transportation Management Plans. Transportation Management Plans address improvements to active transportation, transportation demand management, and regional and local transportation. The intention of coordinating these plans is to fully integrate.
land use designations with complementary transportation policies to ensure that communities are designed efficiently and contribute to the well-being of people. Multi-use trail recommendations illustrated on Secondary Plans have been incorporated into this report as trail initiatives.

The TDM 2015 manages the demands placed on transportation infrastructure. It is the use of policies, programs, infrastructure improvements, or services to influence travel behaviour. TDM encourages sustainable travel choices by supporting alternatives options over the convention of frequently driving alone. It encompasses a wide range of strategies including:

• Shifting travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling, taking transit or carpooling instead of driving alone);
• Reducing the number of trips people make (e.g. destinations and activities such as work and shopping, near each other); and,
• Traveling more efficiently (e.g. making trips outside of peak hours).

Some outcomes the City aims to achieve by integrating TDM and development include:

• More inclusive and appealing streetscapes
• Multi use neighbourhoods and districts development where people can live and work in close proximity;
• Treating streets as public spaces for a more balanced transportation system
• Improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure (bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks)
• Transit integration for more efficient transportation
• Promoting active and healthy lifestyles.

Transit-Orientated Development Guidelines (TOD) Volume 2, 2010 is defined as compact mixed use development located in close proximity to transit facilities with high-quality walking environments. TOD is set apart from traditional transit due to its emphasis on providing access to transit through mixed use areas with higher density, degree of activity, and amenities. TOD encourages balanced transportation choices which enable viable active transportation (e.g. walking, cycling, etc.) as an option to driving. TOD encourages and provides direction on present and future land use policy and zoning, it also aids in further improving land use and transportation planning integration.

6. Hamilton’s Plan for an Age-Friendly City (2014)
The number of seniors in the City of Hamilton is increasing and is expected to double over the next two decades. Developing a plan for an age-friendly city will help identify and address the older populations’ needs and priorities. An age-friendly plan means that Hamilton will participate in the growing age-friendly movement and will have the opportunity to learn and contribute to the learning of other communities.

In April 2012, Hamilton City Council identified the development of an age-friendly initiative as a strategic priority in the City’s 2012-2015 Strategic Plan. The Neighbourhood and Community Initiatives Division partnered with the Hamilton Council on Aging in 2013 to begin this work. Hamilton’s Plan was not developed in isolation, but aligns with, and builds on, work
that is presently underway. The plan links to other key City initiatives including:

- The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan
- The Pedestrian Mobility Plan Rapid Ready, and
- The Cultural Plan.

There is also alignment with the mandatory accessibility standards for people with disabilities being developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005.


With 28 goals and 14 themes identified in the Vision 2020 plan, many recommendations have been implemented. Vision 2020 contributed to the City of Hamilton by making significant progress in the areas of arts and heritage, reducing and managing waste, improving air quality, improving water quality and protecting natural areas. Our Future Hamilton builds on the legacy of Vision 2020.

In 2015, the City of Hamilton initiated Our Future Hamilton: Community in Conversation. After many months talking with residents about their vision for the future of Hamilton a new community vision is taking shape. The information gathered formed the development of a Community vision framework.

Six themes emerged as key priority areas:

- Theme 1: An Engaged and Empowered Community
- Theme 2: Prosperity and Growth
- Theme 3: Healthy and Safe Communities
- Theme 4: Clean and Green
- Theme 5: Built Environment and Infrastructure
- Theme 6: Culture and Diversity

The community vision within Theme 5 directly affects trail development within the City recommending that the built environment (buildings, parks and infrastructure) are designed for safe use by pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and motorists. Theme 5 also discusses creating a well-connected transportation network that allows people to get around conveniently without a car.

8. **City of Hamilton Parks and Open Space Development Manual (2015)**

Created by the Landscape Architectural Services Section of the City of Hamilton, the Parks and Open Space Development Manual defines parks and open space development requirements and guidelines. It also identifies the design and construction standards for parks and open space lands. Parks and open spaces are important resources that deliver numerous benefits and play a key role in quality of life. As Hamilton continues to grow it is essential to balance development with recreational requirements.

The Parks and Open Space Development Manual is used by the development community, consultants, and City of Hamilton staff as a resource tool in the process of creating Hamilton’s parks, open spaces, and trails.

The Outdoor Recreation Facilities & Sports Field Provision Plan was developed in 2011 to provide a sustainable strategy for managing Hamilton’s outdoor sports fields and other community-use recreational infrastructure. It is a long-range plan (to the year 2031) and focuses on implementing projects that can be undertaken within the next ten years.

The Plan recognizes that Hamilton has a proud sports heritage and a significant number of residents are involved in outdoor organized sport participation. Sports fields accommodate a variety of activities, including league play, recreational programs, school physical education classes, tournaments, and special events.

The Plan is about the development, improvement, and conversion of outdoor recreation facilities in the City of Hamilton. It takes into account creating and maintaining a sense of community through the provision and design of park assets and trails, which are critical elements in fostering neighbourhood and community life and identity. It is intended to be a companion document to the City of Hamilton’s Use, Renovation and Replacement Study for Hamilton Recreation and Public-Use (Indoor) Facilities (2008).


The Hamilton Recreational Trails Master Plan, planned for the development of a City of Hamilton trail system that would provide for a wide range of recreational uses, linking on road systems with larger regional, provincial and national systems.

The Hamilton Recreational Trails Master Plan purposes include:
- Connecting and enhancing appreciation of significant environmental, cultural features and parks while preserving their natural heritage values and ecological functions.
- Connecting and integrating urban and rural land uses by linking multi-purpose trails with on-street cycling and sidewalk systems
- Providing a safe environment for cycling and pedestrians
- Promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles
- Interconnecting trail systems
- Connecting trail systems to adjoining municipalities, counties and other larger provincial trail systems.

Several trail initiatives from the 2007 report have been included within this report.
11. Active Transportation Benchmarking Program (2012-2013)

Between 2012 and 2013 the City of Hamilton launched a pilot study that collected pedestrian and cycling active transportation data and which is now deemed as an official program. The program conducted weekly automated rotational counts along various trail corridors to collect usage data.

Technologies such as; Pyro-Boxes (passive-infrared person counting systems), Pneumatic Tubes (rubber tubes that use air pressure to activate recording devices), Urban ZELT (inductive loop systems for bike counting that use SIRIUS algorithms) and MULTI Urban (passive-infrared counter that differentiates between pedestrians and cyclists) were utilized allowing for transportation trends differentiation.

Over the course collecting the data more than 75 Hamilton locations were surveyed and over 1.2 million Active Transport trips were recorded. Currently, the top five locations are as follows:

- The Chedoke Stairs (23,644 trips)
- Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, Bayfront Park (15,290 trips)
- Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, Confederation Park – Lakeland Pool (14,366 trips)
- The Dundurn Stairs (12,119 trips)
- The Desjardin Trail, Princess Point (11,120 trips)

The City of Hamilton is currently considering and initiating future technologies which include, Miovision, Eco-Totems or Bike Barometers, Strava and the recently introduced “Sobi” Hamilton Bike share.


Hamilton’s PMP focuses on rebalancing pedestrian and vehicular mobility on Hamilton’s streets by providing for pedestrians needs, while accommodating vehicular traffic within the streetscape. The PMP identifies the need to further improve pedestrian safety and the number of walking trips in order to achieve the City-Wide Transportation Master Plan targets. The purpose of the PMP is to:

- Enhance the pedestrian environment
- Increase the opportunity for walking as a transportation mode
- Create recreation that is efficient, comfortable, safe inclusive, accessible and improves economic and community health.

The City of Hamilton’s commitment to better pedestrian mobility arises from two sources: Provincial legislation and the City’s commitments to the International Charter for Walking. Step Forward: The Hamilton Pedestrian Mobility Plan (2012) addresses how the City intends to achieve these commitments and legislations. The Plan establishes a City-wide, pedestrian framework for the future.

This PMP employs an evidence based approach to creating safe and interesting pedestrian environments throughout the City by applying public health science and transportation research to the City’s built environments. The PMP goals are to:

- Create healthy, efficient, sustainable and complete communities where people choose to walk
- Increase the number of people walking in the City
- Provide an attractive interesting pedestrian environment that improves personal safety
- Increase active transportation and pedestrian links and connections
- Improve pedestrian movement by focusing on access to community institutions, recreational and leisure opportunities and employment and retail services
- Create a walkable City to attract new residents and businesses
13. Transportation Master Plan (TMP) (2016)

The City is undertaking a review of the city-wide TMP to guide future transportation programs and investment to accommodate future growth for 2031 and beyond. The TMP review will be a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (as amended, 2011) process involving three consultation phases. The review will provide many opportunities for citizens to get engaged and provide feedback about the following topics:

- Rural, urban and suburban transportation issues
- Population or economic growth effects on transportation
- Walking, cycling, transit, goods movement and commuter traffic
- Public health, age-friendly and neighbourhood development
- Complete streets, two-way conversions and infrastructure investment


In Fall 2008 a survey was conducted to gain a better understanding of behaviours and attitudes of Hamilton Waterfront Trail users. The survey was intended, in part, to provide a baseline set of data that could be used in assessing changes in waterfront trail use with the anticipated completion of the QEW Pedestrian Bridge in 2010. As a follow up to the 2008 survey a Post Construction Evaluation was conducted in 2012. The survey asked questions regarding trail use and it was found that:

- Individuals often use the trail for biking and walking
- Peak trail use is during the spring and summer months
- Afternoon is the preferred time of day
- Roughly an equal amount of males and women use the trail
- The majority of users were from Hamilton, Stoney Creek and Burlington.

Many people using the trail expressed concerns regarding:

- Lack of trail etiquette displayed by other users
- Inadequate visual separation on the trail for people walking, biking and rollerblading
- Poor signage
- Lack of recycling and waste stations

15. SoBi Hamilton Bike Share (SoBi)

SoBi is a local non-profit organization who operates the Hamilton Bike Share system of 750 bicycles and over 100 hubs. The system is monitored 24 hours a day to ensure users have bicycles and parking available to them. SoBi uses fourth generation smart bike technology provided by New York based Social Bicycles. Their operational funding is comprised of membership fees, sponsorships and community partners. Surplus revenue is placed directly back into the system to provide for additional bikes, hubs and service enhancements. SoBi Hamilton represents a co-operation between the Province and the City, its citizens, local professionals, and non-profits. Many SoBi bike share stations are located along Hamilton trails.
16. **Waterfalls and Cascades of Hamilton**

The City of Hamilton has over 100 waterfalls allowing many to deem the Hamilton the “City of Waterfalls”. Waterfalls have mainly been identified throughout Flamborough, Stoney Creek, Hamilton and Ancaster, although the area with the highest density of waterfalls is the Chedoke Creek subwatershed (15 waterfalls). Additionally, there are 45 waterfalls which can be observed from trails 76 which are accessible, 13 have a low degree of difficulty, making them accessible to people with wheel chairs or strollers and to people of all ages. Proper interpretive and directional signage as well as new or upgraded all-weather or seasonal trails are required to ensure access to the waterfalls is maintained and safety is of the utmost concern. In April 2006, Waterfalls and Cascades of Hamilton, Phase 2 – Upgrades and Enhancements Study was completed it focused on Hamilton’s waterfalls for interpretive, recreational and tourism development. The report provides specific direction on City-owned waterfalls and cascades.