

Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

GRIDS Response addendum

The land allocated for development in the proposed GRIDS options was based on a calculation intended to identify the amount of land required by the City of Hamilton to accommodate the population and employment projections predicted by the City and the Province. After reviewing and the configuration of land parcels in the Hamilton Airport Industrial Park area and the Greenbelt maps, which identify the path of the Natural Heritage System, it would appear that there is not as much land allocated for industrial/commercial development, as one would expect by looking at the maps illustrating the GRIDS growth options

One of the City of Hamilton's challenges has been the lack of industrial land along major highways. At first glance, it would appear that the Airport Business Park addresses that issue by identifying land along the new Hwy#6 corridor leading to the Hamilton Airport. A closer look reveals that there is a great deal of land in the industrial park that is in the Natural Heritage System, especially along the Hwy#6 corridor.

Not only does this system prohibit prime employment land with highway frontage from being developed, it also leaves behind, stranded and inefficient parcels of land that will difficult to develop for industrial/commercial uses. For example if a parcel of 100 acres is 90% within the Natural Heritage System and the remaining 10% is a bizarre shape that is landlocked, then the entire land parcel should be deemed unusable for industrial development purposes and removed from the land inventory calculation.

Fragmented land ownership could end up being as much of a problem for the Airport Business Park area as it has in certain areas of Stoney Creek. The lower Stoney Creek industrial area has a great deal of land zoned for industrial uses in its inventory, but it is underutilized or not used at all for industrial uses as small 2-5 acre parcels with narrow frontage and long depths are not efficient for modern industrial development. As most of these parcels contain a residential use on the property, it is usually cost prohibitive for land assembly for this purpose.

As an example, multiple landowners in the area of Glancaster Rd. between Airport Rd. and Garner Rd., creates land fragmentation, which will make it difficult to assemble. Furthermore, the lots and concessions intersect in this area creating inefficient land configurations, which are not practical for industrial/commercial development. Although this area has been included in the Airport Industrial Park, it will be less desirable as it is fragmented and difficult to develop.

Servicing should also be a factor in determining which land should be zoned for urban development. It is important, to ensure that 'pockets' of land not be stranded without the proper zoning while being surrounded by the services needed for development. The area between Twenty Road south to the Airport (Special Policy Area #1), the area south of the Airport abutting the north side of the new Hwy#6 (Special Policy Area #2) and the area between Garner Rd., Fiddler's Green Rd. and the Airport Business Park should be zoned for urban uses to make the most efficient use of the services that will be brought to the area. As (most) of these areas can only be utilized for employment land development as a result of the Airport's noise contours, it would make sense that these areas be zoned for industrial/commercial uses.

After taking these factors into account, it appears that there is less land available for development in the Airport Business Park than expected. It is recommended the City of Hamilton take a closer look at the amount and configuration of land being allocated for industrial/commercial uses to determine that there is enough land in the right locations for efficient and successful development of employment land.