

# CITY OF HAMILTON



**Total Land Area (Census 2016)<sup>1</sup>:** 111,729 Ha  
**Area of Census Farms (2016)<sup>2</sup>:** 52,015.06 Ha  
**Area Within the Greenbelt<sup>3</sup>:** 87,560 Ha  
**Percent Within the Greenbelt:** 78.37%  
**Gross Farm Receipts (2016)<sup>4</sup>:** \$259.91 million  
**Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm:** \$4,996.81  
**Population (2016)<sup>1</sup>:** 536,917  
**Growth Rate 2006-2011<sup>5</sup>:** 3.1%  
**Growth Rate 2011-2016<sup>1</sup>:** 3.3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment)	<b>34.5</b>
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation	<b>0</b>
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses	<b>151.7</b>
<b>Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000-2017</b>	<b>186.2</b>
<b>Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)</b>	<b>0.33 %</b>

Please note that in the case of the City of Hamilton, data from the planning department was only available from 2012–2017 due to special circumstances surrounding policy formation related to prime agricultural and specialty cropland designations in the City. The data from 2000–2011 were collected from the City’s online By-law archive, however the By-law documents did not include the planning reports and the findings as a result do not present a complete picture of land use changes occurring across the region. As such, the methods for this summary are not considered by any means exhaustive and the findings are not directly comparable to other municipal jurisdictions within the context of the study. This partial summary may instead be used to independently indicate directional trends regarding the conversion of prime-agricultural land within the City of Hamilton.

## Methods in Brief

The City of Hamilton is comprised of the amalgamated communities of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, Hamilton, and Stoney Creek. Over 2000–2012, the City completed a Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) study during this time that formed the basis for new policy that consolidated the official plans of the former independent municipalities, brought the City into compliance with provincial regulation (primarily

the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 and the Greenbelt Plan, 2005), and standardized existing uses and policies across the rural areas. The new official plan policy was adopted by City Council in 2006, however it was not effective pending Ontario Municipal Board decisions that were made in 2012. All Official Plan amendments between 2000–2011 were based on these former townships' own official plans. Data during this period were collected from the City of Hamilton's online passed By-Law archive files.

Since 2012, the City of Hamilton established two Official Plans, one that relates to rural land and the other to urban lands. This study primarily examined Hamilton's Rural Official Plan and associated Official Plan Amendments (OPAs), where agriculture is the primary long-term land-use. The files which document OPAs adopted and approved by Hamilton's City Council and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2012–2017 were compiled from public documents made available online on the City's website. The assistance of staff at City of Hamilton's Planning Services is appreciated in making this research possible. Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- 1) Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- 2) Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- 3) Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural uses are also conducted within portions of the Escarpment Rural Areas, however, the intent of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) is not necessarily to preserve agricultural land. Land use amendments within the NEP are subject to consideration by the Niagara Escarpment Commission and are not within the scope of this study.

There were also instances of Rural Official Plan policy updates (OPA No. 5, OPA No. 9) and a city-wide road widening (OPA No. 12) that were not included in this summary, as potential impact on prime agricultural lands and the total amount of converted land were unknown.

### **Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion**

**Development Designations:** Our research captured six development redesignation policy amendments under the City of Hamilton's Official Plan (Urban and Rural). This is reflected category 1 of Table 1 for the City of Hamilton.

**Rural Agriculture:** Our research captured zero rural redesignation policy amendments City of Hamilton's Official Plan (Urban and Rural). This is reflected category 2 of Table 1 for the City of Hamilton.

**Site-Specific Amendments:** Eleven site-specific policies were passed in the City of Hamilton from 2012–2017, which is reflected in category 3 of Table 1. These OPAs allowed institutional use, for the addition of a small restaurant in conjunction of an existing winery, agricultural process warehouse, and a surplus farm dwelling.

**Table 1. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs in the City of Hamilton by Adoption Date (2000-2017)**

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval By The OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	3	16.5	0	2
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	2	18	0	0
2006	4	0	0	4.8
2007	0	0	0	0
2008	1	0	0	56.5
2009	1	0	0	21.5
2010	7	0	0	60.5
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	1	0	0	2.2
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	1	0	0	6.2
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>151.7</b>

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**Provincial Land Use Plans:** The City of Hamilton is subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Greenbelt Plan covers 78.37% of the total land, however, this summary cannot comment on the effectiveness of the Greenbelt and agricultural preservation in the City of Hamilton as no data was captured prior to the

introduction of the Greenbelt Plan, and the four OPAs within this study were located outside of the Greenbelt.

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- <sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. *Hamilton, RM [Census division], Ontario and Ontario [Province]* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released May 3, 2017.
- <sup>2</sup> OMAFRA (adopted). 2017. Area of Census Farms (Acres) by County, Ontario: 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016. With data from Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture.
- <sup>3</sup> MMAH. 2005. "Greenbelt Outer Boundary" and MMAH, 2012. "Municipal Boundary - Upper Tier and District" data projected in UTM 17N.
- <sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. *Table 004-0233 – Census of Agriculture, farms classified by total gross farm receipts in the year prior to the census, every 5 years (number of farms reporting unless otherwise noted)*, CANSIM (database).
- <sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. 2012. *Hamilton, Ontario (Code 3524) and Canada (Code 01)* (table). *Census Profile*. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.