




# COMMUNICATION UPDATE

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members City Council
<b>DATE:</b>	October 18, 2024
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Ministry of Finance Population Projections for the City of Hamilton to the Year 2051 (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Anita Fabac Acting Director of Planning, Chief Planner Planning and Economic Development Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

The purpose of this communication update is to provide Council with an update on new Ministry of Finance population projections for the City of Hamilton to the year 2051. Under the new Provincial Planning Statement, Official Plan population and employment forecasts are now to be based on the Ministry of Finance population projections rather than the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. As illustrated in Appendix “A” to this Communication Update, Ministry of Finance population projections for Hamilton are significantly higher than the Growth Plan forecast.

## Ministry of Finance Population Projections

As stated on the Ministry of Finance webpage, the Ministry of Finance produces an updated set of population projections every year to reflect the most up-to-date trends and historical data. The 2024 update uses as a base the 2023 population estimates from Statistics Canada (released in May 2024 and based on the 2021 Census) and includes changes in the projections to reflect the most recent trends in fertility, mortality, and migration.

The projections do not incorporate explicit economic or planning assumptions. They are developed using a standard demographic methodology in which assumptions for population growth reflect recent trends in all streams of migration and the continuing evolution of long-term fertility and mortality patterns.

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe, and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Importantly, the Ministry of Finance projections do not take into account planning policy, infrastructure capacity, housing affordability, land supply or other matters that influence the pattern of growth in southern Ontario. The results also tend to vary from year to year, given that the method is based on a continuation of recent patterns of migration and population growth rather than a forecast of longer-term trends.

The updated Ministry of Finance data projects Ontario's population increasing by 9,631,389 people or 38% and Hamilton's population increasing by 288,026 people or 47% in the 2021-2051 time period.

### **Provincial Planning Statement, 2024**

The Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 was approved by an Order in Council on August 20, 2024, and takes effect on October 20, 2024. replacing both the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan).

A significant change in the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 is that municipalities must begin basing population and employment growth projections on Ministry of Finance projections (2.1.1), but this policy document also states:

- Municipalities “may modify projections, as appropriate”; and,
- Municipalities may continue to use the previous forecast issued by the Province until its next Official Plan review.

The growth policies of the City's Urban Hamilton Official Plan are based on the Growth Plan's population forecast of 820,000 people and employment forecast of 360,000 jobs by the year 2051. As shown in Appendix “A” and Table 1, the updated Ministry of Finance population projections for Hamilton are approximately 10 percent higher than the Urban Hamilton Official Plan forecast with the Ministry of Finance projecting 83,270 more people and approximately 33,975 more households in Hamilton in 2051. Staff note that this is a slight variation from the 2023 Ministry of Finance projection with Hamilton's population projected to grow faster in the next decade and slower in later decades.

**SUBJECT: Provincial Approval of the Provincial Planning Statement (City Wide)  
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Table 1: Comparison of Urban Hamilton Official Plan and Ministry of Finance Population and Household Projections

Time Horizon	Urban Hamilton Official Plan		Ministry of Finance		Difference	
	Population Forecast	Household Forecast	Population Projection	Household Estimate <sup>1</sup>	Population	Households
2031	652,000	258,100	695,874	275,688	43,874	17,368
2041	733,000	295,200	797,106	321,017	64,106	25,817
2051	820,000	332,800	903,270	366,595	83,270	33,975

### Long Term Growth Planning Implications

While the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 allows Hamilton to maintain its current population and employment forecasts in its Official Plan for the time being, staff anticipate that its approved Official Plan growth forecasts will be challenged by proponents of urban boundary expansion applications. The *Planning Act* requires municipalities to undertake five-year reviews of its Official Plan to ensure conformity with Provincial plans and policies. In 2022 the province approved the City's last update to the Urban Hamilton Official Plan following the completion of the City's Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (known as GRIDS2).

Staff note that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff have advised that they are developing guidelines for using Ministry of Finance population projections when undertaking Official Plan reviews as well as guidelines for determining land needs based on these projections. No timetable has been provided on when these guidelines will be released.

Please contact Anita Fabac, Acting Director of Planning and Chief Planner with any questions at [Anita.Fabac@hamilton.ca](mailto:Anita.Fabac@hamilton.ca) or by phone at (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1258 or Dave Heyworth, Manager of Sustainable Communities at [Dave.Heyworth@hamilton.ca](mailto:Dave.Heyworth@hamilton.ca) or by phone at (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1279.

### SCHEDULES AND APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" – 2024 Ministry of Finance Population Projections

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the same household size forecast used in the Urban Hamilton Official Plan.

### Comparison of Ministry of Finance and Growth Plan Population Forecasts for the City of Hamilton

