



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA  
PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
FINAL AGENDA

PEDC 9-2020

Monday, November 9, 2020

1:00 p.m.

Council Chamber

Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON

Due to efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to protect all individuals, the Council Chamber at Regional Headquarters will not be open to the public to attend Committee meetings until further notice. To view live stream meeting proceedings, visit:  
[niagararegion.ca/government/council](http://niagararegion.ca/government/council)

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	<b>Pages</b>
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>	
3. <u>STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING UNDER THE PLANNING ACT</u> Regional Official Plan Amendment 17 (ROPA 17) - Glendale District Plan	
3.1. <u>Presentations</u>	
3.1.1. Overview of the Application Kirsten McCauley, Senior Planner, Secondary Plans, Planning and Development Services	4 - 9
3.2. <u>Registered Speakers</u>	
3.3. <u>Reports and Correspondence (For Information Only)</u>	
3.3.1. PDS 30-2020 Statutory Public Meeting for Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 17 - Glendale District Plan	10 - 25

3.3.2.	<u>PDS-C 24-2020</u> Correspondence received for Regional Official Plan Amendment 17 – Glendale District Plan	26 - 29
3.3.3.	<u>PDS-C 26-2020</u> An email from G. Stratford, resident, Town of Niagara-on-the- Lake, dated November 6, 2020, respecting Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 17 – Glendale District Plan.	30 - 32
3.4.	<u>Summary and Next Steps</u>	
3.5.	<u>Adjournment of the Statutory Public Meeting Under the Planning Act</u>	
4.	<b><u>PRESENTATIONS</u></b>	
5.	<b><u>DELEGATIONS</u></b>	
6.	<b><u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u></b>	
6.1.	<u>PDS 25-2020</u> Woodland Conservation By-law, Agricultural Policy and Action Committee  <i>This item was previously listed under Consent Items for Information.</i>	33 - 35
7.	<b><u>CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u></b>	
7.1.	<u>PDS-C 23-2020</u> COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Planning and Development Services	36 - 38
7.2.	<u>ED 14-2020</u> COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Economic Development	39 - 42
7.3.	<u>ED 16-2020</u> Niagara Economic Update  A presentation will precede the discussion of this item.	43 - 88
7.4.	<u>ED 15-2020</u> Economic Recovery Plan Update 2	89 - 104
7.5.	<u>PDS-C-14-2020</u> Niagara Biennial Design Awards: Update and Announcement of Award Winners	105 - 107

- 7.6. PDS 32-2020 108 - 116  
Miller's Creek Marina
- 7.7. PDS-C 25-2020 117 - 120  
A letter from concerned groups, dated November 3, 2020, respecting Woodland Tree Bylaw and Its Impact on Natural Heritage and Water Resource System Planning.
- 7.8. PDS-C 27-2020 121 - 122  
A letter from J. Schonberger, resident, City of Thorold, dated November 5, 2020 respecting Woodlands Conservation Bylaw Advisory Committee Considerations.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

10. ADJOURNMENT

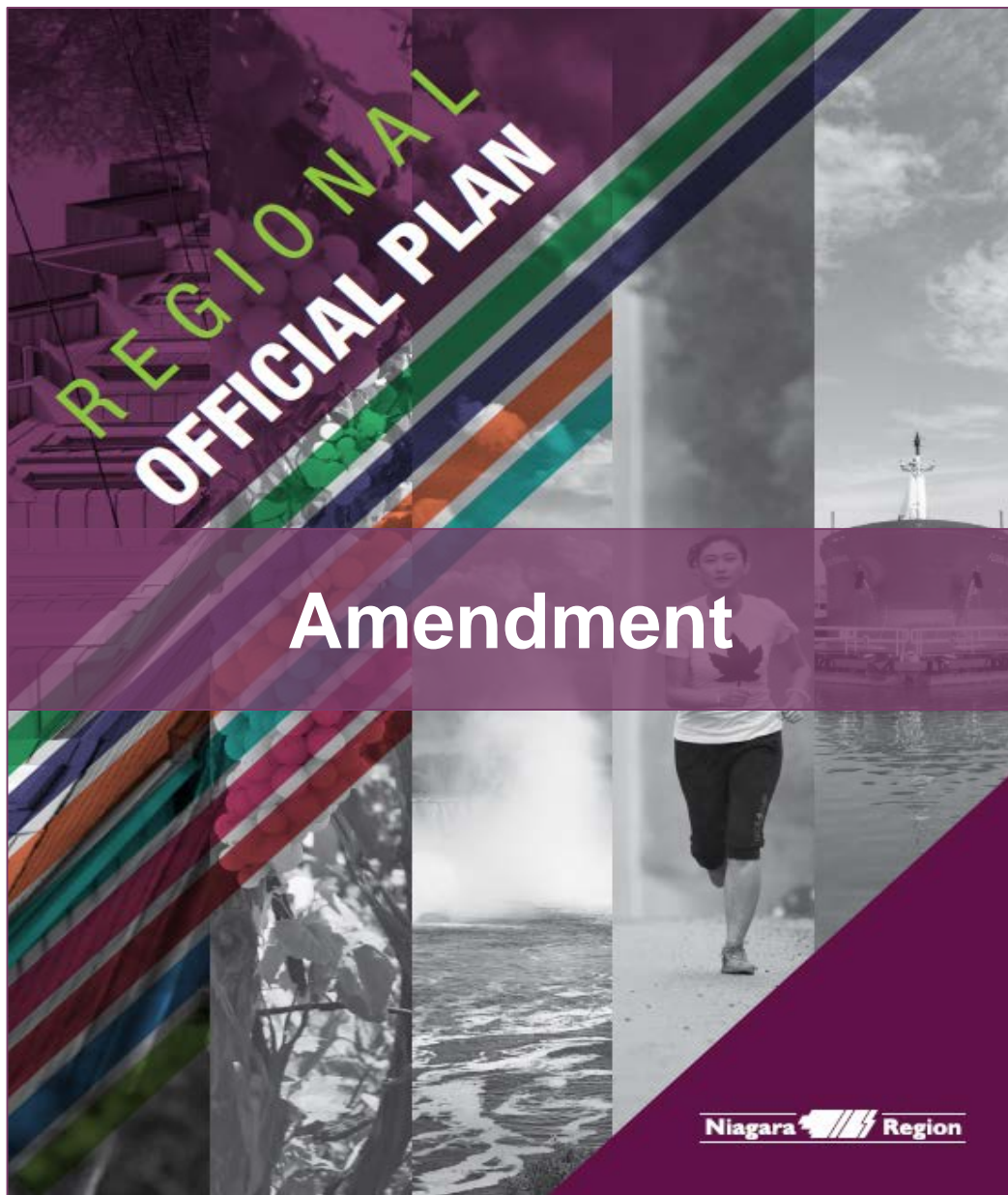
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# Statutory Public Meeting ROPA 17 – Glendale District Plan

Planning and Economic Development Committee  
PDS 30-2020

November 9, 2020

Kirsten McCauley, Senior Planner – Secondary Plans



# Statutory Public Meeting

November 9, 2020

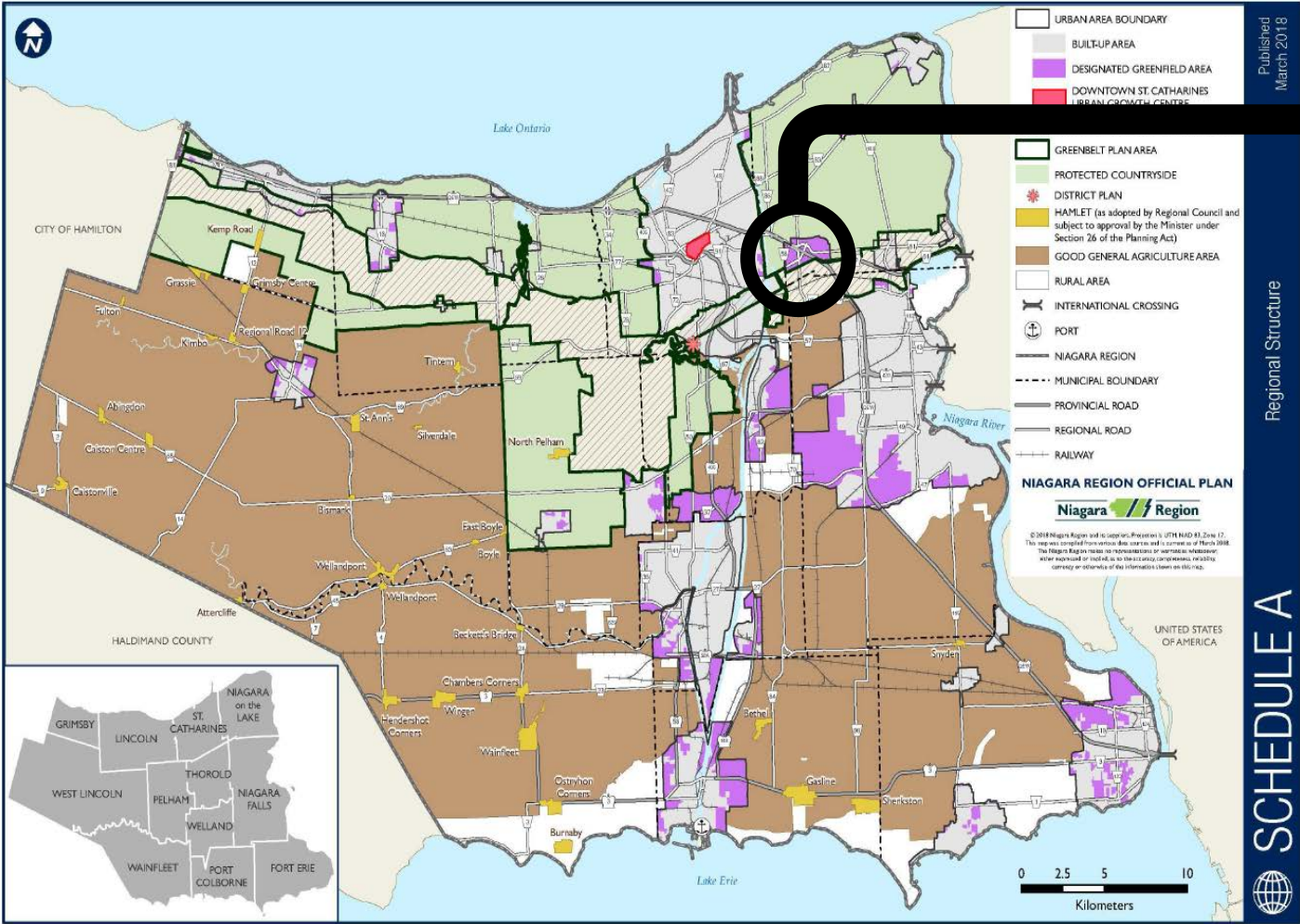
## ROPA 17: Glendale District Plan

Presented by:

**Kirsten McCauley**, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner, Secondary Plans  
[kirsten.mccauley@niagararegion.ca](mailto:kirsten.mccauley@niagararegion.ca)

Associated report:  
**PDS 30-2020**

# Glendale Study Area



Total Study Area:  
Approx. 700 ha

# Purpose of ROPA 17

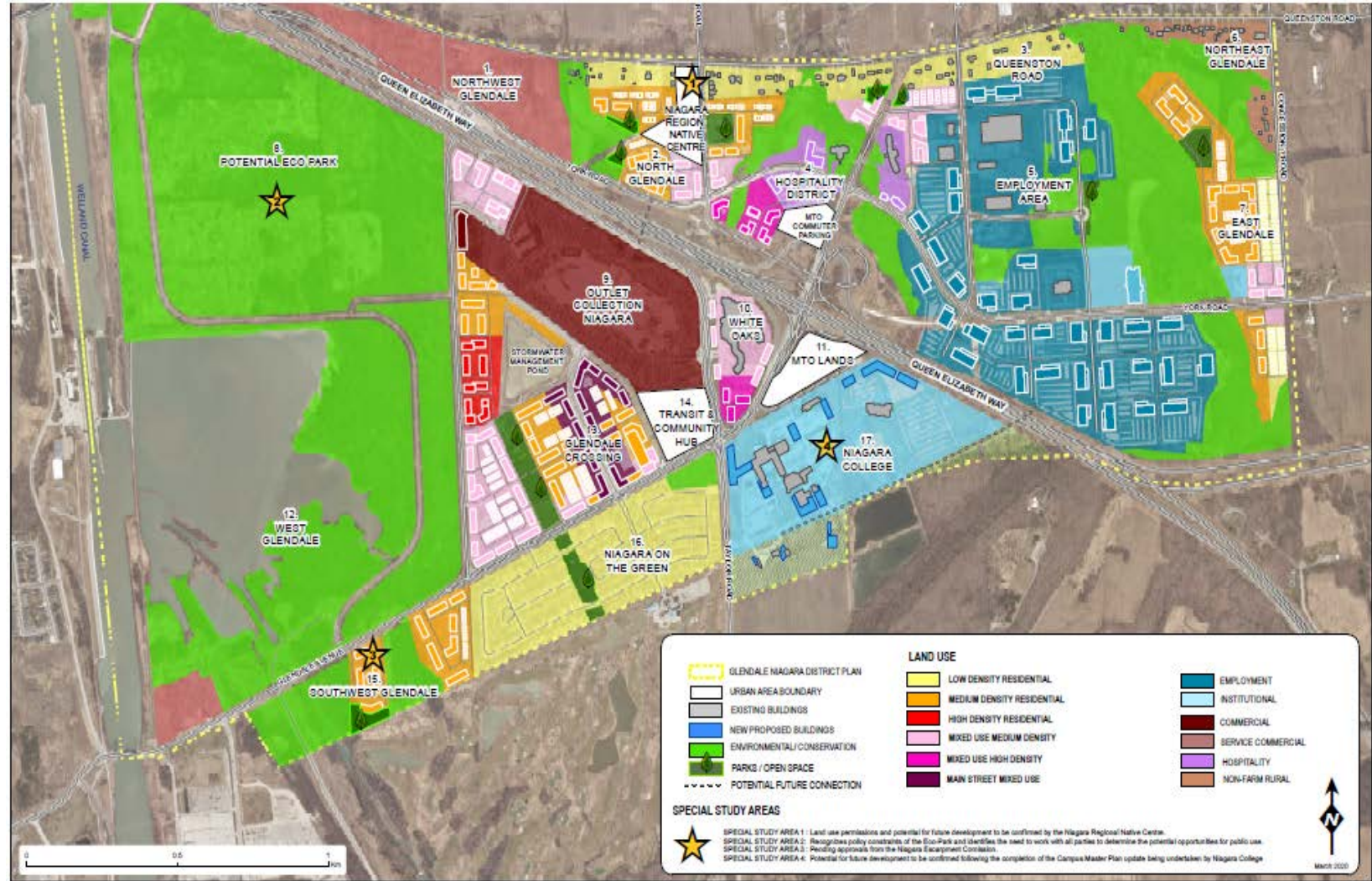
Policy to implement the vision and key directions of the Glendale District Plan.

Ensures future decisions are consistent with the vision and direction of the District Plan.



# Glendale Key Directions

- 1: Protect/enhance natural features
- 2: Trails and active transportation
- 3: Connected transit system
- 4: Build on existing assets
- 5: Create a “main street”
- 6: Diverse range of housing
- 7: Create public/civic space
- 8: Use sustainability measures
- 9: Coordination of infrastructure





# Summary of Next Steps

- ✓ Collect comments from agencies and the public
- ✓ Review and address any issues
- ✓ Prepare a recommendation report for ROPA 17



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**Subject:** Statutory Public Meeting for Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 17  
- Glendale District Plan

**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**Report date:** Monday, November 9, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That Report PDS 30-2020 **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
2. That Report PDS 30-2020 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the City of St. Catharines.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide information for the Statutory Public Meeting for Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 17 (ROPA 17), which is being held in accordance with prescribed requirements of Section 17 of the *Planning Act, 1990*, and to collect comments from the public. No recommendations or approvals are being sought at this time.
- The Region is proposing to amend the Regional Official Plan to add policy direction to ensure that future decisions within the Glendale study area are consistent with the vision and direction of the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan.
- The draft amendment includes policy to implement the vision for Glendale, key directions and strategies of Regional interest and outlines the additional work required for success of the Plan.
- On October 15, 2020, the Region circulated information on this public meeting to prescribed agencies and advertised in newspapers having general circulation surrounding the study area.

## Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

The cost to process ROPA 17 have been accommodated within the Planning and Development Services Department 2020 Operating Budget.

## Analysis

A District Plan is a proactive strategy which sets out a framework for growth, design and development of a complete community. Glendale is identified as an important strategic growth area for the Region with the intent to accommodate a significant portion of population and employment growth through the planning horizon and beyond. For this reason, the Region undertook the Glendale District Plan to ensure that the vision and tools are in place to appropriately manage the future growth.

The Glendale study area is located primarily with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, with a small portion of the south west area falling within the City of St. Catharines. The study area is approximately 700 hectares generally bound by Queenston Road to the north, the Niagara Escarpment to the south, Concession 7 Road to the east, and the Welland Canal to the west. The QEW bisects the study area and includes the Glendale Ave interchange. A location map is included as **Appendix 1**.

The Glendale District Plan was developed as a collaborative effort with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the City of St. Catharines and Niagara College. It also included extensive consultation and engagement with many stakeholders and landowners, a Technical Advisory Committee, a Community Focus Group and the general public. Input from these sources assisted in establishing the vision and key directions of the District Plan.

Glendale's vision:

Glendale District will be a vibrant and complete community for people of all ages, lifestyles, and abilities - a place to live, work, play, learn and grow.

Its urban districts, with a mix of uses, will protect, integrate and celebrate the natural and rural surroundings reflecting the distinct character of the area.

Glendale District will be framed by connection to green space along the Welland Canal, the creek valleys, the Niagara Escarpment and agricultural lands.

Glendale District will put mobility first with a robust transit system, cycling trails and pedestrian routes seamlessly connecting areas north and south of the QEW highway.

The Plan's 9 key directions provide a guide for the future Glendale community, including direction to become more accessible through active transportation and a centralized transit hub, more affordable through diversity in housing options, and more resilient through inclusion of sustainability measures to address climate change.

- 1: Protect and enhance the landscape/natural features.
- 2: A convergence for the area's trails and active transportation facilities.
- 3: Provide an accessible and connected transit system to serve the Glendale area, the greater Niagara Region and beyond.
- 4: Create a strategy to build on the existing assets within Glendale and linking Glendale with the greater NOTL and the Region.
- 5: Create a "main street" from the Outlet Collection of Niagara to the adjacent urban neighbourhood.
- 6: Provide a diverse range of housing ensuring choice and affordability.
- 7: Create public/civic space as a focus for Glendale.
- 8: Use sustainability measures related to resiliency and climate change.
- 9: Coordination of infrastructure review, capacity and upgrades.

The Glendale District Plan was formally endorsed by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Council on August 24, 2020, and Regional Council on September 17, 2020. This endorsement confirmed Council's commitment to the shared vision and key directions for the transformation of Glendale into a mixed use, complete community.

Staff is now initiating the Regional Official Plan Amendment process to add the vision and strategic direction of the District Plan into the Regional Official Plan.

The draft amendment (**Appendix 2**) implements the vision for Glendale, includes policy for the key directions and strategies of Regional interest and outlines the additional work to be undertaken. This ROPA will also ensure that future decisions within the Glendale study area are consistent with the vision and direction of the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan.

Notice of this public meeting was provided on October 15, 2020, to prescribed agencies and advertised in newspapers having general circulation within and surrounding the study area.

The Region is collecting comments from the public, prescribed agencies and other stakeholders. No comments were received prior to the completion of this report.

Comments received prior to the public meeting will be included as correspondence on the Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting agenda. Additional comments may be submitted at or following the public meeting. All comments will be reviewed and addressed prior to staff bringing forward a recommendation on this amendment.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

The *Planning Act, 1990*, requires that public consultation be conducted as part of all amendments to municipal Official Plans. Notice has been provided for this Statutory Public Meeting as required by the legislation.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The Glendale District Plan ROPA 17 will implement aspects of all four aspects of Council's priorities.

- Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth
- Healthy and Vibrant Community
- Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning
- Sustainable and Engaging Government

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

View the [Glendale District Plan](https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/glendale-niagara-district-plan/default.aspx) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/glendale-niagara-district-plan/default.aspx>) website for more information and to review the endorsed District Plan.

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#### **Prepared by:**

Kirsten McCauley, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner, Secondary Plans  
Planning and Development Services

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#### **Recommended by:**

Rino Mostacci, MCIP, RPP  
Commissioner  
Planning and Development Services

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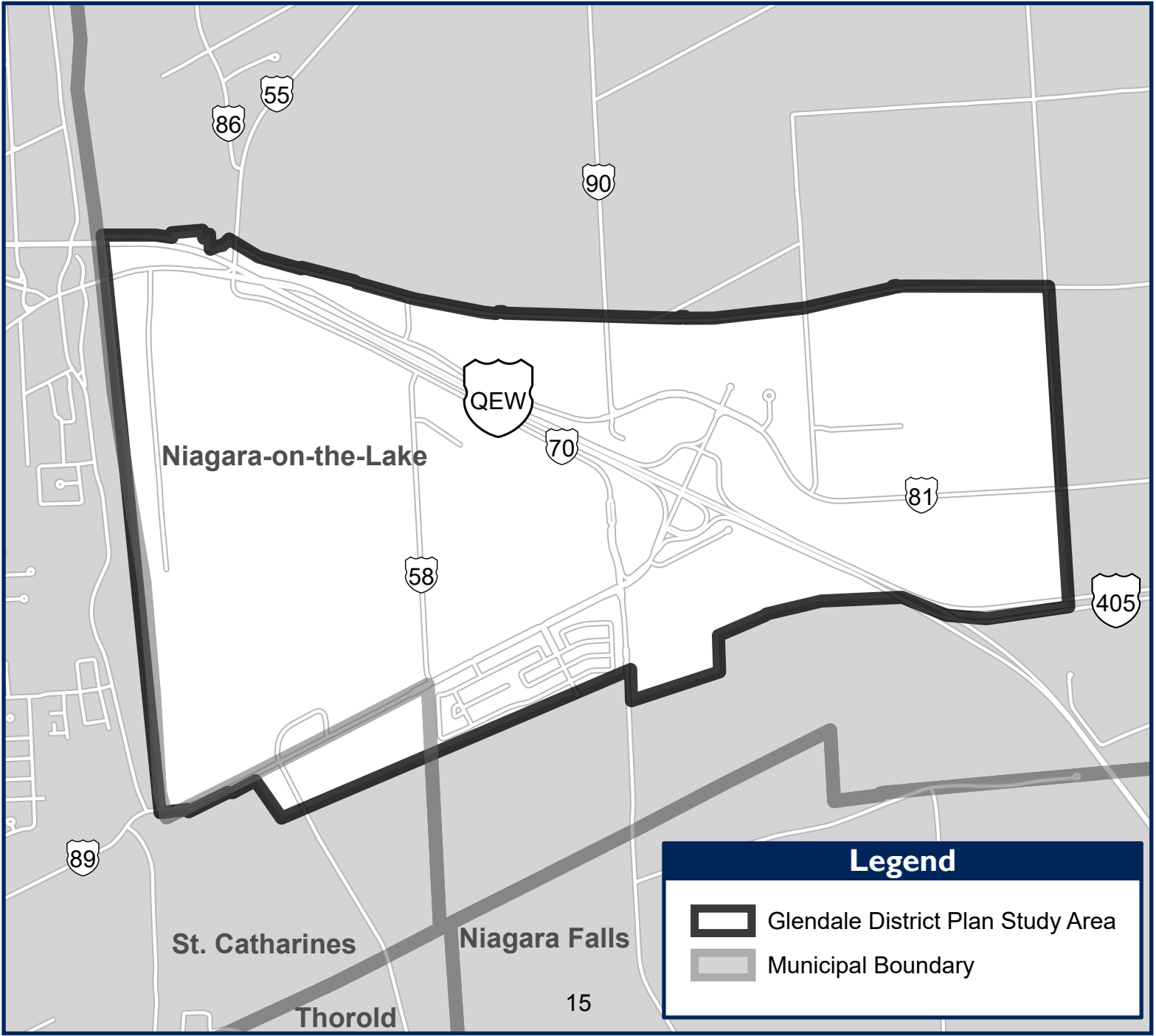
**Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer



*This report was reviewed by Isaiah Banach, Manager of Long Range Planning, and Doug Giles, Director of Community and Long Range Planning.*

**Appendices**

Appendix 1	Location Map
Appendix 2	Draft Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 17



**Legend**

-  Glendale District Plan Study Area
-  Municipal Boundary

**DRAFT**  
**Amendment No. 17**  
**To The Official Plan**  
**for the Niagara Planning Area**

**PART “A” – THE PREAMBLE**

The preamble provides an explanation of the Amendment including the purpose, location, background, and basis of the policies and implementation, but does not form part of this Amendment.

- Title and Components
- Purpose of the Amendment
- Location of the Amendment
- Background
- Basis for the Amendment
- Implementation

**PART “B” – THE AMENDMENT**

The Amendment describes the additions and modifications to the Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area, which constitute Official Plan Amendment No. 17.

- Map Change
- Text Change

**PART “C” – THE APPENDICES**

The Appendices provide information regarding public participation and agency comments relevant to the Amendment, but do not form part of this Amendment.



## **PART “A” – THE PREAMBLE**

### **TITLE AND COMPONENTS:**

This document, when approved in accordance with Section 17 of the *Planning Act, 1990*, shall be known as Amendment 17 to the Official Plan of the Niagara Planning Area.

Part “A” – The Preamble, contains background information and does not constitute part of this Amendment.

Part “B” – The Amendment, consisting of map and text changes, constitutes Amendment 17 to the Official Plan of the Niagara Planning Area.

Part “C” – The Appendices, does not constitute part of the Amendment. These Appendices contain information related to public involvement and agency comments associated with the Amendment.

### **PURPOSE OF THE AMENDMENT:**

The purpose of this Amendment is to add policy to the Niagara Region Official Plan that reflects and supports the implementation of the vision, key directions and strategies of the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan. The amendment also includes the addition of an asterisk identifier on Schedule A to the Regional Official Plan to denote the general location of the Glendale District Plan area.

### **LOCATION OF THE AMENDMENT:**

The amendment area is approximately 700 hectares generally bound by Queenston Road to the north, the Niagara Escarpment to the south, Concession 7 Road to the east, and the Welland Canal to the west. The QEW bisects the study area and includes the Glendale Ave interchange. The study area is primarily comprised of lands within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, with a small portion located in the City of St. Catharines known as Southwest Glendale.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Glendale District Plan provides a framework for land use planning and design to support the Region’s focus on growth and economic prosperity. It establishes the long-term commitment to Glendale becoming a mixed use, vibrant and complete community where residents and visitors can meet their daily living needs.

The direction of the Glendale District Plan is a result of ongoing collaboration between the Region and the local municipalities, as well as extensive consultation including 6 public

engagement sessions, 5 Technical Advisory Committee meetings, 3 Community Focus Group meetings and numerous meetings with stakeholders, agencies and landowners. The vision of the District Plan directs the transformation of the Glendale settlement area into a vibrant and complete community; a community that celebrates its distinct character and builds on the unique attributes of the area. The District Plan sets out nine key directions and numerous strategies to achieve the vision. It also contains a land use concept and demonstration plan to assist in guiding this transformation.

The Glendale District Plan was endorsed by Regional Council on September 17, 2020. This Amendment adds policy direction into to the Regional Official Plan to support the vision, key directions and regional strategies of the District Plan to ensure that future decisions within the Glendale area are consistent with the vision and direction of the District Plan.

**BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT:**

- a) The Amendment was the subject of a Public Meeting held under the *Planning Act, 1990* on XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. Public and agency comments were addressed as part of the preparation of this Amendment.
- b) The Amendment will provide Regional policy that implement the Council endorsed District Plan’s vision and key directions to transform the Glendale District Plan area into a vibrant and complete community for people of all ages, lifestyles, and abilities.
- c) The Amendment will support continued collaboration between stakeholders to advance the key directions of the District Plan.
- d) Based on the Region’s review of the *Planning Act, 1990*, the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), the Provincial plans (2017 and 2019), the Regional Official Plan, and public and agency consultation, Regional staff is of the opinion that XXXXXXXXXXXX

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Section 14, Implementation of the Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area, shall apply where applicable.

**DRAFT**  
**PART “B” – THE AMENDMENT**

**Amendment 17**  
**To the Official Plan for the**  
**Niagara Planning Area**

The Official Plan for the Niagara Planning area is amended as follows:

**Map Changes (attached)**

1. “Schedule A – Regional Structure” is amended to add an asterisk to the map denoting the general location of the Glendale District Plan area.

**Text Changes**

The Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area is amended as follows:

**Part I – Modifications to Existing Policies**

None

**Part II – New Policies**

1. Add Policy “4.G.14 Glendale District Plan” to Chapter 4.

*“4.G.14 Glendale District Plan*

The Glendale study area is approximately 700 hectares generally bound by Queenston Road to the north, the Niagara Escarpment to the south, Concession 7 Road to the east, and the Welland Canal to the west. The QEW bisects the study area and includes the Glendale Ave interchange. The majority of the study area falls within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake with a small portion location within the City of St. Catharines.

The Glendale District will be a vibrant and *complete community* for people of all ages, lifestyles, and abilities - a place to live, work, play, learn and grow. Its urban districts, with a mix of uses, will protect, integrate and celebrate the natural and rural surroundings reflecting the distinct character of the area.

Glendale District will be framed by connection to green space along the Welland Canal, the Niagara Escarpment, the creek valleys and agricultural lands.

Glendale District will put mobility first with a robust transit system, cycling trails and pedestrian routes seamlessly connecting areas north and south of the QEW highway.

#### 4.G.14.A Objectives

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.1

To position the Glendale District Plan area as a *strategic growth area* and transition it to a complete, vibrant, mixed-use, urban community.

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.2

To ensure the protection and enhancement of Glendale's natural features and *agricultural areas*.

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.3

To offer a safe, comfortable and connected *active transportation* network while supporting all modes of mobility.

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.3

To incorporate a centrally located, accessible transit hub/station area.

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.4

To build on Glendale's existing assets and celebrate its distinct character.

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.5

To promote a range of housing in terms of built form and affordability.

##### Objective 4.G.14.A.6

To promote the development of a sustainable and resilient community.

#### 4.G.14.B Policies

##### 4.G.14.B.1

The Glendale District shall become a *complete community* by integrating current and new uses, with a revitalized public realm and compact mixed use

development supporting a blend of residential, retail, institutional, recreational, hospitality and employment activities.

4.G.14.B.2

The Glendale District Plan provides the framework for the update to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Glendale Secondary Plan. This update will be supported by technical studies, including but not limited to:

- a) Transportation study;
- b) Functional servicing study;
- c) Environmental planning study;
- d) Commercial lands review;
- e) Urban design guidelines;
- f) Phasing plan; and
- g) Financial impact assessment.

4.G.14.B.3

A transit station/hub will be centrally located to serve the entire Glendale area and beyond. The final location/configuration, transit operations and logistical requirements for this hub will be determined via the completion of a feasibility study and ongoing discussion with the Inter-Municipal Transit Working Group and other key stakeholders.

4.G.14.B.4

In order to support affordability, the Glendale District will offer a range in the mix and type of housing and units built in the community. Information from the Region's Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and consultation with the affordable housing providers will assist in forming guidance and recommendations for *affordable* and supportive housing.

4.G.14.B.5

An *active transportation* network shall be improved by ensuring new development applications incorporate a continuous sidewalk network, cycling infrastructure and safe marked crossings. The existing network shall be enhanced by making it *active transportation-friendly* and displaying signage that is clear and informative throughout the District.

4.G.14.B.6

Opportunities for additional vehicular or *active transportation* connections north to south of the QEW may be studied at a future time.

4.G.14.B.7

The Glendale District Plan is committed to supporting the numerous established business, employment and hospitality assets and building on these

assets. Marketing, economic development and tourism strategies shall be pursued to promote these assets and attract new ones. The proximity of Niagara District Airport shall be leveraged as an asset for supporting important social and economic links, including passenger connections, tourism and movement of goods.

4.G.14.B.8

The Glendale *Employment Area* is well situated with high visibility to the QEW and close proximity to the international border and Niagara District Airport. The boundary of this *Employment Area* is shown in the District Plan. Refinements may be made to this boundary with supporting technical analysis through the update to the Town's Glendale Secondary Plan.

4.G.14.B.9

The Glendale District Plan will have a distinct character celebrated by a high-quality public and private realm and incorporation of public art. Urban design guidance shall be further defined through development of urban design guidelines.

4.G.14.B.10

To build on the distinct character of the community, prominent view corridors to the Niagara Escarpment and surrounding *agricultural areas* shall be identified and protected through viewshed analysis.

4.G.14.B.11

The Glendale District Plan identifies potential locations for major, minor and character gateways. These gateways shall have a consistent design approach to promote the Glendale area as a unique location within Niagara.

4.G.14.B.12

The Glendale District is uniquely located adjacent to the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. The Glendale District should capitalize on this unique location to promote research and innovation for the conservation of biodiversity and sustainability.

4.G.14.B.13

Development and re-development within the Glendale District shall consider incorporating measures related to sustainability and resiliency, such as low impact development techniques, green building standards, transit oriented development and other new innovative techniques and technologies that will achieve this direction. A sustainability strategy shall be prepared for the Glendale District.

4.G.14.B.14

Land use designations in local Official Plans shall be reviewed in the context of the Glendale District Plan, as well as the Natural Heritage policies of Section 7B, the Greenbelt Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan. The environmental features shall be further reviewed and refined through an Environmental Planning Study, or equivalent, prepared to support the Town's Glendale Secondary Plan update.

4.G.14.B.15

The *infrastructure* capacity of the Glendale District shall be assessed through the functional servicing study and monitored to proactively plan for *infrastructure* upgrades and ensure that *infrastructure* capacity is available and development ready.

4.G.14.B.16

A fiscal impact assessment will be completed as part of the Glendale Secondary Plan update to ensure that infrastructure and services are provided in a financially sustainable and responsible manner. The assessment will report on the cost of providing services to new development and redevelopment in the Glendale District. The mechanisms set out in Policy 14.H.3 may be used to offset the financial impact of development. The assessment will also report on an appropriate balance between residential and non-residential assessment.

The assessment will also inform any phasing requirements to ensure the logical progression of development.

4.G.14.B.17

Local municipal Official Plans, Secondary Plans, and Zoning By-laws shall be updated to implement the vision, objectives, and policy direction of Glendale District Plan, as required.

4.G.14.B.18

The Land Use Concept and Demonstration Plan Map as shown in the Glendale District Plan shall be used as a guide for the layout and design of permitted development within the District Plan area.

4.G.14.B.19

The District Plan contains four Special Study Areas as shown on the Land Use Concept and Demonstration Plan. Additional study is required through the Town's Secondary Plan update and ongoing consultation and collaboration.

A) Special Study Area 1: Further to the Land Use Concept and Demonstration Plan, the Niagara Regional Native Centre (NRNC) does not indicate land use direction to reflect the ongoing NRNC Master Plan work.

B) Special Study Area 2: The creation of an Eco-park should be pursued to support the connection to nature, offering opportunities for improved physical and mental health for residents and visitors alike. The Region shall consult with the Province, Transport Canada (or future owner) and local municipality to investigate opportunities for the creation of an Eco-park with passive recreational uses or other complimentary uses.

C) Special Study Area 3: Notwithstanding the direction provided by the Land Use Concept and Demonstration Plan, the lands shown as Southwest Glendale, within the City of St. Catharines, are subject to the Niagara Escarpment Plan and cannot proceed as illustrated without the required planning approvals.

D) Special Study Area 4: The District Plan's Demonstration Plan reflects the Niagara College Campus Master Plan and recognizes the Master Plan guidance in the ongoing collaboration. Regard for the vision, objectives and key directions of the Glendale District Plan shall be given through future review of this Campus Master Plan.

4.G.14.B.20

The Glendale District Plan shall be reviewed and updated every 10 years in consultation with stakeholders.

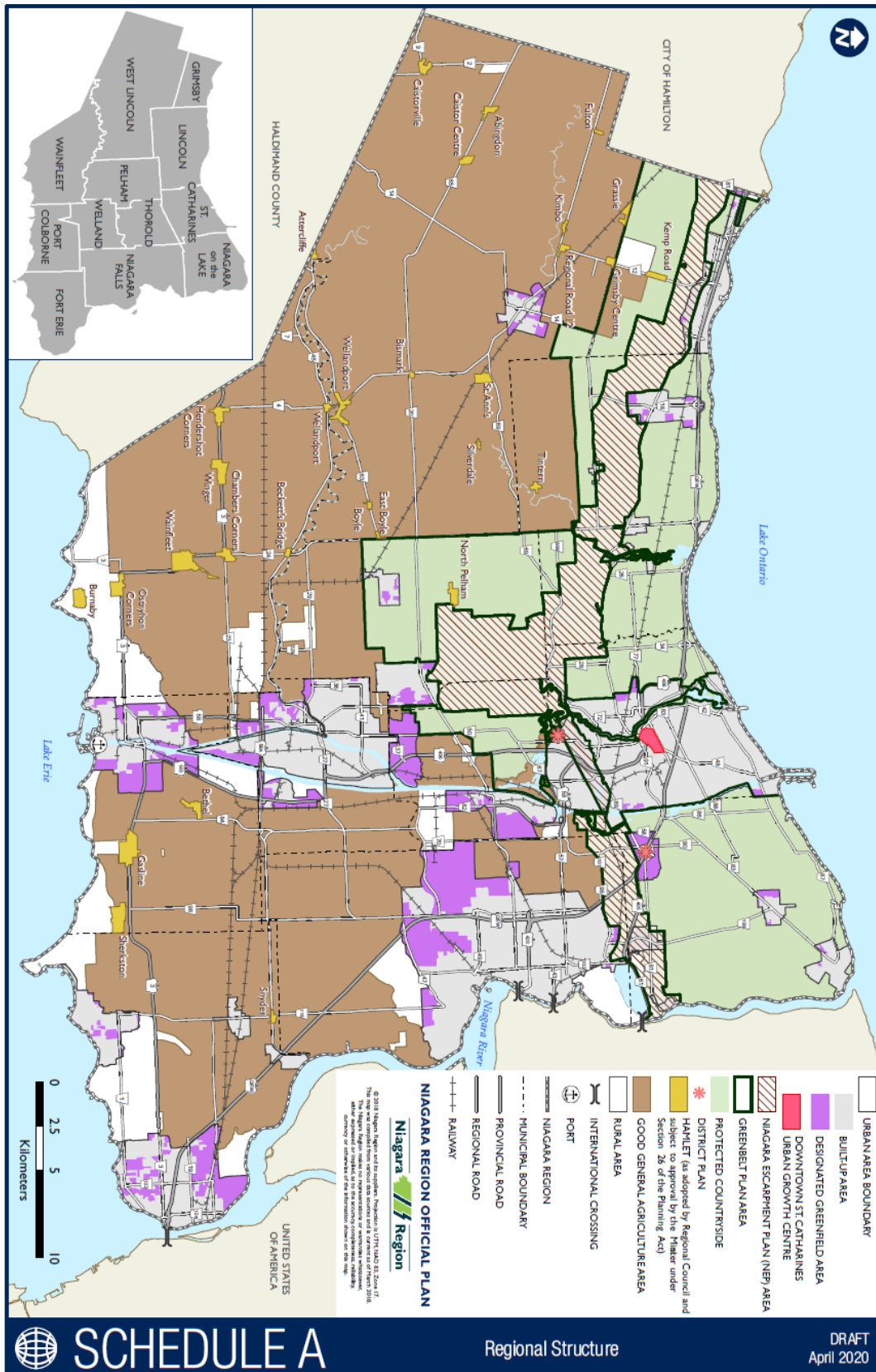
4.G.14.B.21

Minor changes may be permitted as a result of future planning study or technical review provided it is consistent with the overall vision and framework of the Glendale District Plan.

4.G.14.B.22

A Regional Technical Advisory Committee shall be formed by the Region to develop an implementation framework as part of the ongoing commitment to the District Plan. An implementation plan will be refined and tasks/timelines assigned accordingly.





**SCHEDULE A**

**Regional Structure**

DRAFT  
 April 2020

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**MEMORANDUM**

**PDS-C 24-2020**

**Subject:** Correspondence received for Regional Official Plan Amendment 17 – Glendale District Plan

**Date:** November 9, 2020

**To:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**From:** Kirsten McCauley, Senior Planner – Secondary Plans

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Attached below are public and agency comments received as of November 4, 2020 for Regional Official Plan Amendment No 17 – Glendale District Plan. This memo is related to Report PDS 30-2020 titled Statutory Public Meeting for Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 17 - Glendale District Plan.

The comments submitted below as well as the comments and input provided at or after the public meeting will be addressed through a future staff recommendation report.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

---

Kirsten McCauley, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner – Secondary Plans

**Comments received:**

**City of Niagara Falls:**

Hi Kirsten,

Thank you for circulating Niagara Region Official Plan Amendment 17- Glendale District Plan to the City for review and comment. City staff have reviewed the draft ROPA (policies and mapping) and offer no objections.

Regards,

Brian Dick

Brian Dick, MCIP, RPP | Manager Policy Planning | Planning, Building & Development | City of Niagara Falls

**Resident – Eric Galloway (provided in separate emails):**

Thank you for the consideration. If you have time could you tell me in the new development if natural gas will be run to the rural boundaries and if so if that is something that the adjacent properties along this new development can receive. Or if there are any benefits to the property owners beside this new development that we might be able to be compensated with in what is being planed at this time or are the boardering properties not considered with the changes that are happening.

Thank you for the up date is there any talk of considering all the properties in the yellow hatched boarder to become part of the city limits it would allow future growth and municipal services to all those lots that is a interest to me if there is all of this development in our back yard. Us locals sitting lust out side the boarder are seeing the opportunity of growth and development but in the plan it cover the area to queenston street ad york road but no development changes have been made in our rr zoning. We see this change happening around us and we are in the Glendale zone. But are missing out on any benefits of this change to the properties we own in this area. It would be nice for a consideration for our lots to be apart of this change happening around us in the Glendale area

**Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority:**

Good Morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the above noted application. The NPCA has no concerns in principle to the overall plan to incorporate policy related to the vision and key directions of the Council endorsed Glendale District Plan into the Regional Official Plan.

The NPCA would request that reference be made to the NPCA and our Regulations/policies particularly in section 4.G.14.B.14 along with other applicable policies and pieces of legislation pertaining to the Natural features within the Plan area.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

**Sarah Mastroianni**  
**Manager, Planning and Development, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority**

**City of Thorold:**

November 2, 2020

EMAIL ONLY

Kirsten McCauley, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner, Secondary Plans, Planning and Development, Niagara Region

**RE: Glendale District Plan- ROPA No. 17**

Thank you for the opportunity for the City of Thorold to review and comment on ROPA No. 17 regarding the Glendale District Plan.

The City of Thorold has no concerns with ROPA No. 17. Consideration may be given to numbering/labelling the Districts on the Regional Structure- Schedule A map to clarify the locations of the various Districts (i.e. Glendale District, Brock District, etc.).

With the on-going conformity exercise of the Brock District Plan/Brock Business Park Secondary Plan, there may be opportunity to implement similar policies in the mixed-use and employment areas.

If the City can be of any further assistance, please advise.

Yours truly,

Julie Hannah, MES, MA, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner

**Development Planning, Niagara Region:**

Good afternoon Kirsten,

Thank you for circulating Regional Development Planning staff on Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 17 to implement the Glendale District Plan, which was endorsed by Regional Council on September 17, 2020. Regional staff has reviewed the Draft Amendment (received October 5, 2020), which proposes to add policy to the Niagara Region Official Plan that reflects and supports the implementation of the vision, key directions and strategies of the Council-endorsed Glendale District Plan, and include an asterisk identifier on Schedule A of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) to denote the general location of the Glendale District Plan area.

Regional Development Planning staff are supportive of the intent of ROPA No. 17 to guide development within the Glendale District area, and to implement policies in-text and identify the Glendale District Plan area on Schedule A of the ROP. It is recommended that wording be added to Policies 4.G.14.B.9, 4.G.14.B.10 and 4.G.14.B.13 to clarify when these requirements will be undertaken, whether that be as part of the Regional Technical Advisory Committee to be formed through Policy 4.G.14.B.22 or as part of the update to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Glendale Secondary Plan.

Regional Development Planning staff looks forward to continued collaboration with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, City of St. Catharines and the Technical Advisory Committee to facilitate the development of the Glendale District area, and contribute to creating a vibrant and complete community.

Should you have any questions regarding the above comments, please contact the undersigned or Lola Emberson ([lola.emberson@niagararegion.ca](mailto:lola.emberson@niagararegion.ca) or 905-980-6000 ext. 3518).

Kind regards,

**Aimee Alderman, MSc, MCIP, RPP**  
**Development Planner**  
Planning and Development Services  
Regional Municipality of Niagara

November 06, 2020

Office of the Regional Clerk,  
Niagara Region,  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way,  
Ontario, L2V 4T7

Re: Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 17 – Glendale District Plan

**Submitted by email to clerk@niagararegion.ca**

To Whom it May Concern,

I would like to submit the following input related to the Glendale District Plan (GDP), for your consideration.

The GDP's strategic vision is for a vibrant and complete mixed-use community within the boundaries of the Glendale District Plan Study Area. The following input is being shared with the goal of supporting and enhancing the strategic vision and goals of the GDP.

#### OUTLET COLLECTION AT NIAGARA

The GDP is essential to anticipating and framing future growth and change in Niagara Region and the Town of Niagara on the Lake. For the area of the GDP bounded by Glendale Avenue, Taylor Road and Homer Road drawings and views have been created depicting a mixed-use neighbourhood that will form the vibrant centre of the GDP. The future for much this area has been clearly portrayed in the GDP but there is one key part missing, the future of the Outlet Collection at Niagara land.

Like many retail malls the Outlet Collection at Niagara (OCN) was designed to meet market opportunity and conditions at the time of its creation. However, a trend is well underway where malls are proactively planning the future of the land they occupy. This future often includes replacing surface parking (that typically rings a mall) with mixed-use development that can potentially evolve past retail alone to include places to live and work. There are many examples of this evolution in North America, including malls in the Golden Horseshoe/Greater Toronto region. Such future-forward planning will likely be accelerated by the pandemic which has seriously upended the retail market.

*The GDP does not currently appear to include this trend, which could be a significant contribution to the GDP's strategic vision. It would be highly beneficial for Niagara Region and the OCN owner to partner towards updating the GDP to include a master plan for the future of the OCN land.*

#### GLENDALE AVENUE BRIDGE CROSSING THE QEW

The GDP's strategic vision for a vibrant and complete mixed-use community is challenged by a major expressway that runs through the centre of the Glendale District Plan Study Area. A complete community must be well connected in order to ensure success, and this connectivity includes providing safe means for people to move throughout the GDP community... whether they drive, are driven, bike or walk.

I understand that the existing Glendale Avenue bridge crossing the QEW will be replaced by a new diverging diamond interchange (DDI). It appears that the DDI offers a more effective/efficient and safer circulation solution for vehicular traffic than the current bridge provides. However, the DDI design may result in far less safety for pedestrians.

Through studying several examples of DDI's there is the possibility that pedestrians would need to cross the vehicular on and off ramps as part of their journey across the DDI bridge. As a result, they would experience the extremely dangerous condition of crossing in front of vehicles moving at speed from and onto the QEW. Depending on how bike circulation is handled in the DDI design similar danger may exist for this mode of transportation as well.

To realise the goals that the GDP has so clearly and correctly stated all means of overcoming the QEW-divide and connecting the Glendale District Plan Area together are essential. With this in mind, it would be a shame to miss the opportunity to design a DDI that fully supports the GDP.

I would be happy to discuss the above items further.

Thanks,

Gordon Stratford

**From:** [PF-Mailbox-01](#)  
**To:** [Norio, Ann-Marie](#); [Trennum, Matthew](#)  
**Subject:** FW: ROPA No. 17 Glendale District Plan - Submission  
**Date:** Friday, November 06, 2020 9:11:23 AM

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**From:** Gordon Stratford  
**Sent:** Friday, 06 November 2020 09:11:00 (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Clerks  
**Subject:** Re: ROPA No. 17 Glendale District Plan - Submission

Hi,

My email (included submission letter attachment) below was sent to you prior to the 9:00 am deadline for submission, but I wanted to add the following contact information for your reference:

Address:

[REDACTED]  
Niagara on the Lake  
Ontario, L0S 1J0

Phone:

[REDACTED]

Regarding the diverging diamond interchange design I do have a related brief graphic study available to share upon request. As well I would have a brief graphic study outlining the potential evolution of the mall site available to share.

Thanks very much for the opportunity to provide input.

Regards,

Gordon Stratford

On Fri, 6 Nov 2020 at 08:59, Gordon Stratford [REDACTED] > wrote:

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**Subject:** Woodland Conservation By-law, Agricultural Policy and Action Committee

**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**Report date:** Monday, November 9, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That staff **CIRCULATE** a copy of this report and the new Niagara Region Woodland Conservation By-law No. 2020-79 to the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee (APAC).
2. That the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee **INCLUDE** the Woodland Conservation By-law as a standing item to its quarterly meetings.

## Key Facts

- On October 22, 2020 the Regional Council of Niagara adopted By-law 2020-79, a By-law to prohibit or regulate the destruction or injuring of trees in woodlands in the Regional Municipality of Niagara.
- The purpose of this report is to direct APAC to include the Woodland Conservation By-law as a standing item to its quarterly meetings.

## Financial Considerations

There are no financial impacts to the Region as a result of this report.

## Analysis

The Agricultural Policy & Action Committee (APAC) was formed in 2013 as a result of a direction from Regional Council to amalgamate the Agricultural Sub-Committee and the Regional Chair's Agricultural Task Force. The amalgamation of the two committees into the Agricultural Policy & Action Committee provides the opportunity to recognize and align the work of both committees, and to recognize the critical primacy of agriculture in the Niagara Region in terms of both public policy and demonstrable actions. The APAC reports into Regional Council through the Planning and Economic Development Committee.

The original Woodland By-law did not include agricultural exemptions or an advisory committee. In 2008, the By-law was updated to include agricultural exemptions and the 2020 update maintained those exemptions. Additionally, in 2008 an Advisory Committee was formed to ensure that the implementation of the Woodland By-law was completed in a manner that ensured no negative impacts to the agricultural sector. Through staff review of other Woodland By-laws in the Province, it was confirmed that no other By-law formally incorporates an Advisory Committee. This is in part because the By-law has legal implications for tree removal that must be dealt with in a prescriptive manner that avoids any potential for real or perceived conflict of interest.

Given that the agricultural exemptions are still within the By-law it is not staff's intention to limit public engagement on the By-law but instead direct that engagement through APAC. It is recommended that APAC receive quarterly updates from the Regional forester, and staff be made available to answer any questions or concerns relating to the By-law at that Committee. Staff recommend that public engagement continue to take place through APAC.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

No alternatives were reviewed as part of this report.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The Woodland Conservation By-law aligns with objective 3.2 Environmental Sustainable Stewardship:

*“A holistic and flexible approach to environmental stewardship and consideration of the natural environment, such as in infrastructure, planning and development, aligned with a renewed Official Plan.”*

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

- DPD 49-2006 Update on the Tree Conservation By-law
- DPD 133-2007 Tree and Forest Conservation By-law Amendments
- Service Level Agreement Tree and Forest Conservation By-law August 2008
- PDS 13-2019 Initiation of a Woodland By-law Review
- CWCD 41-2020- Woodland By-law Review Update
- PDS 16-2020 Woodland Conservation By-law Review

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**Prepared by:**

Diana Morreale, MCIP, RPP  
Director, Development Approvals  
Planning and Development Services

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**Recommended by:**

Doug Giles  
Acting Commissioner,  
Planning and Development Services

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**Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

*This report was reviewed by Cara Lampman, Manager of Environmental Planning.*

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**MEMORANDUM**

**PDS-C 23-2020**

**Subject:** COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Planning and Development Services

**Date:** November 9, 2020

**To:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**From:** Rino Mostacci, Commissioner

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**Community and Long Range Planning**

**Current Status of Operations**

With the announcement of the retirement of Commissioner Rino Mostacci effective October 30, 2020 the following changes will be made to Community and long Range Planning as of November 2, 2020:

- Doug Giles – Acting Commissioner Planning and Development Services
- Isaiah Banach – Acting Director Community and Long Range Planning
- Kirsten McCauley – Acting Manager Long Range Planning

Work is continuing on updating background reports with the 2051 population and employment numbers. This work will also feed into the lands needs methodology and growth management. It is anticipated that updates will be complete by January 2021.

The recent round of online Public Information Centres (Picks) for the Regional Official Plan have been completed. The first session was held on September 23, 2020 and the final session was held on October 21, 2020. Over this period six sessions were held and total attendance was 332. A report summarising this consultation will be provided in December.

## **Development Planning & Approval Services**

### **Current Status of Operations**

Development Planning & Approval Services continues to adapt to ensure the delivery of core development review functions including: review and comment on all development applications from a Provincial and Regional perspective, coordinating and analyzing internal review/comments from Urban Design, Environmental Planning and Development Engineering for a “one-window” Regional response.

The following development volumes were received by the department during September:

- Planning Applications (includes zoning, subdivision, site plan etc.) - **38**
- Engineering Applications (includes servicing reviews, site plan, etc.) - **22**
- Private Septic Applications - **41**
- Pre-consultations – **51**

The total volume of formal applications (101, excluding pre-consultations) represents an increase of approximately 38% from September 2019 (73 applications), which is consistent with the increase experienced in August (30% increase). September 2020 volumes remained stable at approximately the same level as August. In addition, a 17% increase in application volumes was experienced for 2020 Q3 (276) compared to 2019 Q3 volumes (235).

## **Infrastructure Planning & Development Engineering**

### **Current Status of Operations**

#### **Development Engineering**

We are continuing to respond to development applications with engineering comments, legal agreements for road works, and processing ECA's under the Transfer of Review program for new sanitary and storm sewers. Additionally, we are continuing with Stormwater Management (SWM) review, Transportation review/meetings, and W&WW review/meetings as it relates to development applications and inquiries. We are working on the SWM Guidelines Project with WOOD Consulting Engineers and assessing schedule/deliverables to adapt to current situation.

### **Infrastructure Planning**

We are developing the RFP for the 2021 Water & Wastewater (W&WW) Master Servicing Plan (MSP) Update project in consultation with W&WW team. The target release imminent to ensure work can be completed by end of 2021 as essential input for the Development Charges Background Study and By-law update.

Collectively, there are ongoing corporate wide-efforts to coordinate long range planning/growth with infrastructure planning projects (2021 W&WW MSP update) and the upcoming Development Charges Background Study & By-law update.

### **Development Industry Liaison**

We are continuing with the review of the potential build out scenarios for the urban areas in collaboration with planning group. This is necessary for the 2021 W&WW MSP update to evaluate servicing implications and supporting infrastructure. We are leading the development application process for the Linhaven and Gilmore LTC Redevelopment Projects and coordinating with St. Catharines, MTO, and other review agencies to ensure that site plan application can be approved and the timelines associated with this project remain on track (Government funding is tied to this as well). Participating with Development Industry meetings (NHBA) to understand impacts and restrictions from COVID to residential development industry and housing stock.

### **Private Sewage/Septic Systems Program**

The Private Sewage System group (responsible for Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code) is continuing to receive and respond to septic permit applications, inspections, development applications, special requests and complaints.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Rino Mostacci, MCIP, RPP  
Commissioner

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**MEMORANDUM**

**ED 14-2020**

**Subject:** COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Economic Development

**Date:** November 9, 2020

**To:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**From:** Valerie Kuhns, Acting Director, Economic Development

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***Economic Development***

**Current Status of Operations**

This memo is the Economic Development Division's monthly update on our response to COVID-19 and business continuity. As previously reported, Economic Development's work is focused on leading planning for business recovery, through the Economic Rapid Response Team (ERRT) and the implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan.

Economic Development actively participates in the REOC and is collaborating with the Internal Organizational Recovery table as well as the Community Recovery Planning table to ensure that there is coordination and communication between the three recovery planning groups. We are providing input into the discussion about the economic indicators that will be used to monitor recovery.

**Service/Operational Changes**

Our work concentrates on the many projects that are included in the Economic Recovery Plan, to support businesses. This work is carried out in collaboration with our economic development colleagues and regional stakeholders. In addition, we are also continuing to move projects forward in our core function areas. In order to do this, we have had to adapt to virtual meetings, not only internally with our local stakeholders but also with potential investors. Virtual meetings and working from home bring efficiencies in time and result in high productivity from team members. We communicate frequently through regular team meetings as well as impromptu Skype and Zoom chats, throughout the day. In-person meetings are limited.

## Significant Initiatives or Actions Taken

A separate report ED 15-2020 Economic Recovery Plan Update has been included in this month's PEDC meeting agenda. It gives a progress report on the initiatives and projects that are included in the Plan. Biweekly reporting to our stakeholder groups continues with the ERRT Update calls every other Wednesday. The update calls are being used as a communication forum for all business support organizations who are advancing recovery and resilience for Niagara's economy.

Now that economic data has become available from regular sources e.g. Statistics Canada and the Conference Board of Canada, we are able to provide an update on Niagara's economy showing the initial effects of COVID-19. This report is ED 16-2020 Niagara Economic Update and is also provided to members of PEDC in this month's agenda. There is a presentation with this report to explain the analysis of the economic data.

All recovery projects as well as our foreign direct investment (FDi) and business development activities are supported by strategic marketing activities. The total number of visits to [www.niagaracanada.com](http://www.niagaracanada.com) are up by 1,242 (12,090 in total) from this time last year. A visit is defined as a series of page requests from the same uniquely identified visitor with a time of no more than 30 minutes between each page request. Page views are up by 2,790 (25,651 in total) in comparison to the same time last year. A page view is a count of how many times a page has been viewed on a website or the chosen group within the chosen period of time. All page views are counted no matter how many times a user has visited the website in the chosen period of time. The number of unique visitors is up by 1,570 (10,482 in total).

For the month of October there have been 7 FDi meetings, organized by a contracted lead generation consultant with companies from the U.S. In addition there have been 12 FDi-related follow up meetings. We also participated in a webinar hosted by the World Trade Centre Leeuwarden, The Netherlands, in partnership with the World Trade Centre Buffalo Niagara, to discuss investment opportunities and the economic strengths of the Niagara region with a group of Dutch companies.

This month the Niagara Region approved a Gateway CIP application for an existing business that is expanding in the City of Niagara Falls. The business will be trebling their physical footprint in the city, creating twenty new jobs within the first year of completion, and will result in the retention of 15 existing jobs. It is expected that this investment will result in \$2.5 m in new building construction. A second Gateway CIP



application was approved for a company bringing their business to the City of Welland. It is expected that the investment will result in \$2.5 m in new construction and the creation of 19 new jobs in the city.

Advisory support continues to the Local Area Municipalities (LAMs) that do not have economic development offices and their businesses. These municipalities are Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham, Wainfleet and West Lincoln. Sector support to the agribusiness and tourism sectors is also ongoing. Our Economic Development Officer has assisted Niagara-on-the-Lake to evaluate applications from tourism dependent businesses to their Fed Dev tourism recovery funding of \$500,000. Applications to Niagara Economic Development's LAM Fund, which was extended this year to include recovery related initiatives, are being processed. To date, three applications have been approved and four are pending.

## **Operational Outlook**

### 1 month

- Economic Recovery Plan implementation with stakeholders continues as a priority.
- Economic Development will continue to participate in the REOC meetings and collaborate with the Internal Organizational Recovery table as well as the Community Recovery Planning table to develop metrics to measure recovery.
- Development of a third Business Impact Survey to be circulated to businesses.
- Virtual FDI meetings with potential investors in the U.S. are completed, meetings in the U.K. will begin.
- Niagara Foreign Trade Zone webinar to be held on November 5<sup>th</sup> aims to prepare businesses to participate successfully in virtual trade shows.

### 3 months

- Implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan completed.
- 'Open in Niagara' website expanded into a permanent regional business directory.
- Review work practices depending on Niagara Region recommendations and Public Health advice.

6 months

- Longer term strategic economic development planning started.
- Continue to monitor economic indicators to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy compared to previous years and determine where resources could best be utilized to maximize ongoing economic development programming.
- Review work practices depending on Niagara Region recommendations and Public Health advice.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Valerie Kuhns  
Acting Director, Economic Development

# Niagara Economic Update

Planning and Economic Development Committee  
ED 16-2020

Monday November 9, 2020

Blake Landry, Manager, Research and Analysis

# Niagara Economic Update

Planning and Economic Development Committee

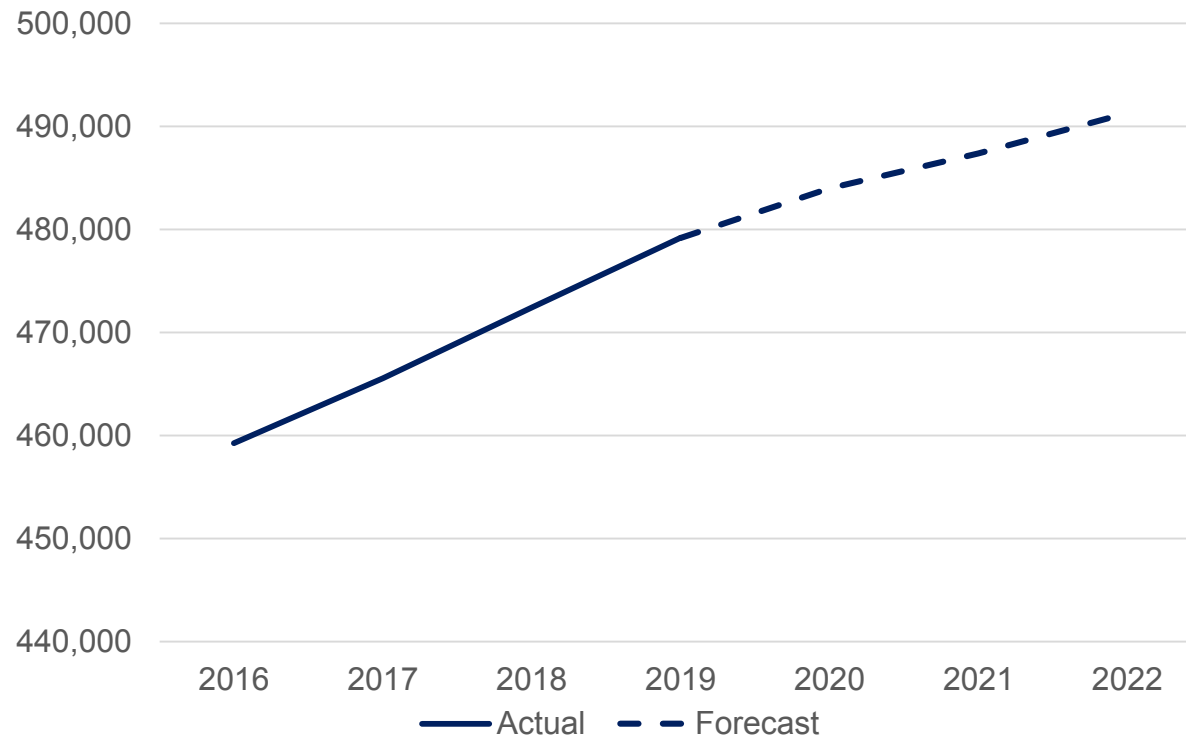
November 9, 2020

Blake Landry, Ec.D

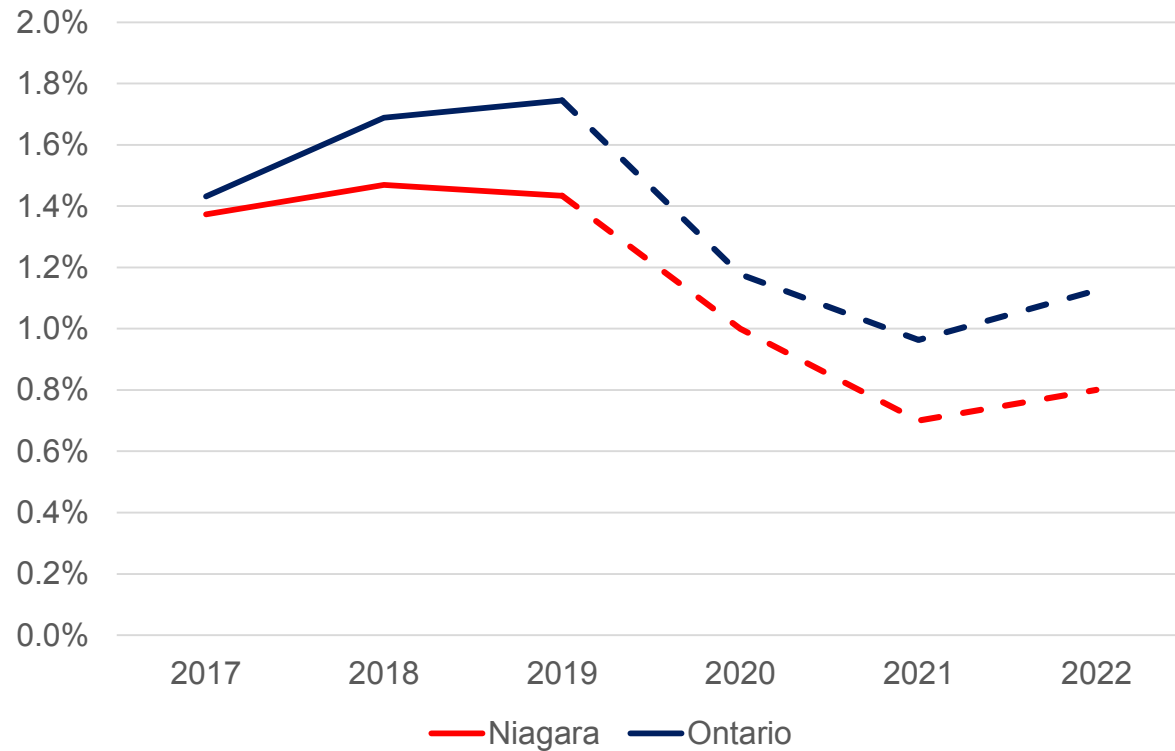
Manager, Economic Research & Analysis

Economic Development

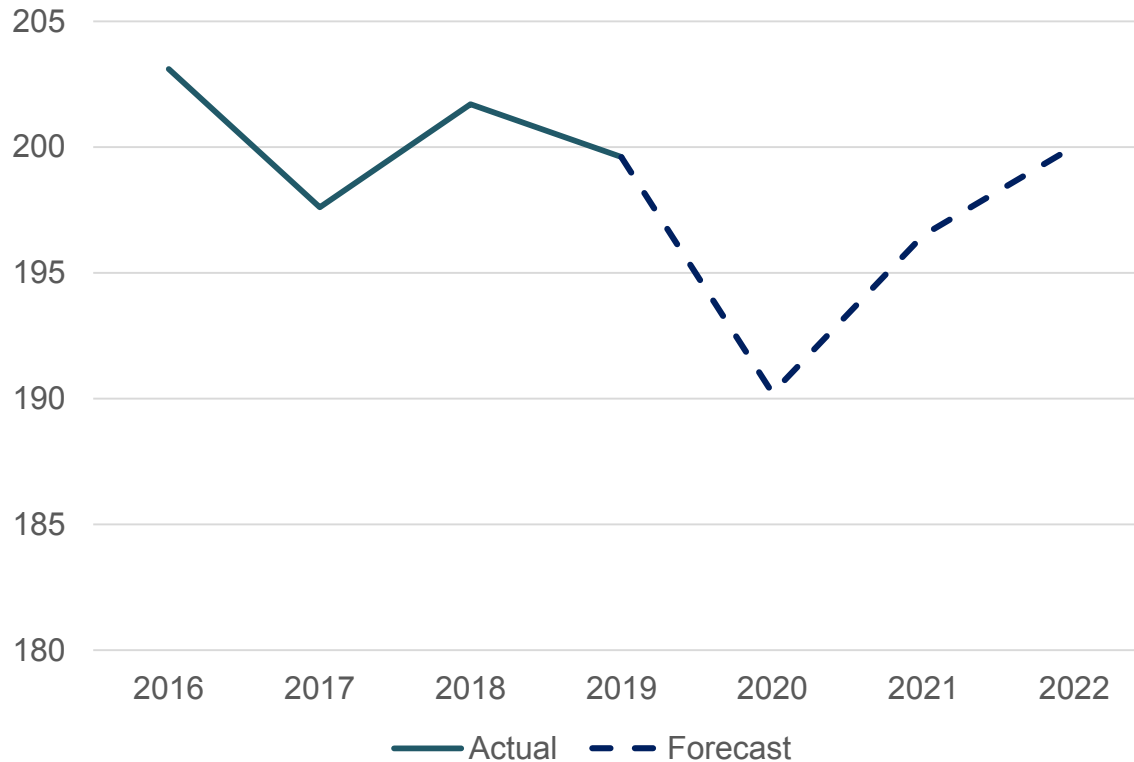
## Population, Niagara Region



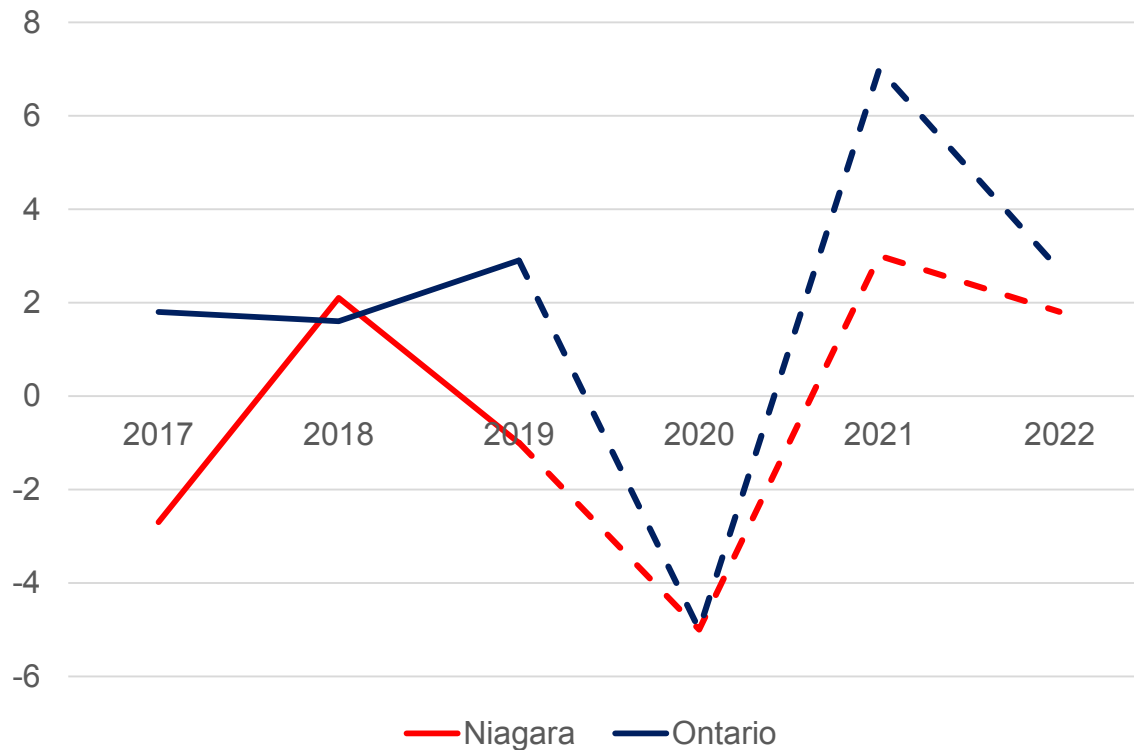
## Population Growth Rate (%), Niagara Region and Ontario



## Employment, Niagara CMA

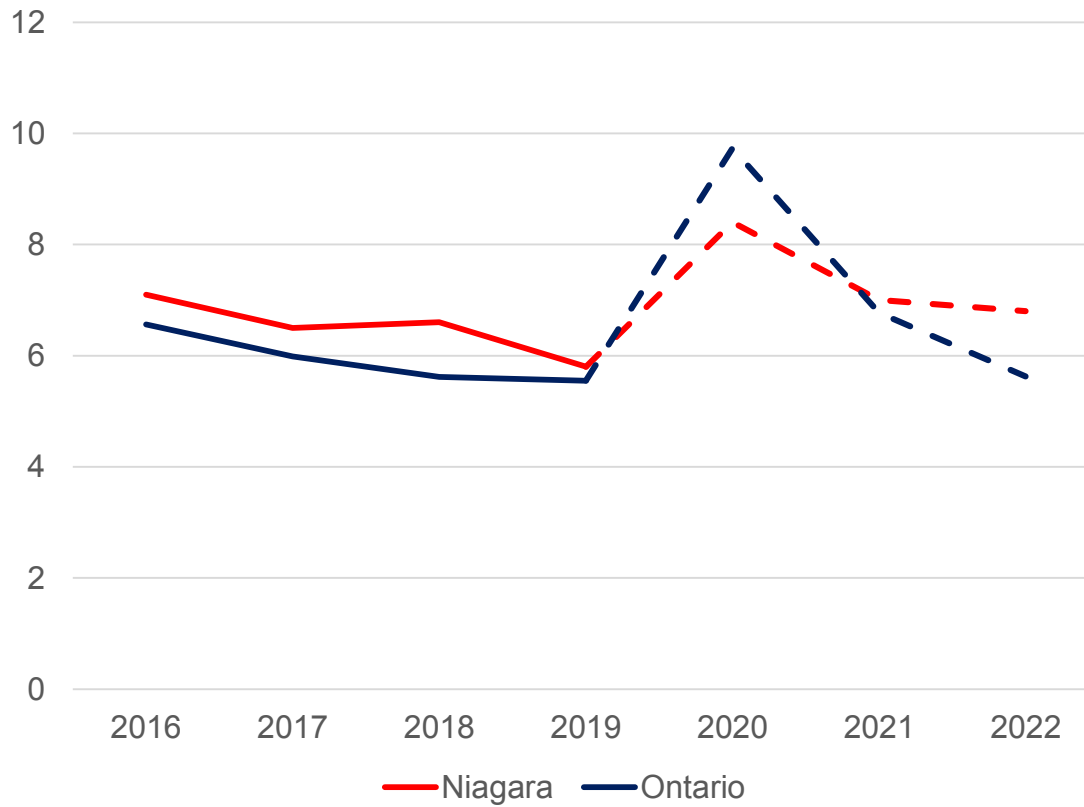


## Employment Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario

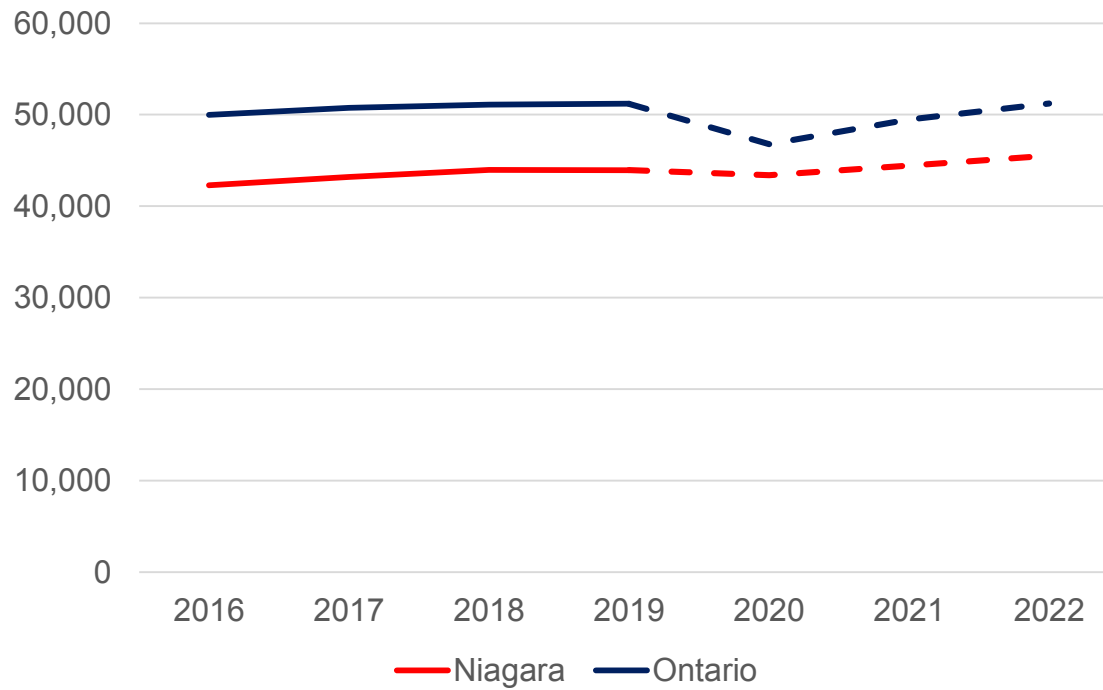




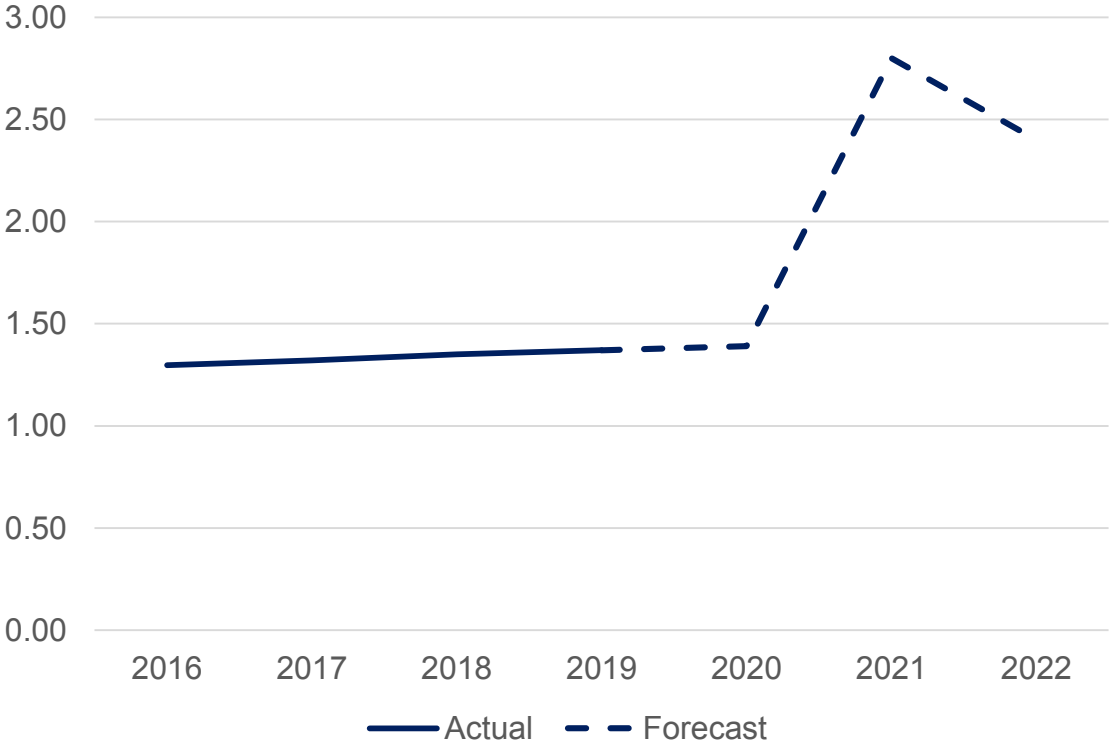
## Unemployment Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario



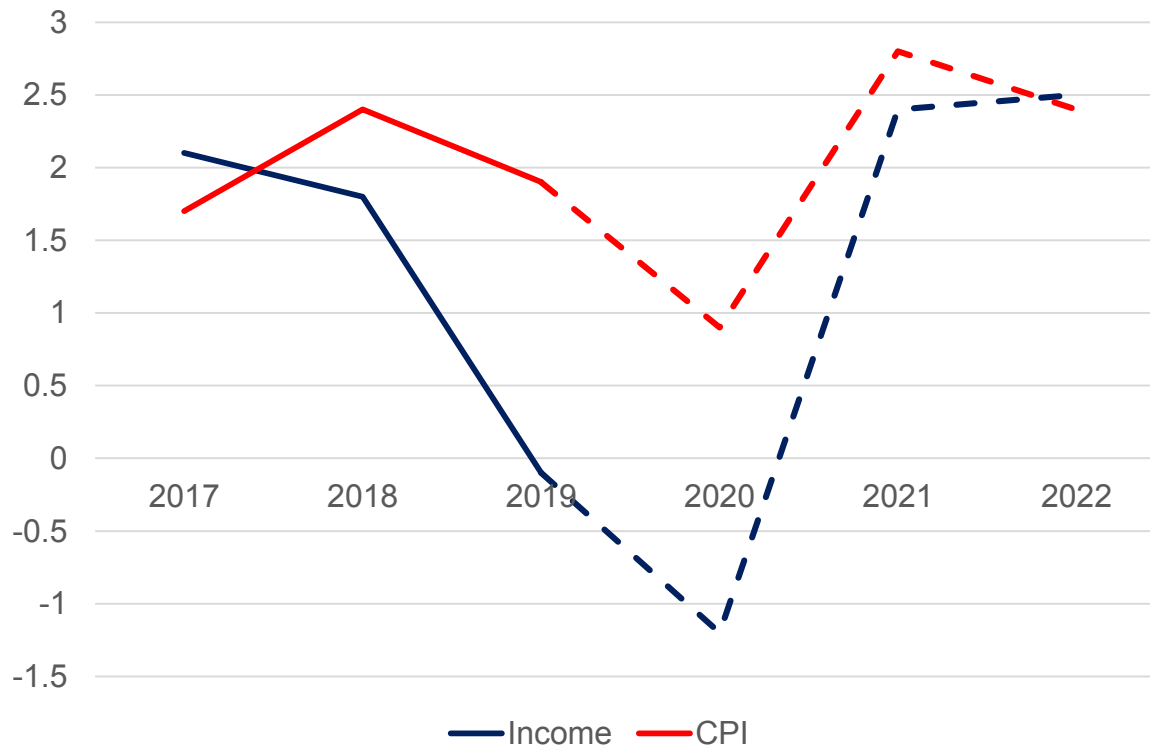
## Per Capita Income (\$), Niagara CMA and Ontario



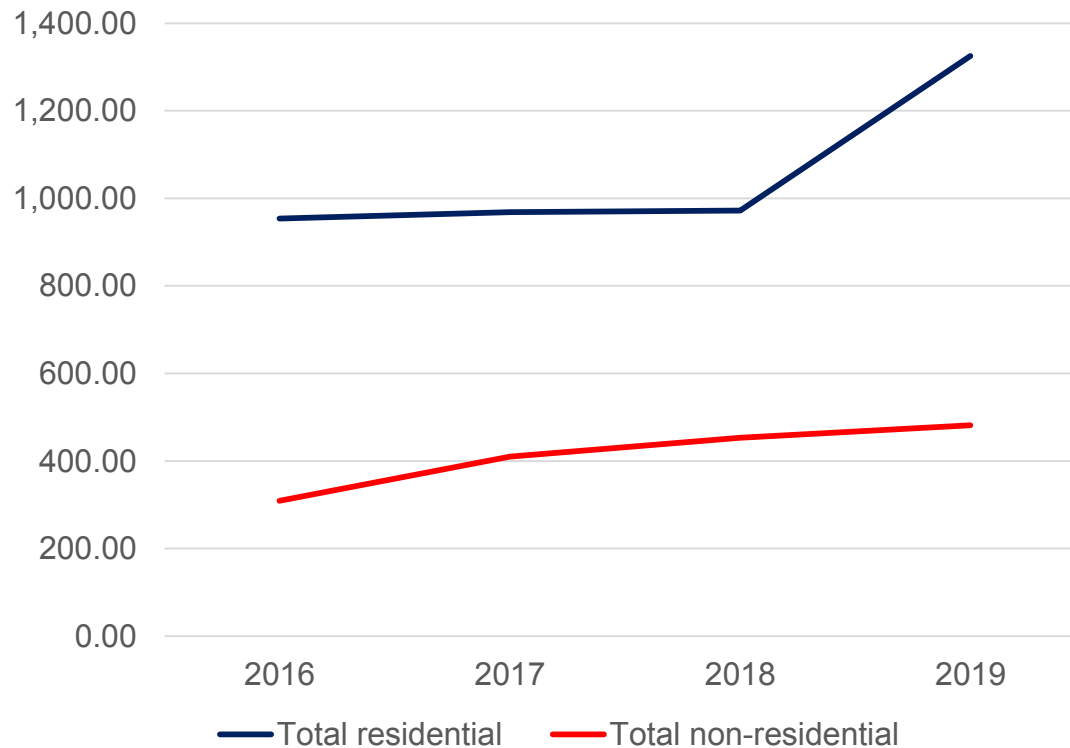
# CPI (2002 = 1.00), Niagara CMA



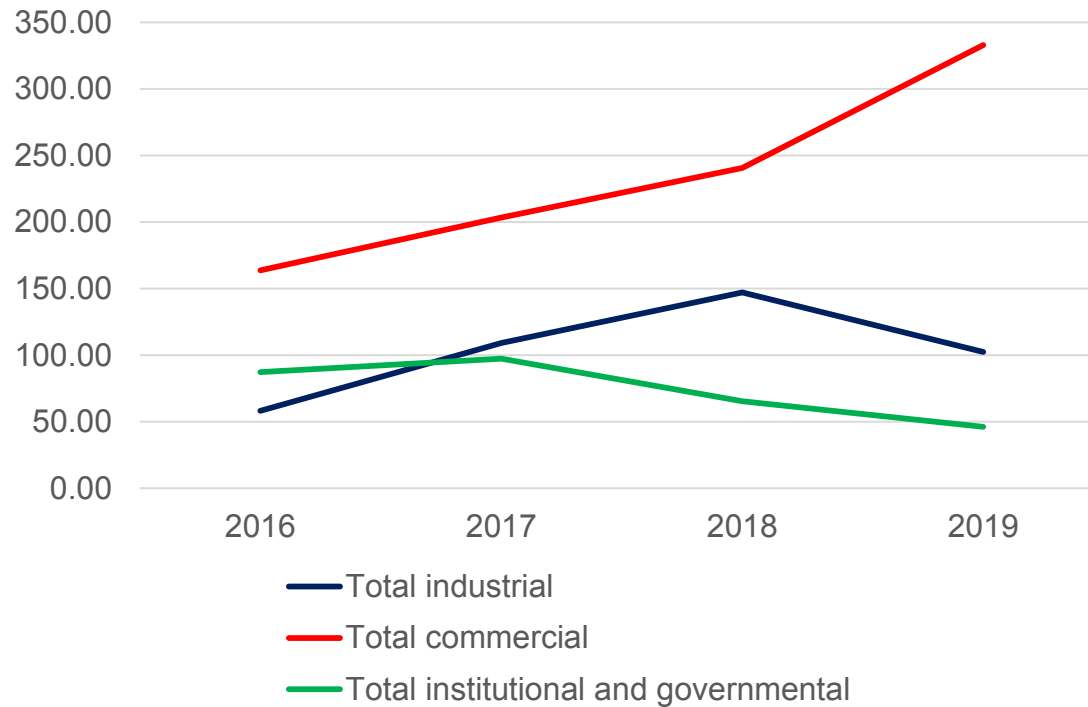
## Income Growth Rate vs. CPI Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA



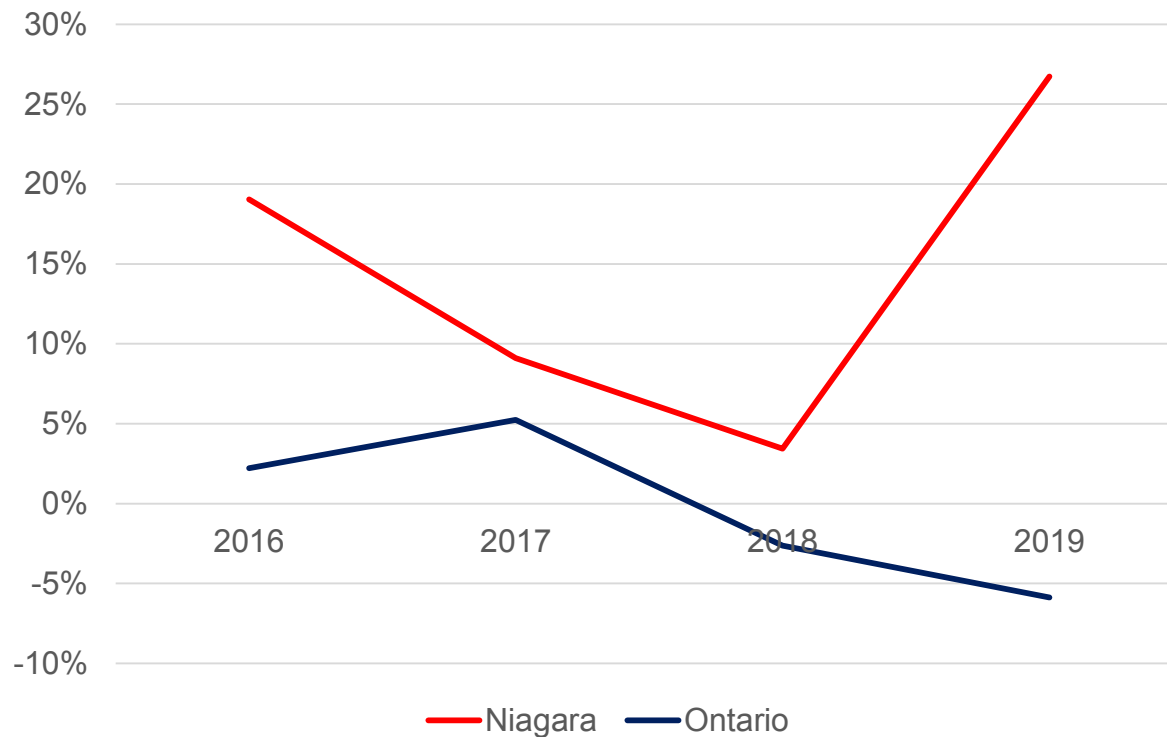
## Investment in Building Construction (\$ millions), Niagara CMA



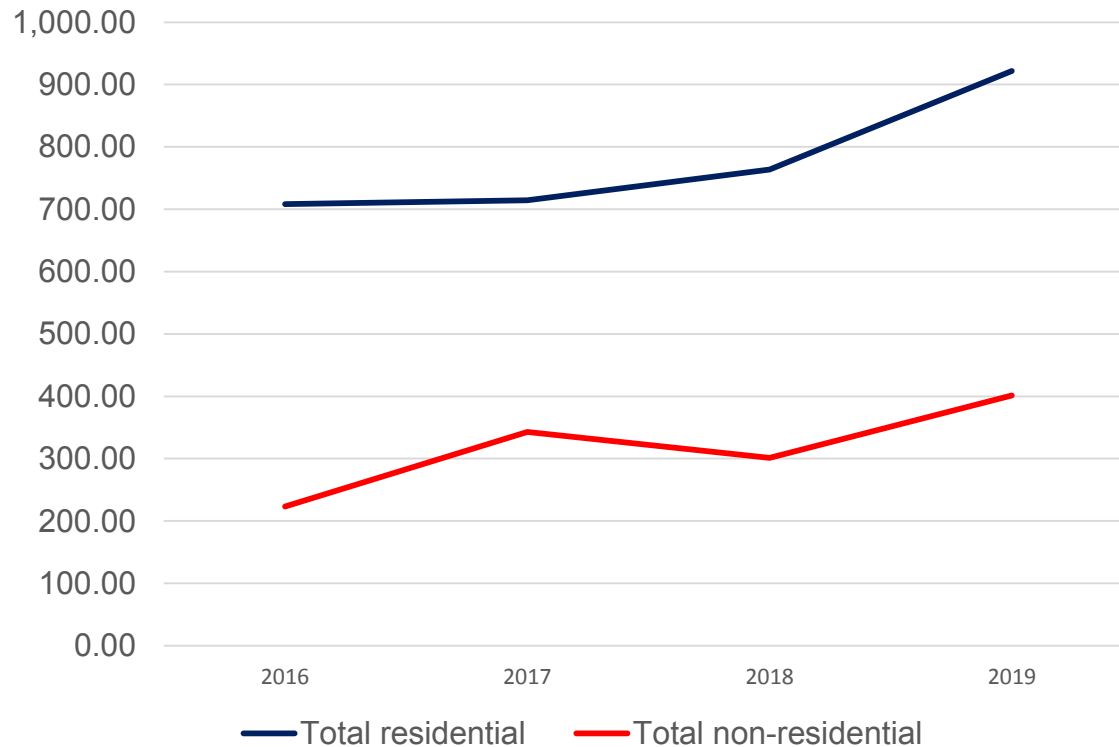
## Investment in Non-Residential Building Construction (\$ millions), Niagara CMA



## Investment in Building Construction Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario

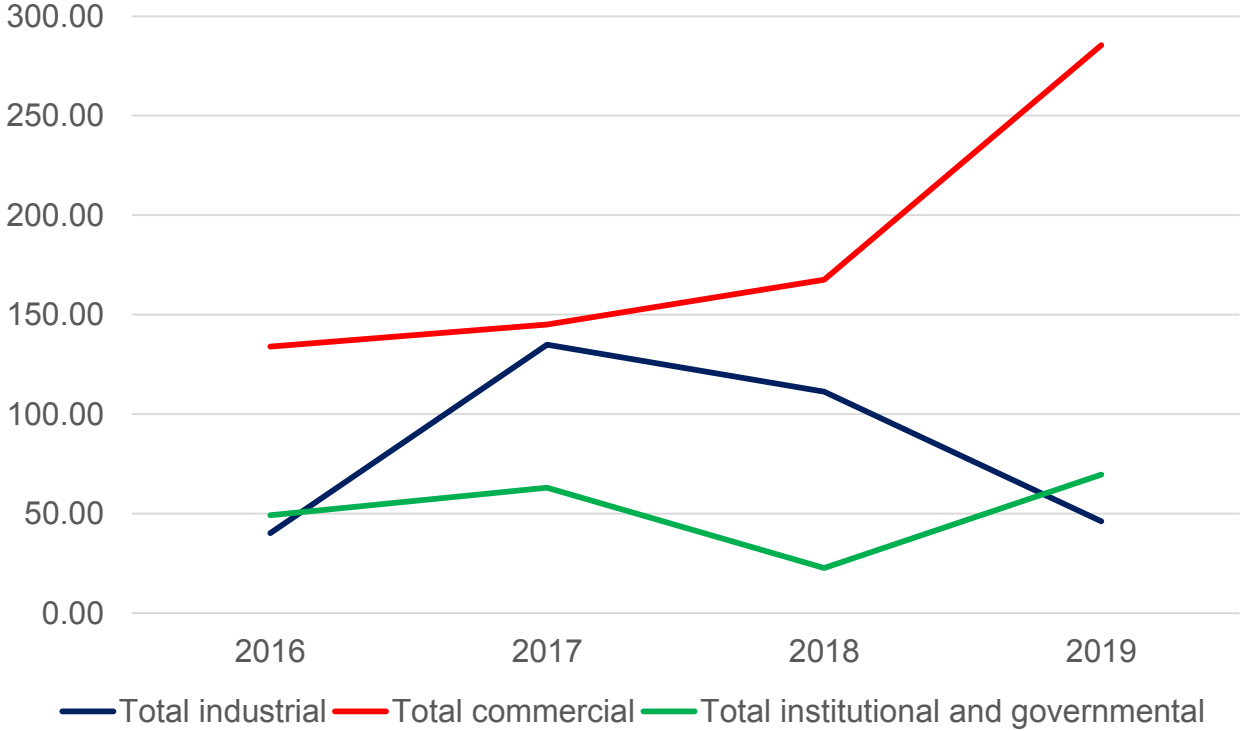


## Building Permit Values (\$ millions), Niagara CMA

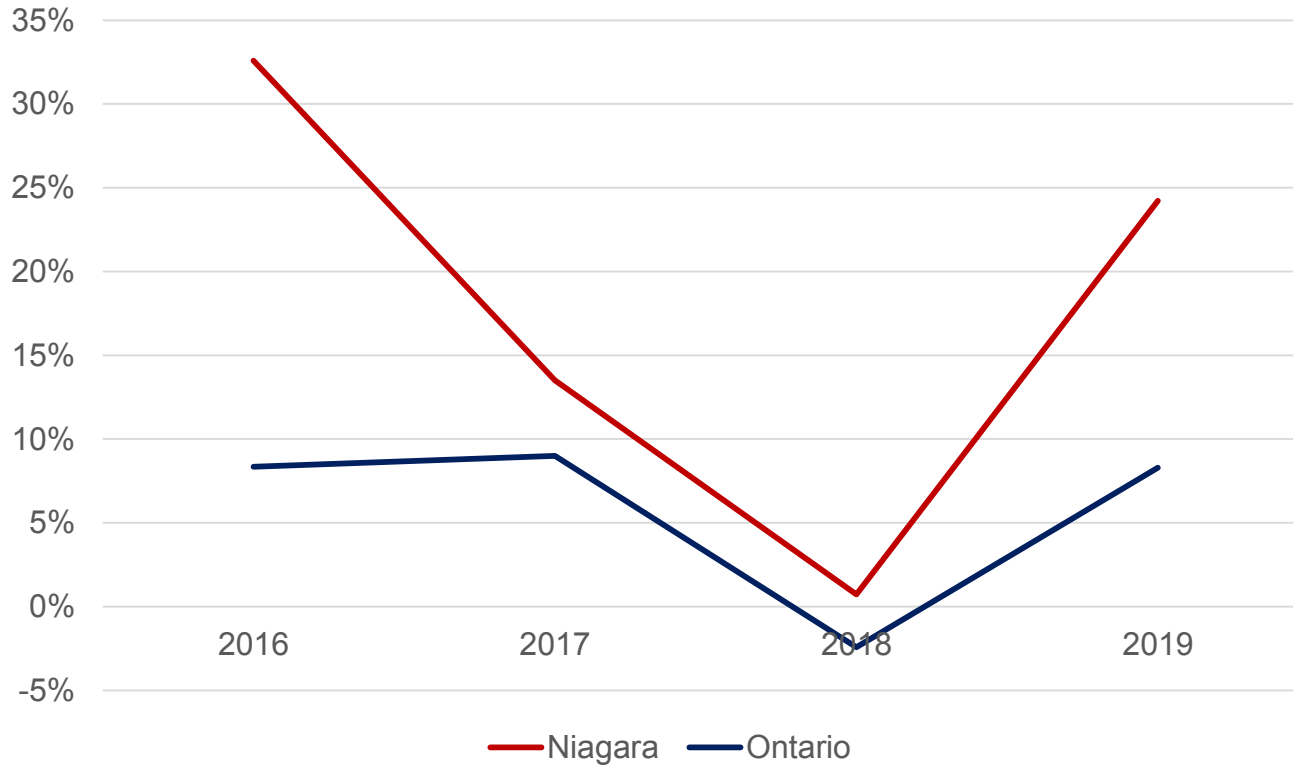




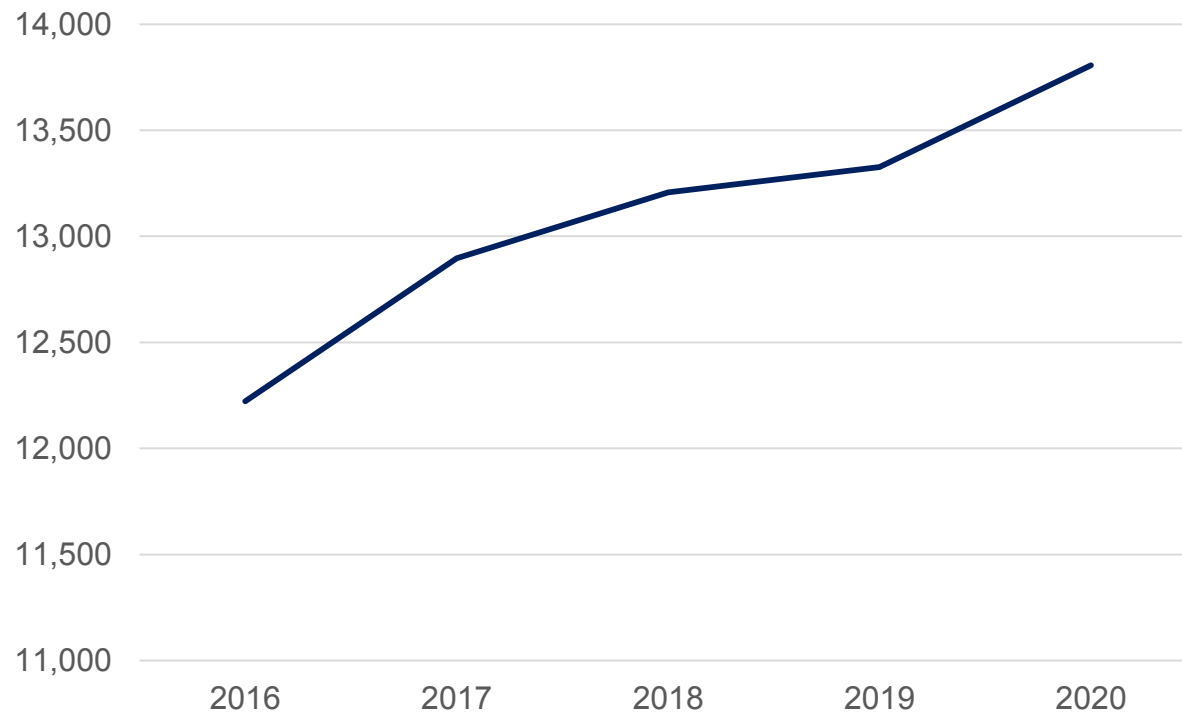
# Building Permit Values (\$ millions), Non-Residential, Niagara CMA



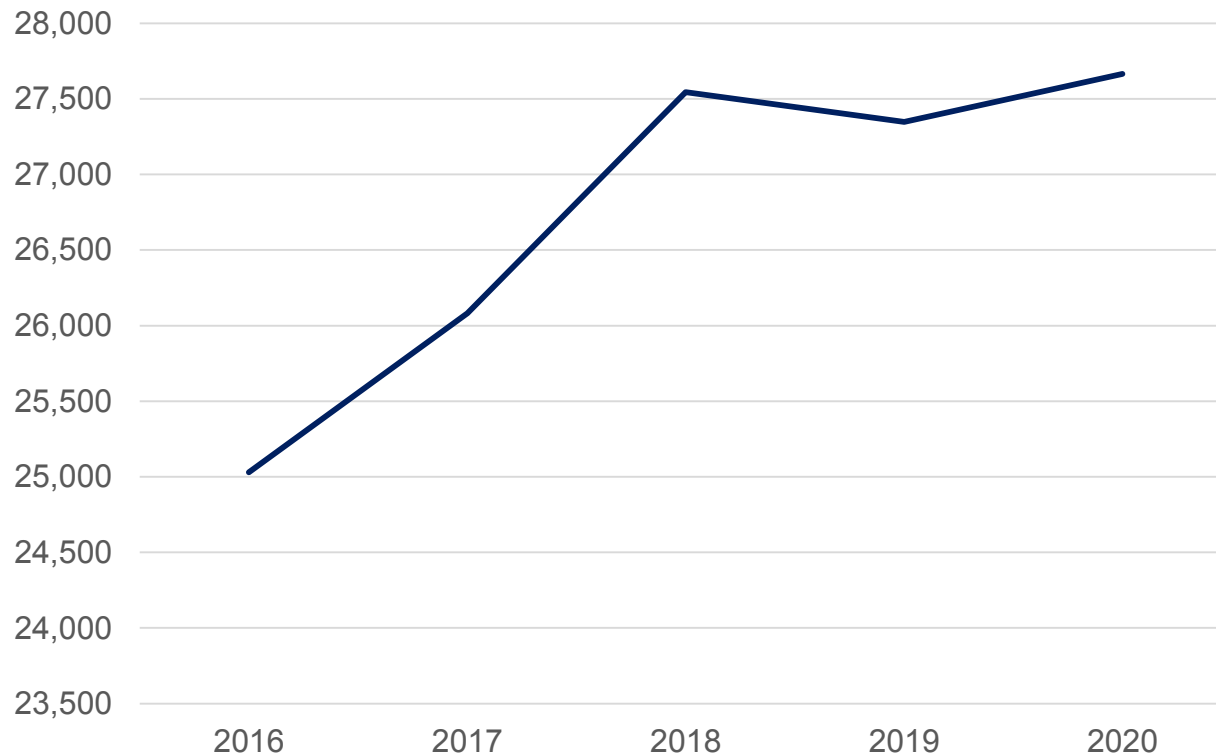
## Building Permit Values Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario



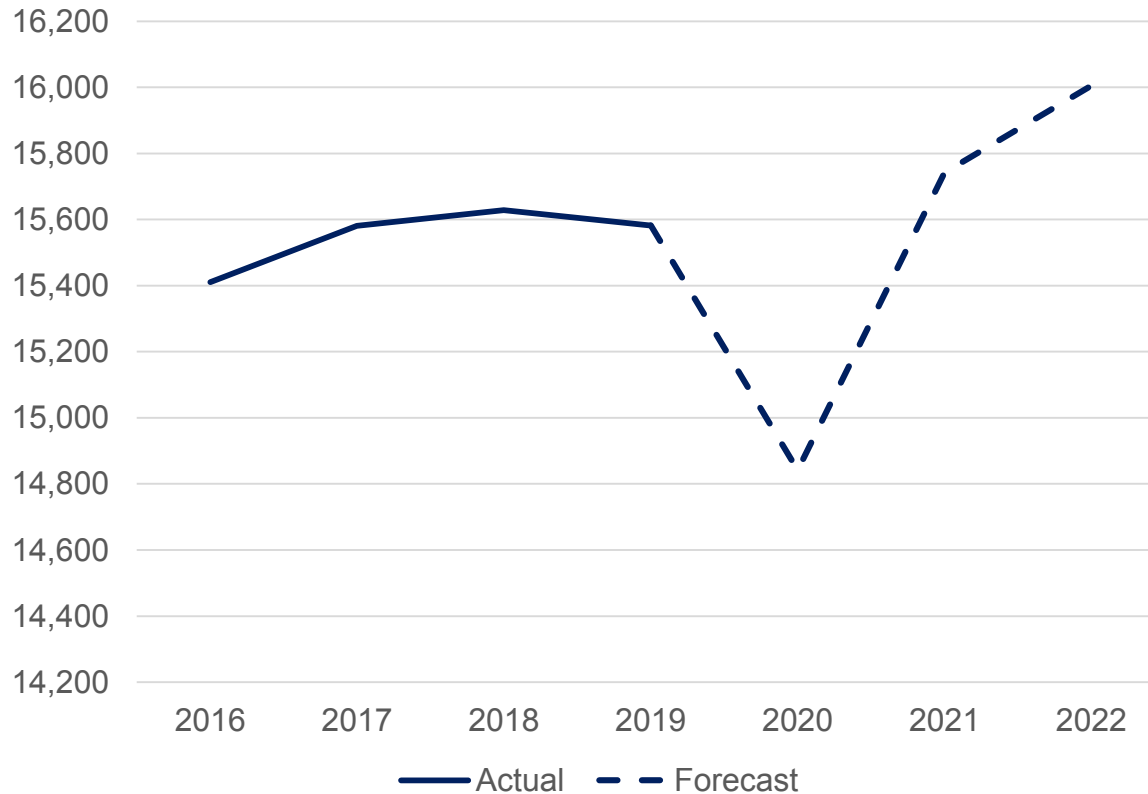
## Businesses With Employees, Niagara Region



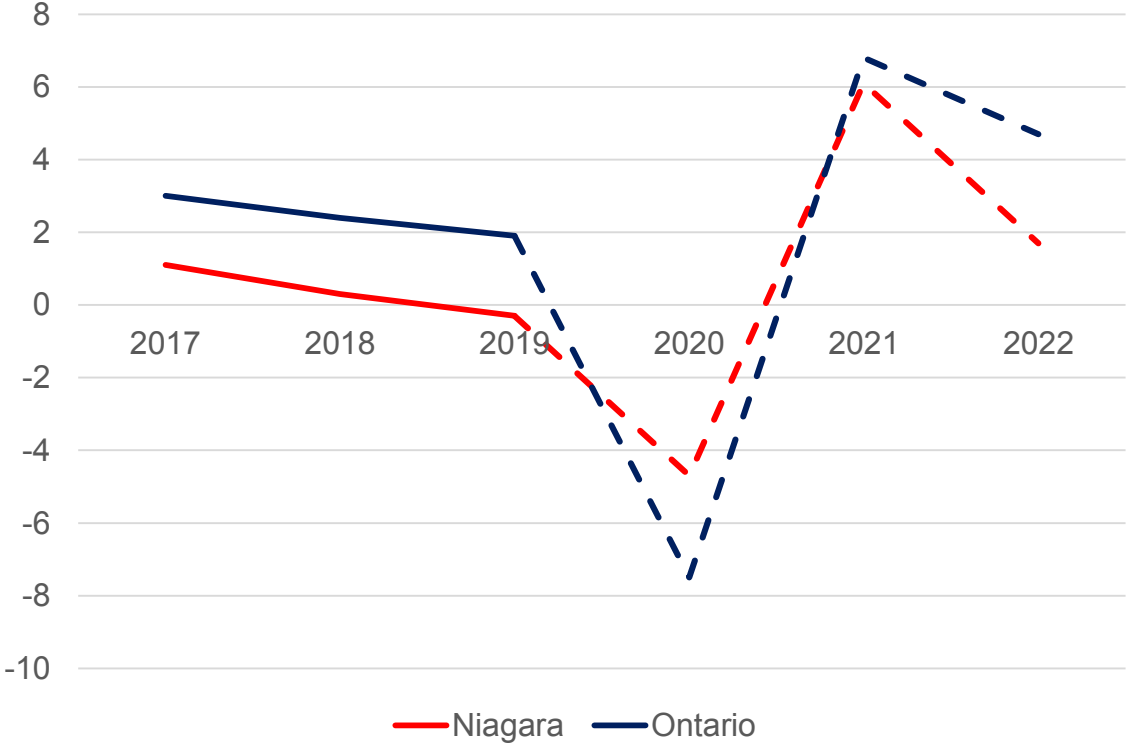
## Businesses Without Employees, Niagara Region



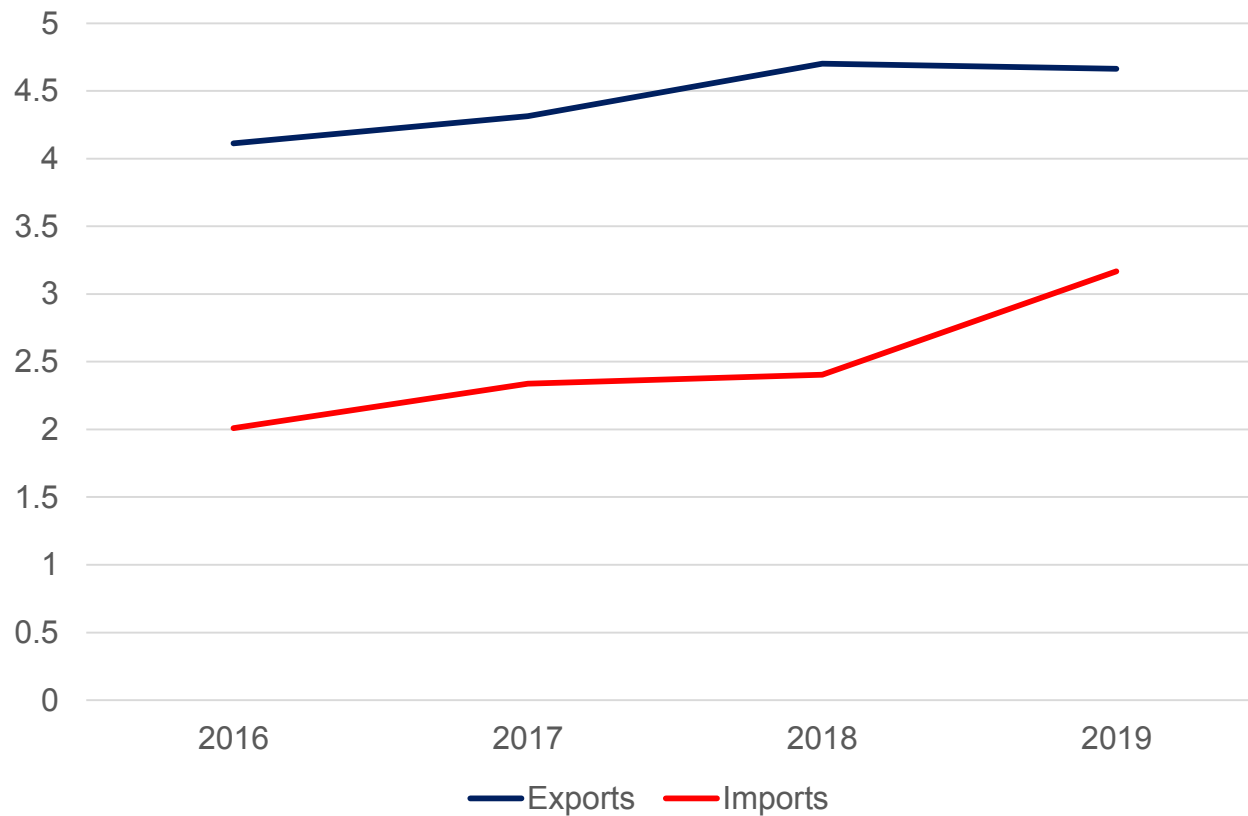
## Real GDP (2012 \$ millions), Niagara CMA



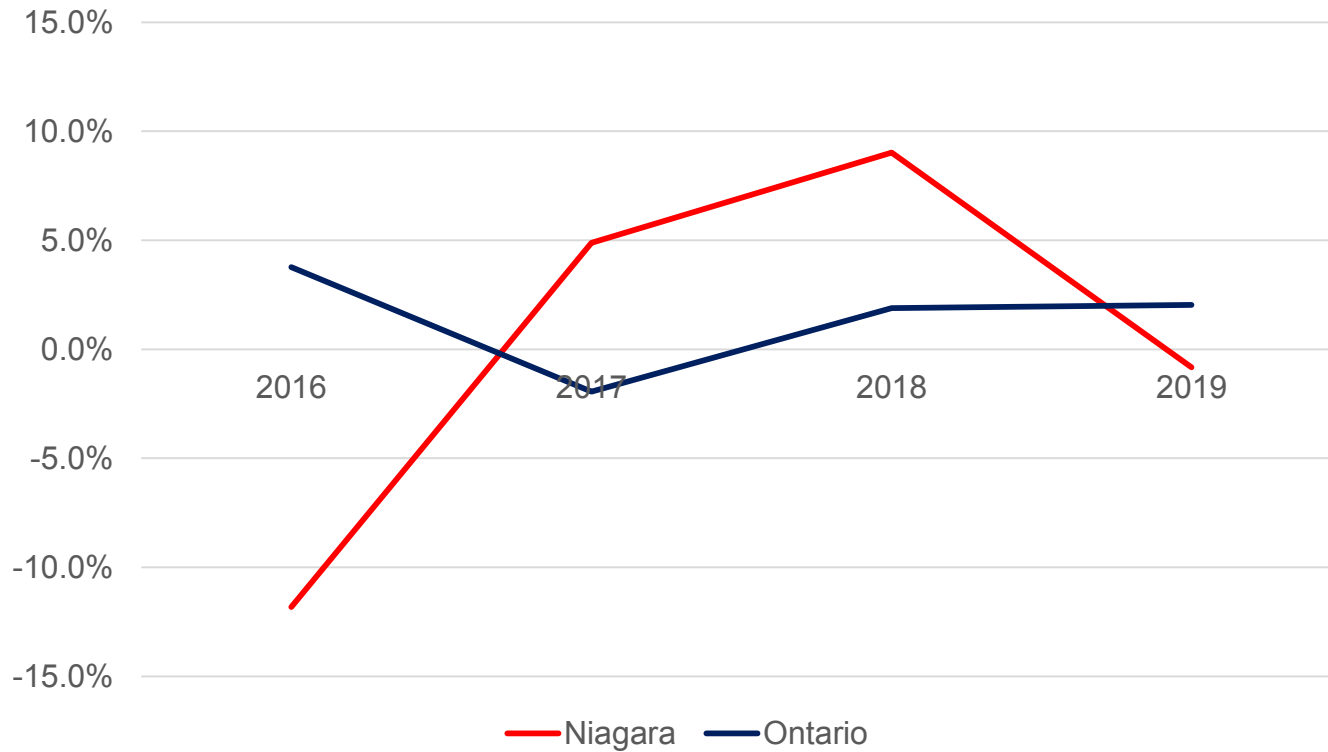
# Real GDP Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario



## International Trade (\$ billions), Niagara CMA

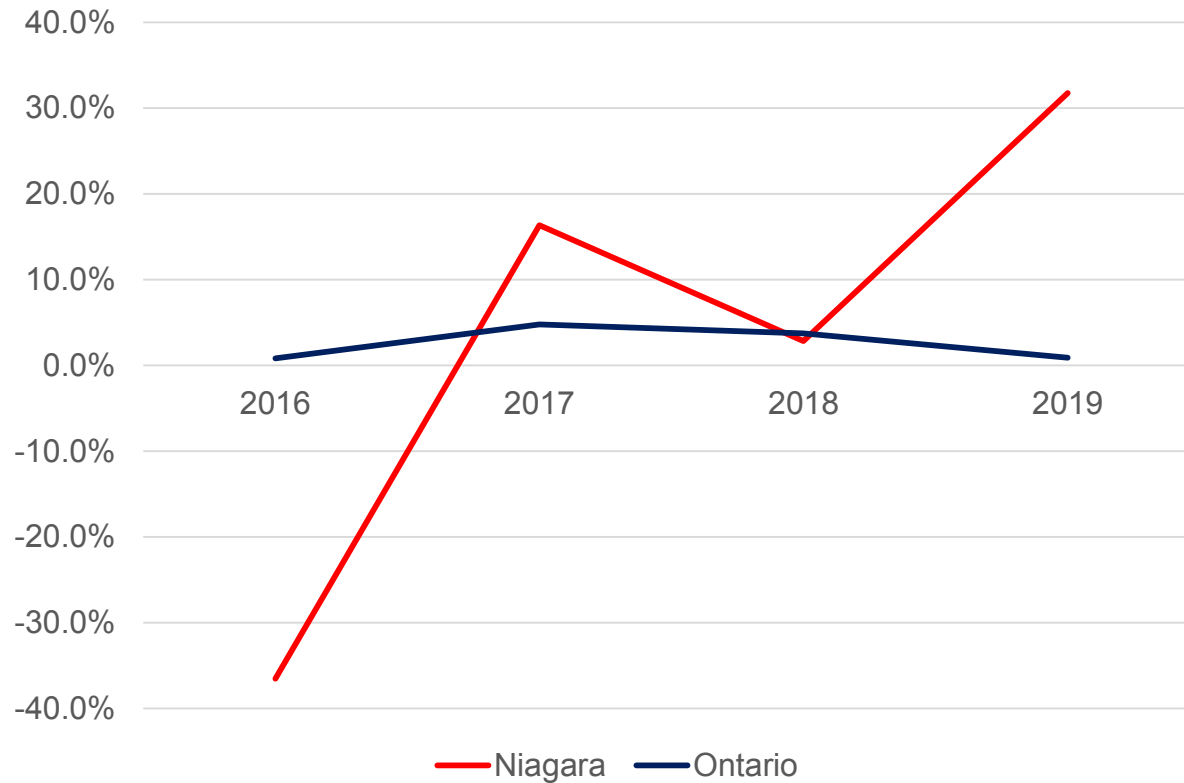


## Export Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario

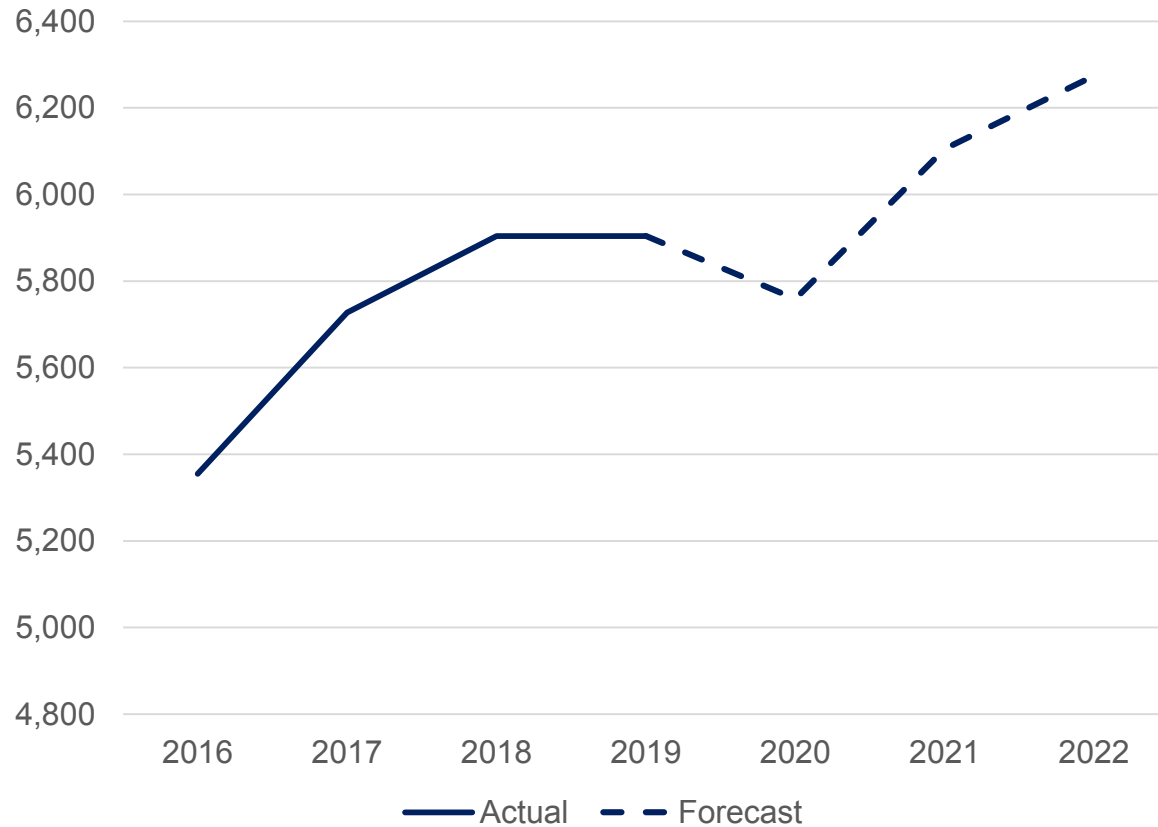




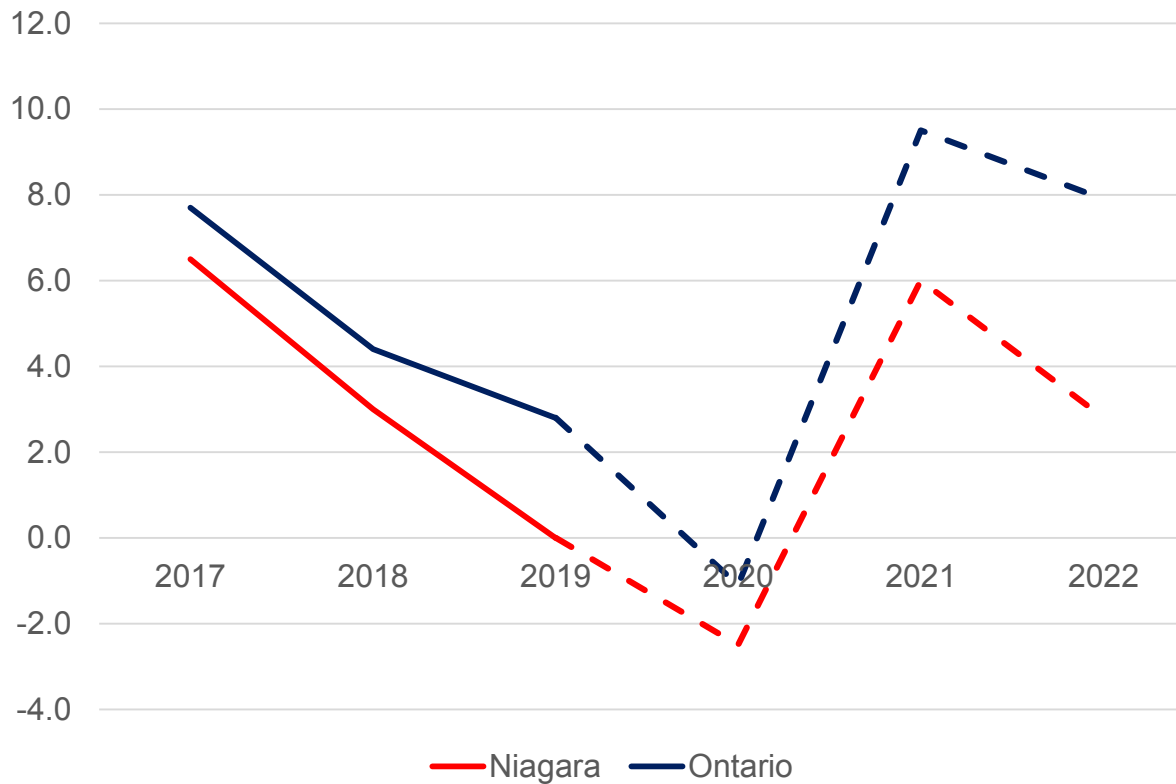
## Import Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario



## Retail Sales (\$ millions), Niagara CMA



## Retail Sales Growth Rate (%), Niagara CMA and Ontario



# Discussion

Contact:

Blake Landry, Ec.D  
Manager, Economic Research & Analysis  
Economic Development  
[blake.landry@niagararegion.ca](mailto:blake.landry@niagararegion.ca)

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**Subject:** Niagara Economic Update

**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**Report date:** Monday, November 9, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That report ED 16-2020 **BE RECEIVED** by the Planning and Economic Development Committee for information.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide PEDC with an update on the performance of Niagara's economy in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- COVID-19 has had a major impact on Niagara's economic momentum, but forecasts show that the damage can be reversed within a couple of years if the virus is contained.
- The main challenges include high unemployment; rising cost of living that is outpacing income growth; vastly reduced retail sales values; drastically reduced GDP for 2020; and a major disruption in tourism visitors and spending, and international trade.
- Some positive attributes include heightened momentum in investment in building construction across residential and commercial building types; investment stability in industrial and institution/government building types; and, substantial growth in new employer businesses.

## Financial Considerations

None applicable.

## Analysis

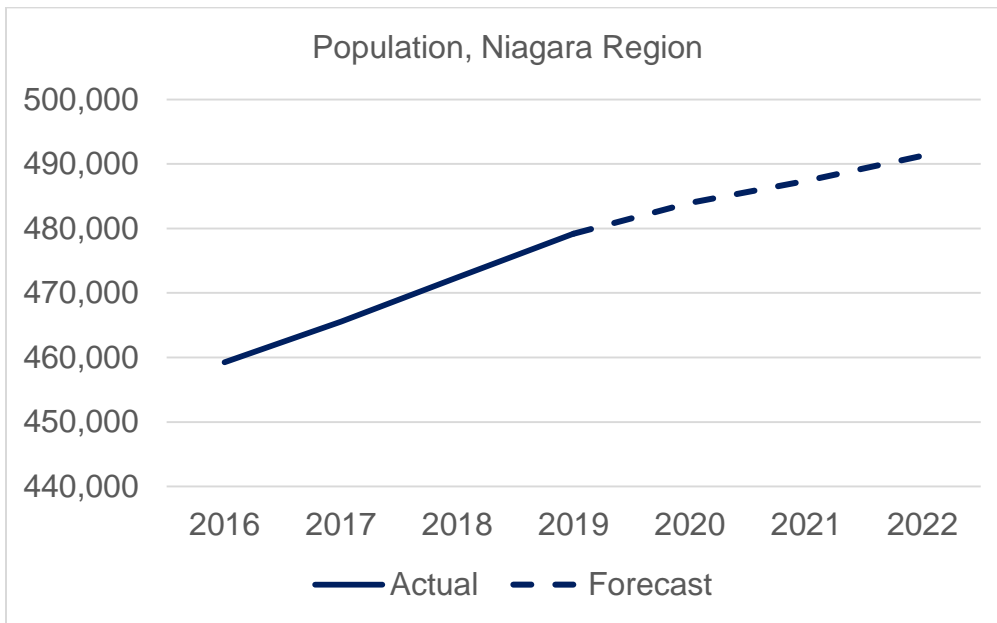
The COVID-19 pandemic has had extensive negative impacts in addition to the spread of the disease and ensuing healthcare crisis. The onset of the pandemic has resulted in the largest economic disruption in history. Lockdowns, supply shortages, market disruptions, market instability, and many other factors due to COVID-19 are threatening global economic stability so long as the virus remains uncontained. Niagara's

dependence on international trade and tourism has put the region in a precarious economic situation while the infection rates are prevalent.

Until the pandemic, Niagara was performing very well economically with a historically low unemployment rate, record levels of new investment and job creation, high levels of new business creation, high volumes of tourism visitors, high levels of tourism spending, strong retail sales, growing income levels, very strong export values, and consistent GDP growth. However, the pandemic has greatly disrupted Niagara's economic progress. Niagara businesses have lost billions in revenue, many thousands of people have become unemployed, the tourism sector has lost an entire season with billions in lost tourism expenditures, hospitality businesses have been forced to operate at greatly reduced capacities with many closing permanently, and there is an existing threat of increased infection spread that would make matters worse.

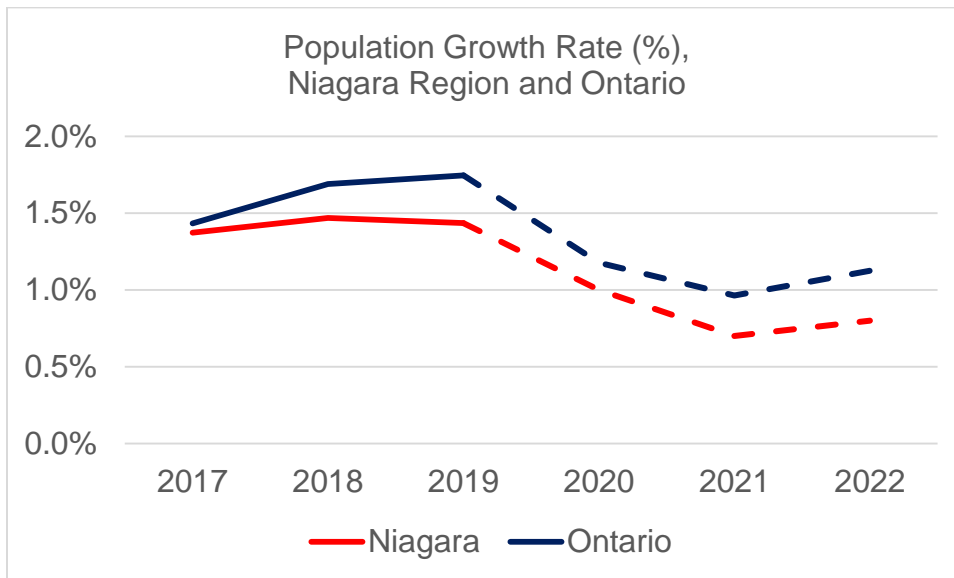
That said, there are signs of resiliency in Niagara's regional economy and if the spread of infection can be contained, Niagara is well poised for economic recovery.

This report explores major economic indicators including population, employment, income, inflation, investment, business counts, gross domestic product, international trade, and retail sales. It addresses the past few years of economic activity, as well as provides forecasts for the next couple of years with a consideration for the impact of COVID-19 on the regional economy.



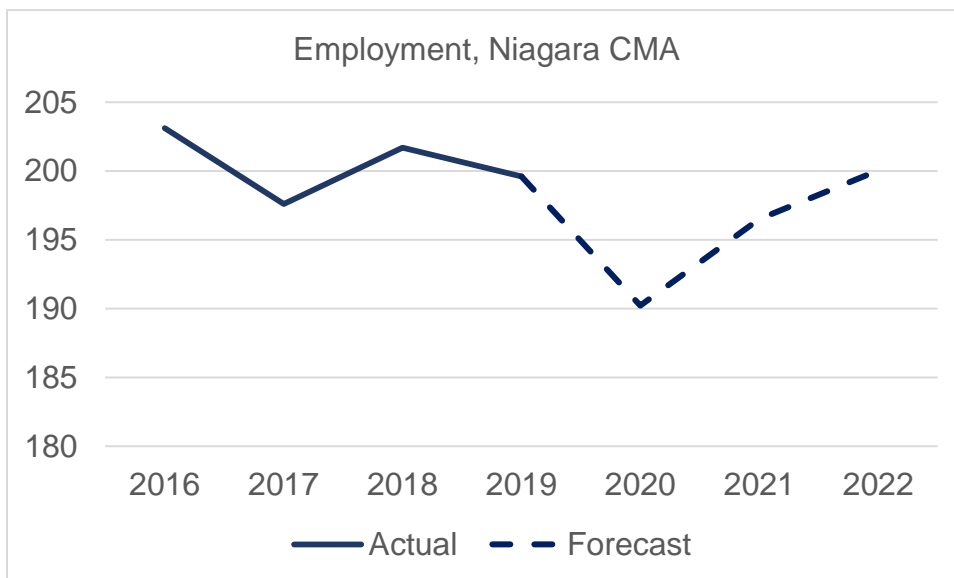
*Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0142-01; forecasts from the Conference Board of Canada*

- The population of Niagara grew by 19,921 people from 2016 to 2019 at a growth rate of 4.3%.
- The population is forecasted to grow by 12,079 people, or 2.5% from 2019 to 2022.



Statistics Canada, Table: 17-10-0142-01; forecasts from the Conference Board of Canada, July 2020

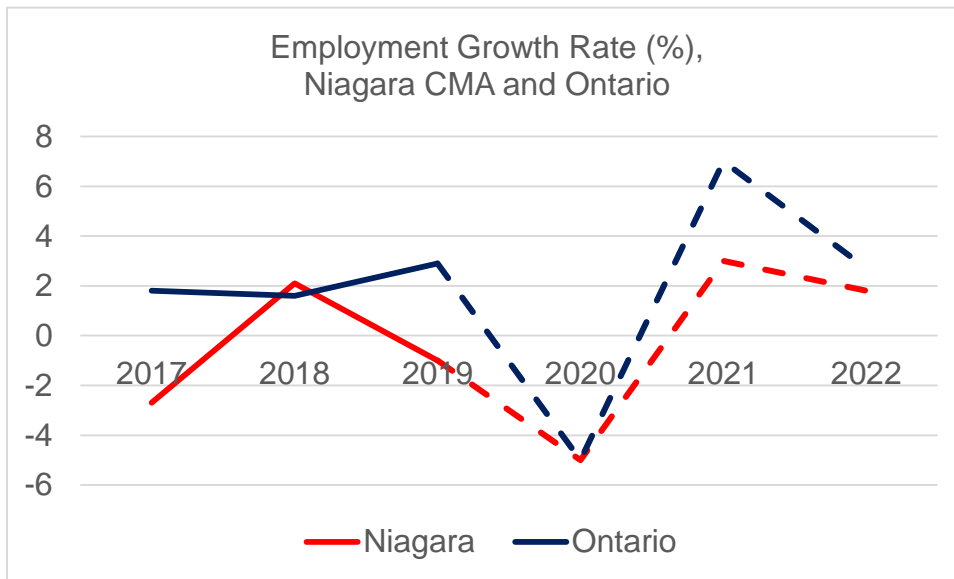
- The population of Niagara has grown slightly slower than Ontario from 2017 to 2019.
- The population of Niagara is forecasted to grow slightly slower than Ontario from 2019 to 2022, but will follow the same growth trend.



Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020

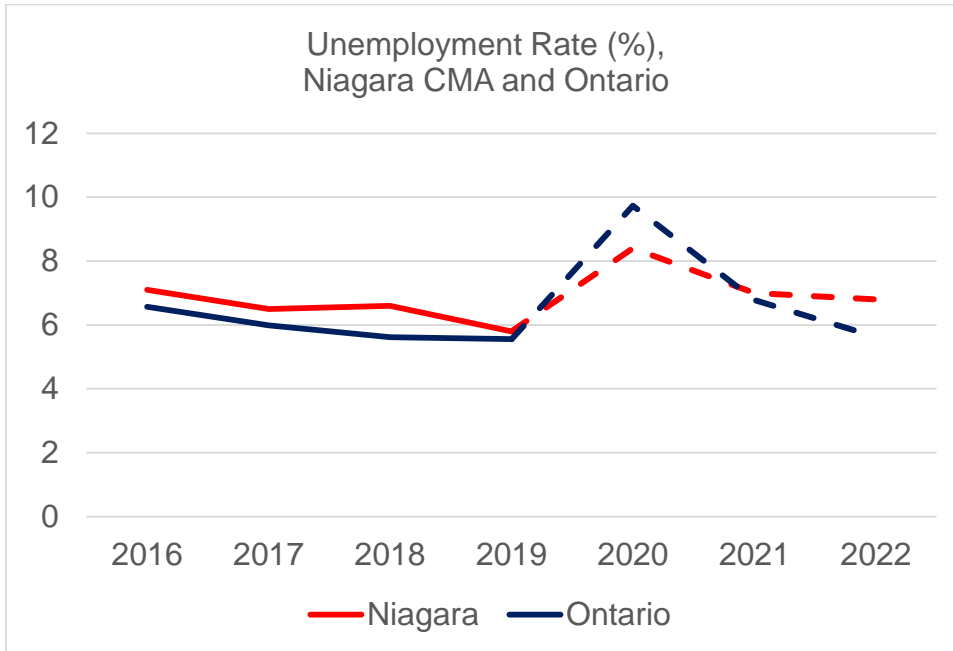


- Employment in Niagara remained relative stable from 2016 until 2020 where it is forecasted to decline by 12,900 people at a rate of 6% due to COVID-19. This is the estimated net loss for 2020.
- Employment is forecasted to begin to rebound in 2021 with a full recovery to 2019 levels by 2022.



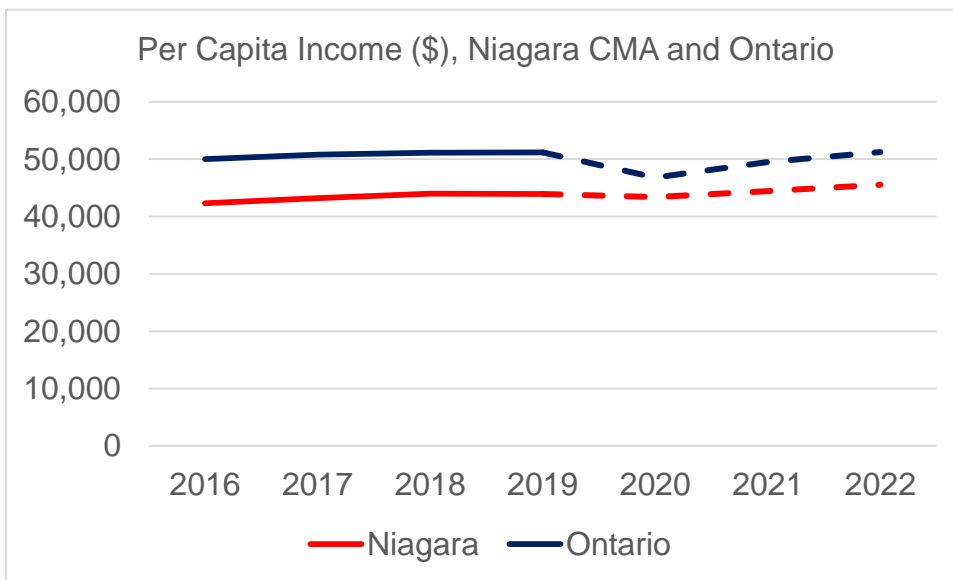
*Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020*

- The employment growth rate for Niagara was much lower than Ontario in 2017 but surpassed Ontario in 2018.
- While the Niagara employment growth rate declined in 2019, Ontario's grew. However, both the Niagara and Ontario employment growth rate are forecasted to drop significantly in 2020 due to COVID-19. Employment growth rate for Niagara is forecasted to grow significantly in 2021, but not as much as Ontario.
- The employment growth rate is forecasted to stabilize in 2022 for Niagara and Ontario.



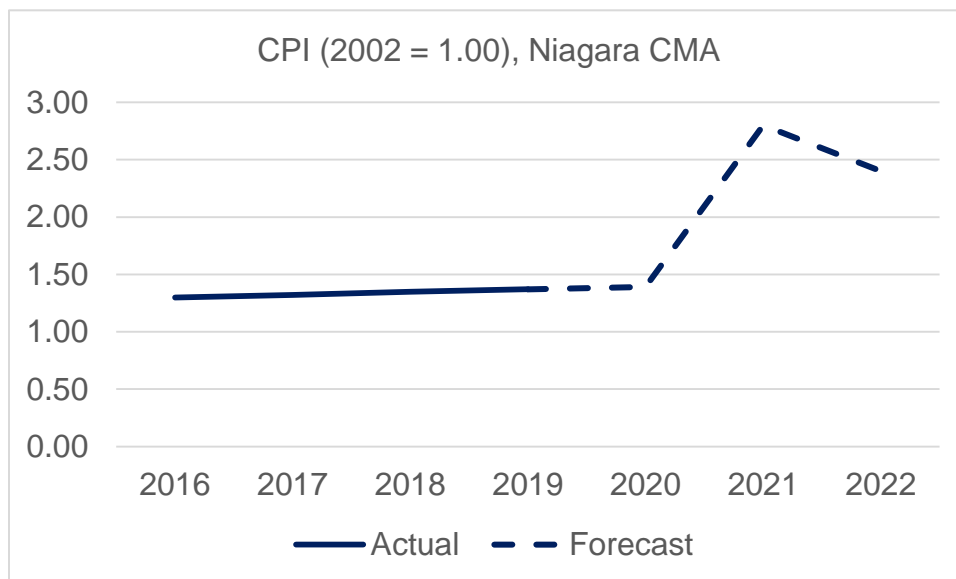
Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020

- The unemployment rate for Niagara was slightly higher than Ontario from 2016 to 2018 with Niagara closing the gap in 2019.
- The unemployment rate for Niagara is forecasted to drop below Ontario for 2020 and 2021, and increase above Ontario in 2022.



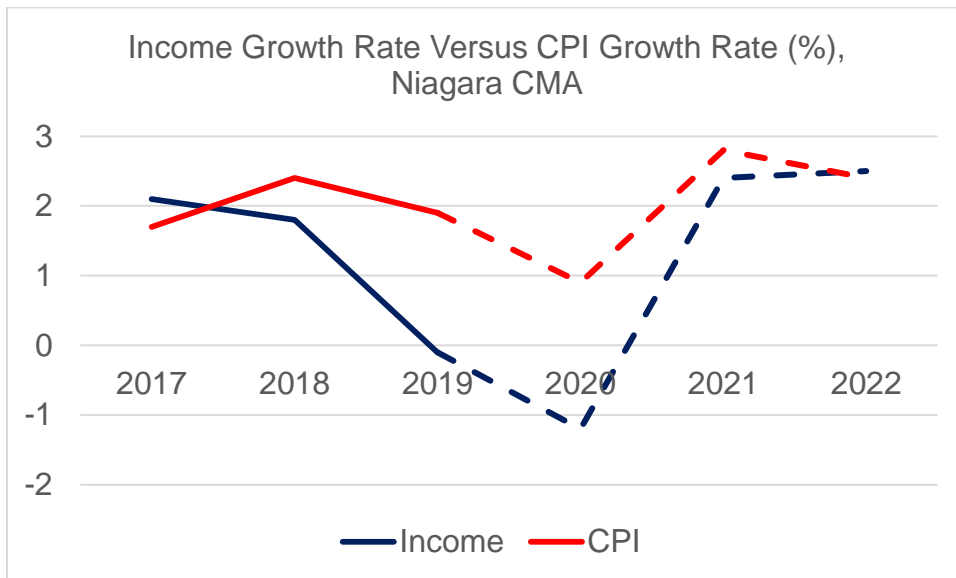
Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020

- Per capita income measures the average income earned per person in a given geographical region. It is a good way to assess a region's level of wealth and affordability.
- Per capita income for Niagara has historically lagged Ontario. However, from 2016 to 2019 per capita income for Niagara increased by \$1,655 (3.9%) while Ontario increased by only \$1,198 (2.4%).
- The per capita income gap is projected to get smaller. From 2019 to 2022, per capita income for Niagara is expected to increase by \$1,596 (3.6%) while Ontario is expected to remain stagnant at only \$37 (0.1%) growth. Niagara is catching up to Ontario.



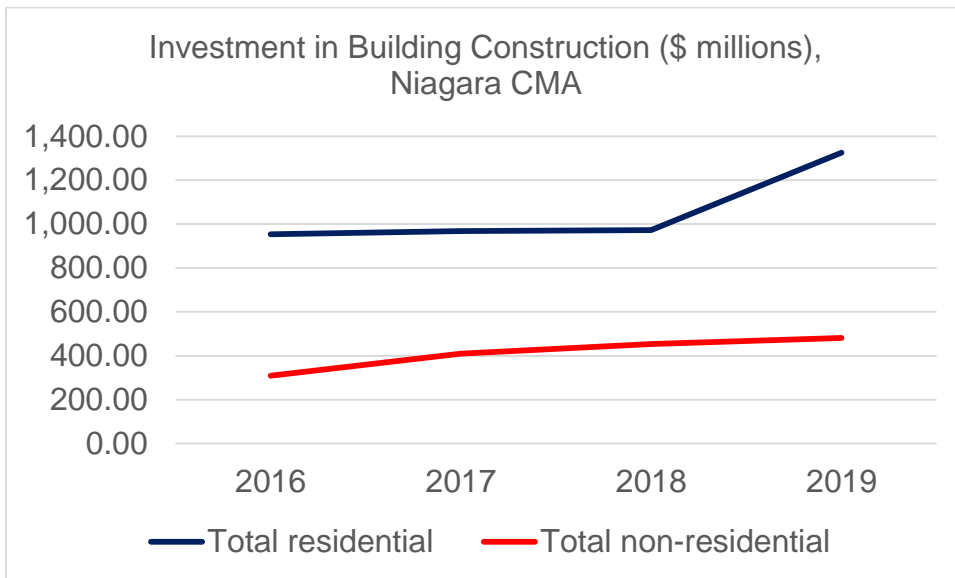
*Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020*

- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a way to measure inflation.
- The CPI for Niagara increased by 6% from 2016 to 2019 and are forecasted to remain stable into 2020.
- The CPI is forecasted to increase significantly in 2021 and remain high in 2022, which is a sign that the cost of living will increase substantially.



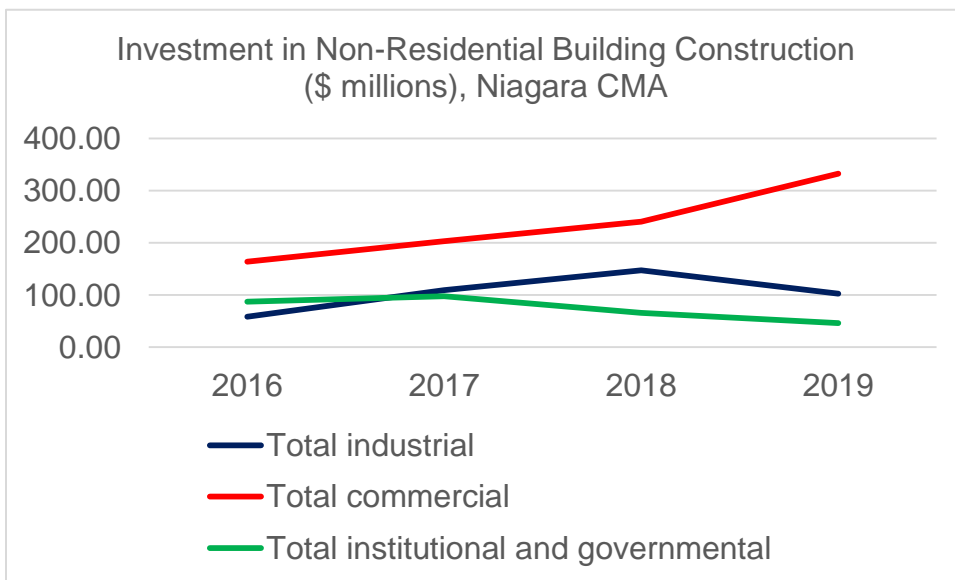
*Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020*

- In 2017, the income growth rate for Niagara was above CPI, which means income was growing faster than inflation.
- In 2018 and 2019, CPI growth was much higher than income growth.
- In 2020, both income and CPI are forecasted to dip drastically due to COVID-19 but are forecasted to rise above pre-pandemic levels in 2021 and into 2022.
- The income growth rate is expected to surpass CPI again in 2022, which means incomes will begin to increase faster than inflation again.



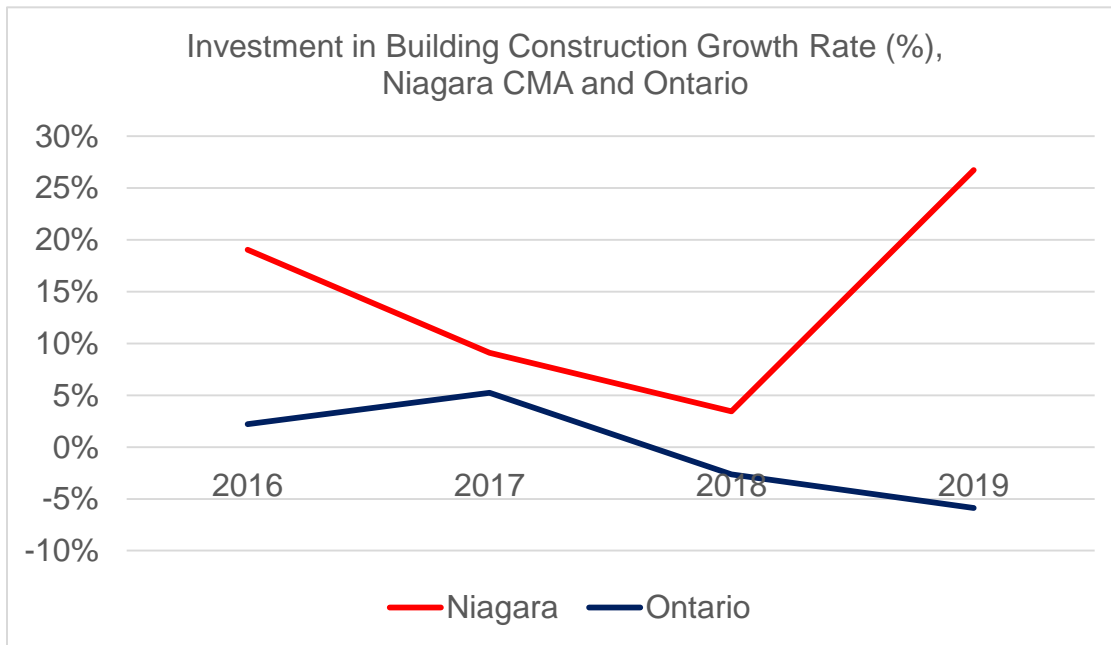
Statistics Canada, Table: 34-10-0175-01

- Investment in building construction in Niagara continues to grow for both residential and non-residential buildings.
- From 2016 to 2019, investment in residential building construction grew by 39% while investment in non-residential building construction grew by 56%.



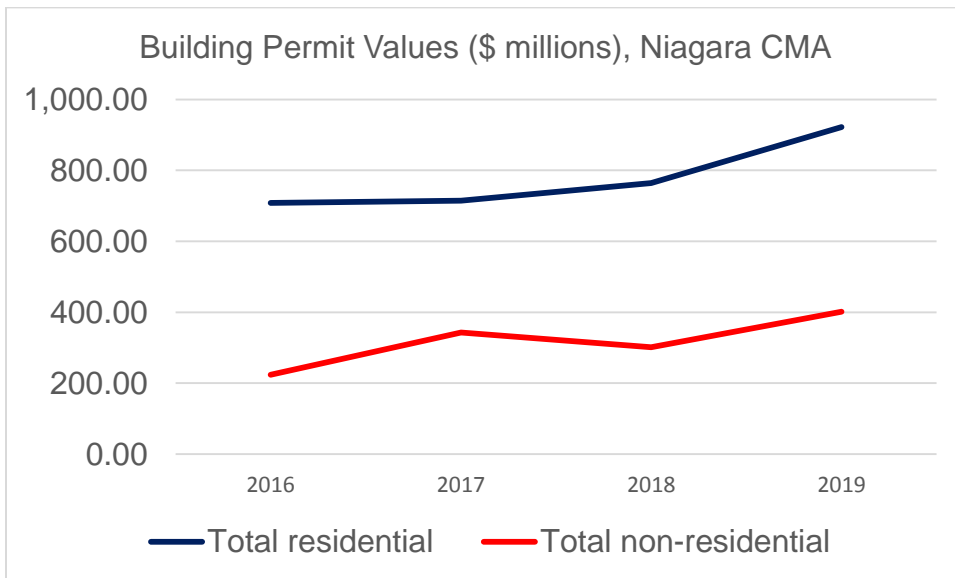
Statistics Canada, Table: 34-10-0175-01

- From 2016 to 2019, investment in non-residential building construction has been driven by commercial building construction. However, investment in industrial and institutional and government has remained stable.
- From 2016 to 2019, investment in commercial building construction has grown by 103%, while industrial has grown by 76%, and institutional and government has grown by 46%.



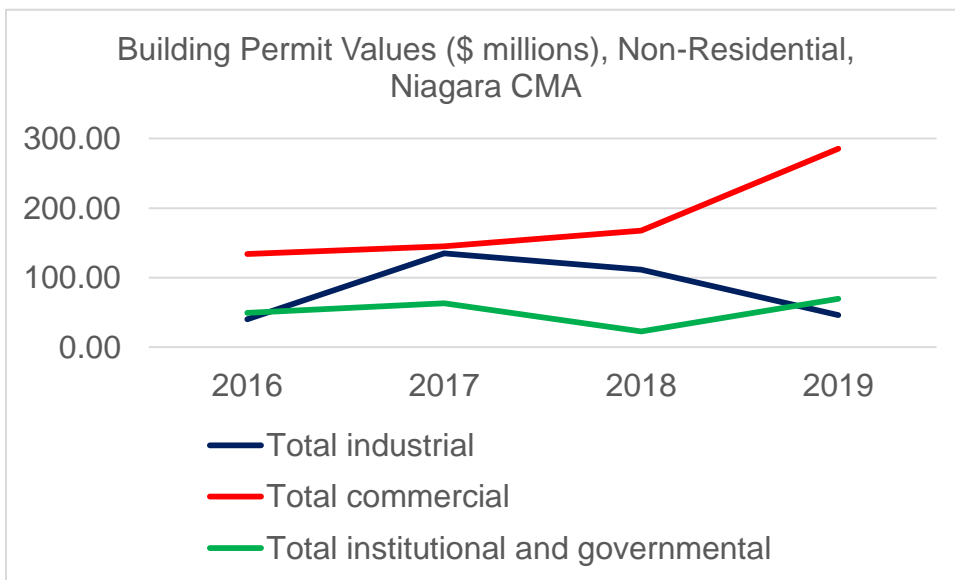
Statistics Canada, Table: 34-10-0175-01

- From 2016 to 2019, growth in investment in building construction for Niagara has significantly outpaced Ontario.
- Both Niagara and Ontario experienced a decline in growth rate for building construction; however, Ontario declined more drastically.
- In 2019, Niagara experienced a drastic increase in investment growth by 27% while Ontario continued to decline to -6%.



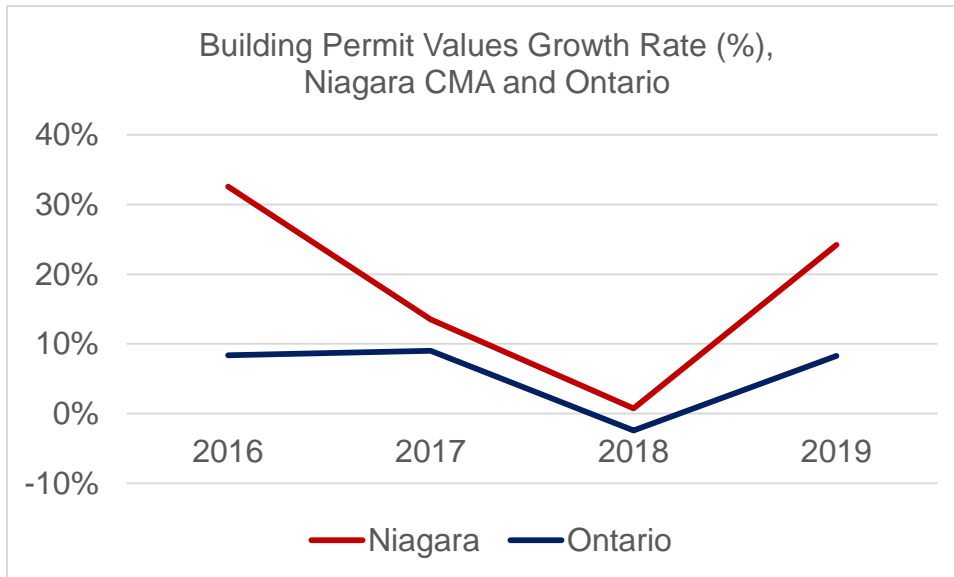
Statistics Canada, Table: 34-10-0066-01

- Both residential and non-residential building permit values have continued to grow in Niagara.
- From 2016 to 2019, total building permit values grew by 42% with 39% in residential and 80% growth in non-residential.



Statistics Canada, Table: 34-10-0066-01

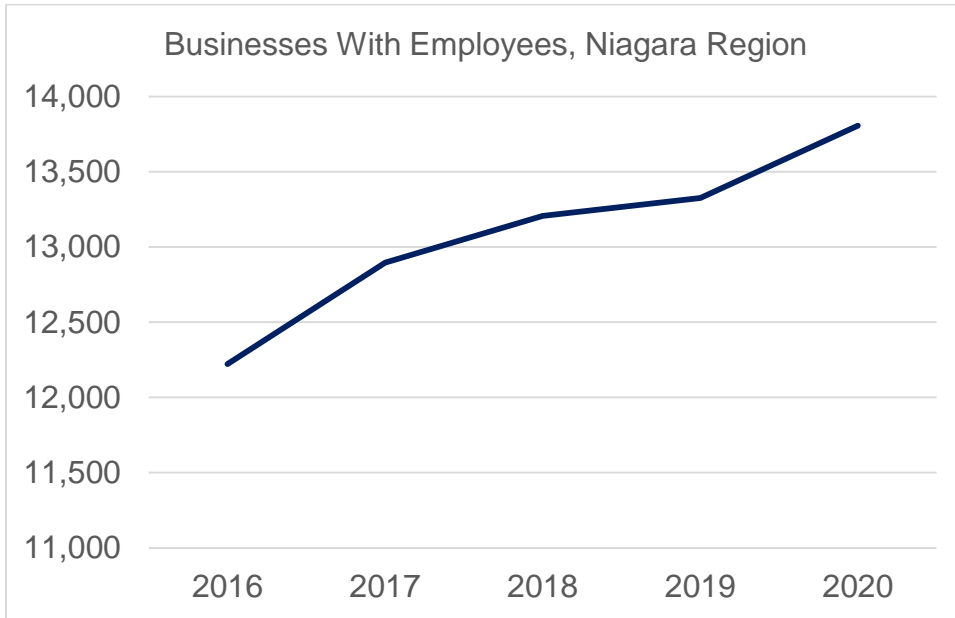
- As mentioned, total non-residential building permit values grew by 80% from 2016 to 2019. Commercial building types drove this growth.
- Commercial building permit values grew by 113%, while industrial grew by 15%, and institutional and government grew by 41%



Statistics Canada, Table: 34-10-0066-01

- From 2016 to 2019, Niagara has consistently outpaced Ontario in growth rate of building permit values.
- In 2016, Niagara had a building permit value of 33% compared to 8% for Ontario. This gap narrowed in 2017 and 2018, but in 2019 building permit values for Niagara rose drastically above Ontario again.





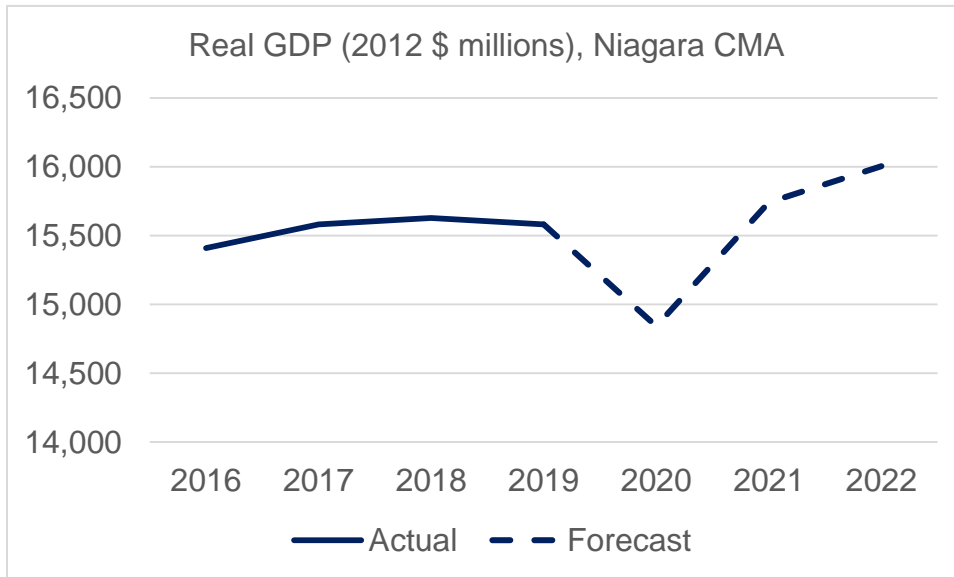
Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, June 2020

- From 2016 to 2020, Niagara gained 1,584 businesses with employees at a growth rate of 13%.
- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Niagara gained 480 new businesses with employees by June 2020.



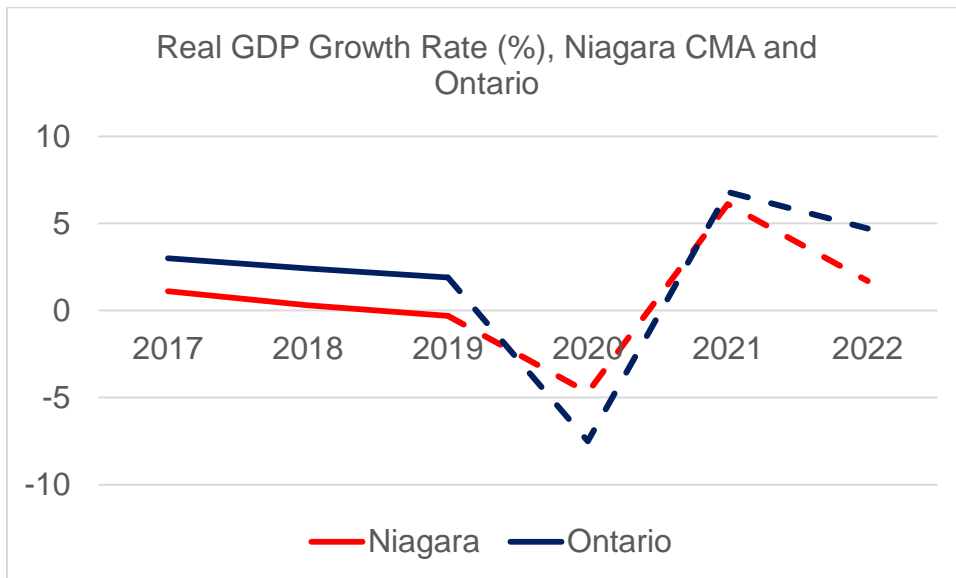
Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, June 2020

- From 2016 to 2020, Niagara gained 2,636 business without employees at a growth rate of 11%.
- Again, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Niagara still had a net gain of 318 businesses without employees.



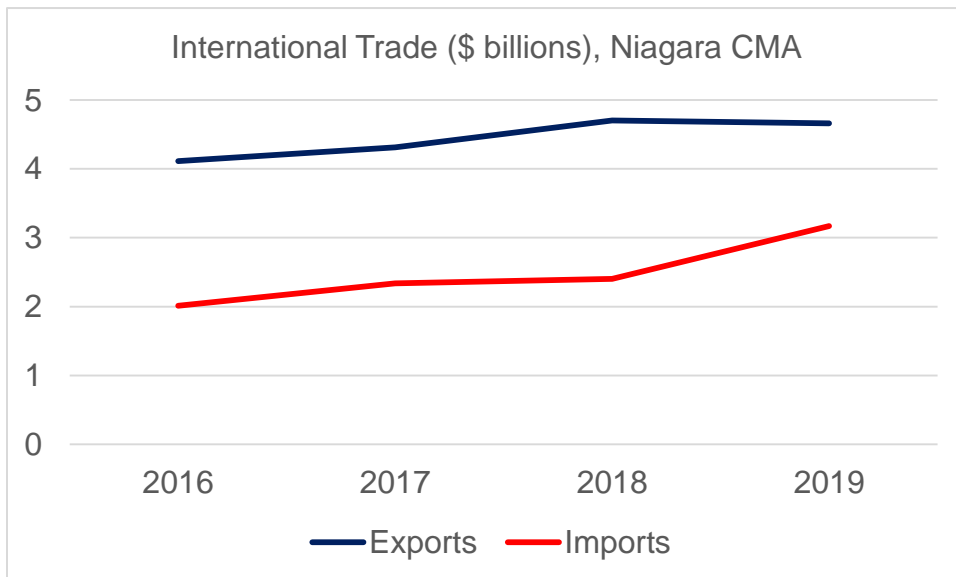
*Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020*

- Gross domestic product (GDP) is the monetary value of total goods and services produced in a certain geographical area. Real GDP is adjusted for inflation in order to assess the real economic growth of a region.
- From 2016 to 2019, GDP for Niagara has remained relatively stagnant at only 1.1% growth.
- In 2020, GDP is forecasted to plummet by -4.7% over 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- GDP is forecasted to recover significantly over 2021 and 2022 at 7.8% over 2020.



Conference Board of Canada, *Major City Insights*, July 2020

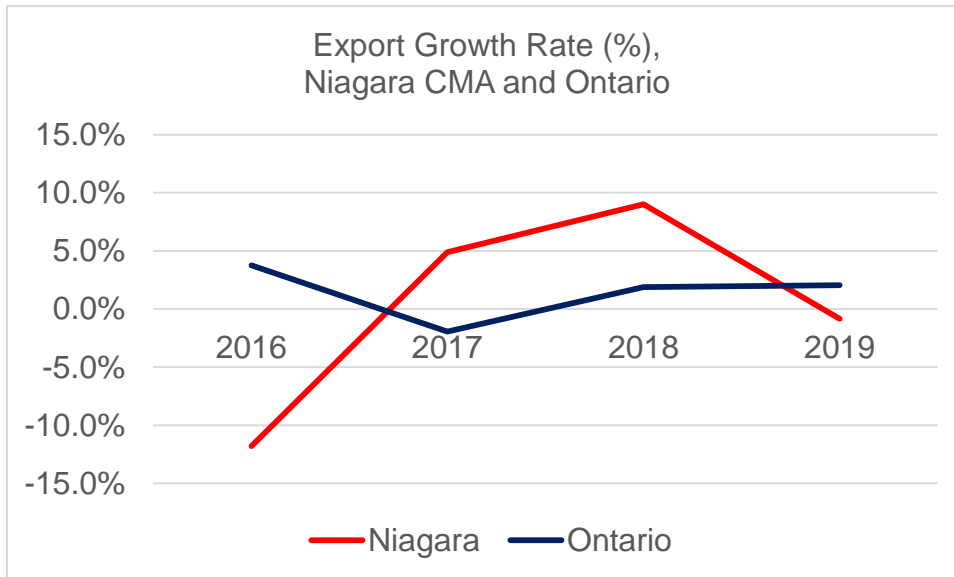
- GDP growth for Niagara lagged Ontario from 2017 to 2019.
- In 2020, GDP growth rate for Niagara is forecasted to drop with Ontario dropping further, but Ontario will outpace Niagara again in 2021 and 2022.



Statistics Canada, *Trade by Exporter and Importer Characteristics*

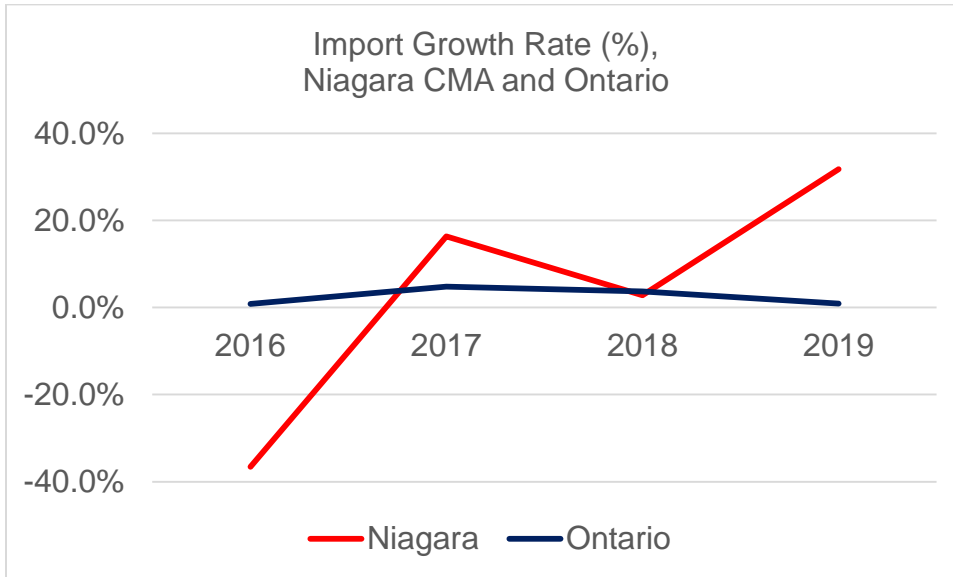
- From 2016 to 2019, value of exports for Niagara grew by \$551 million at a rate of 13% but leveled off in 2019.

- Value of imports for Niagara also increased. From 2016 to 2019, value of imports grew by \$1.2 billion at a rate of 58%.
- Net trade for Niagara grew from 2016 to 2019, but was reduced significantly in 2019 given the significant increase in import values.



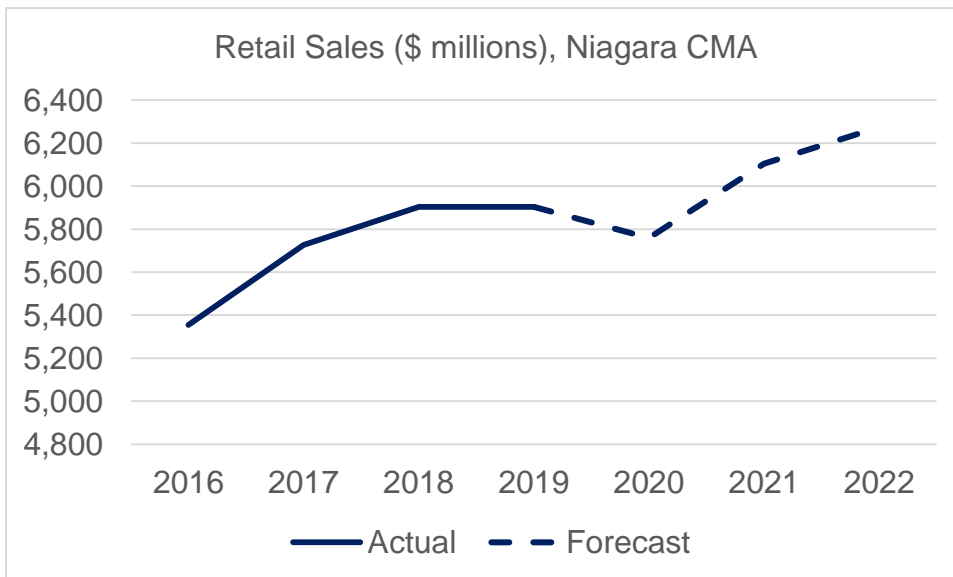
*Statistics Canada, Trade by Exporter and Importer Characteristics*

- Niagara's export growth rate was significantly lower than Ontario in 2016, but increased drastically in 2017 and 2018, but dipped by 9.8% in 2019.
- The export growth rate for Ontario dipped a little from 2016 to 2017, but remained stable from 2017 to 2019.



Statistics Canada, Trade by Exporter and Importer Characteristics

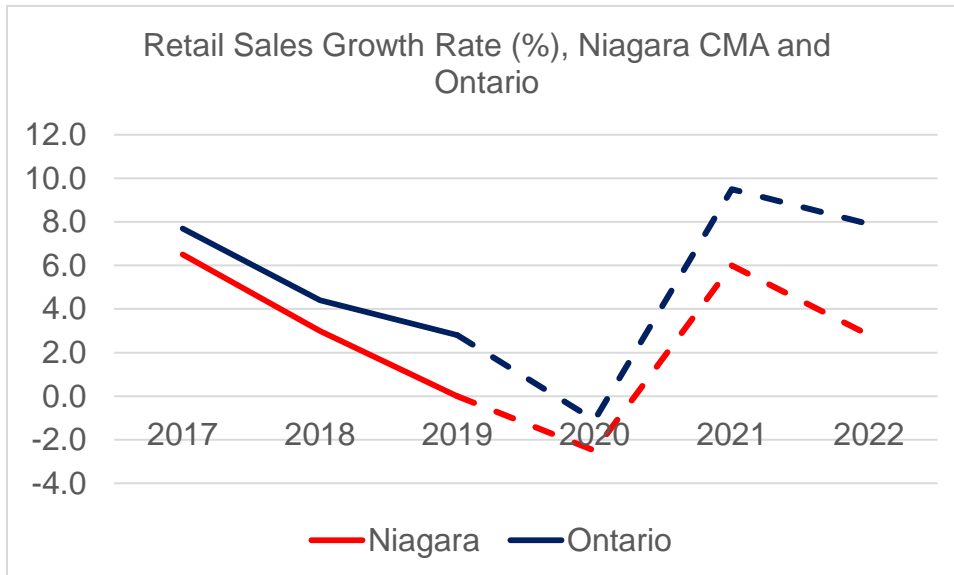
- Niagara had a very low import growth rate in 2017, but it increased significantly by 52% in 2017.
- The export growth rate for Ontario remained relatively stable from 2016 to 2019.



Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020

- Retail sales in Niagara grow significantly from 2016 to 2018 by \$549 million at a rate of 10%, but flattened out in 2019.

- In 2020, Retail sales in Niagara are forecasted to decline by \$145 million at a rate of 10% due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Retail sales are forecasted to rebound strongly in 2021 and 2022 by \$370 million at a rate of over 6%.



*Conference Board of Canada, Major City Insights, July 2020*

- Retail sales growth rate has lagged Ontario from 2017 to 2019 and is forecasted to continue to lag Ontario through 2020 to 2022.
- Retail sales growth rate for Niagara and Ontario bottomed out in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but are forecasted to grow substantially in 2021 by 6% for Niagara and 10% for Ontario and dropping again in 2022.

## Conclusion

- Niagara's population is forecasted to continue to grow into the future, but the growth rate lags slightly behind Ontario.
- Employment in Niagara was reduced significantly 2020 due to the pandemic and is not expected to recover fully until 2022.
- Niagara's employment growth rate was stable until 2020. This is expected to stabilize again through 2021 and 2022, which is in line with Ontario.
- Niagara's unemployment rate has trended downward for a number of years until COVID-19 where it increased substantially. Along with Ontario, it is forecasted to return to lower levels by 2022.

- Cost of living is outpacing per capita income in Niagara. However, it is expected to start catching up within a couple of years.
- Investment in building construction remains very strong in Niagara, especially in residential and commercial building types. Also, Niagara's growth rate in investment in building construction far exceeds that of Ontario.
- Building permit values have remained historically strong, especially in residential and commercial building types. Industrial and institutional and government have declines compared to the past few years, but have remained stable.
- Niagara continues to gain net employer businesses. However, we have yet to see the full impact of COVID-19 on business bankruptcies and closures. Businesses without employees (i.e. self-employed) have seen little growth in the past couple of years.
- Niagara GDP growth has been underperforming. COVID-19 has intensified this, but it is expected to recover rather quickly. Niagara's GDP growth rate is in line with Ontario.
- Niagara remains strong in international trade. However, growth rate in exports has softened while imports have strengthened, which has reduced the trade surplus.
- Retail sales have been relatively stagnant over the past couple of years and have declined in 2020 due to COVID-19, but they are expected to rebound over the next couple of years.
- Niagara remains an attractive place for new residents and businesses and demand for property is expected to remain high despite the pandemic. However, this will exacerbate the affordability issue since Niagara incomes are lower than neighbouring regions, which are driving up real estate demand.
- Lastly, economic recovery is highly dependent on containing the COVID-19 virus and ending the pandemic. If infections continue to spread, the economic damage will continue to worsen and recovery will be prolonged.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

None applicable.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

This report supports the following Council Strategic Priority because it is essential to be aware of and understand the characteristics of Niagara's regional economy in order to make informed decisions pertinent to business and economic growth:

- Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

- ED 11-2020 Economic Recovery Plan Progress Update
- ED 12-2020 COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Economic Development
- ED 13-2020 COVID-19 Impact on Investment and Development in Niagara

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**Prepared by:**

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Manager, Economic Research and  
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**Recommended by:**

Valerie Kuhns  
Acting Director  
Economic Development

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**Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

### **Appendices**

None applicable.



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**Subject:** Economic Recovery Plan Update 2  
**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee  
**Report date:** Monday, November 9, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That Planning and Economic Development Committee **RECEIVE** report ED 15-2020 Economic Recovery Plan Update 2 for information.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide Planning and Economic Development Committee with an update on the progress on the Niagara Economic Recovery Plan.
- Niagara Economic Development continues to focus its work on supporting local businesses through actions developed in collaboration with the other Economic Development offices in the region as the Economic Rapid Response Team (ERRT).
- Niagara Economic Development is the Project Manager for the Economic Recovery Plan, but the action items included within the plan are owned by the ERRT members and require the support from these members and business stakeholders across the region, where applicable, to advance and complete.
- The actions in the plan are under the pillars of Research and Information; Advocacy; and Resilience.
- Each pillar has Immediate, Mid-Term and Long-Term actions. This time-line is meant to progress in succession with the Province's Framework for Business Re-opening as best as possible.
- Many of the actions in the plan have been initiated or are in-progress.

## Financial Considerations

All financial implications of advancing or completing the action items included within the Economic Recovery Plan are being funded by the operational budget of the Economic Development department or through applications to granting programs made available by the Provincial and/or Federal government.

## Analysis

We remain in Stage 3 of Phase 2 of the Province’s Framework at this time. As a result, the actions in the plan under Immediate and Mid-Term are the first actions to be initiated and/or completed.

The actions under Long-Term will not be initiated until the Province provides direction that we will be entering into Phase 3. Should the Niagara region be placed in a modified version of Phase 2 as we have seen happen in the communities of Toronto, Peel and Ottawa, the economic recovery plan’s progress would be re-assessed by the ERRT.

The plan’s action items will be monitored and assessed are continually being assessed as they advance through consultation with the partners and the ERRT Task Force.

Niagara Economic Development intends to launch a third COVID-19 Business Impact Survey in November 2020 that will take a sector-specific approach to gauging the relevance of these action items along with the most pressing needs of businesses at this time.

Below is a high-level overview of the action items from the plan that have been completed and/or initiated. This chart highlights actions that have progressed or been initiated in addition to the items outlined in the update provided in report ED 11-2020 Economic Recovery Plan Update on Sept 9, 2020.

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
Engagement with stakeholders representing tourism, manufacturing, agri-business and Task Force	On-going	Niagara Economic Development (NED) is preparing a third COVID-19 Business Impact survey to be launched mid-Nov 2020. This survey will be sector-specific, as we know they are impacted in different ways. The sectors of focus will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manufacturing</li> <li>- Agri-business</li> <li>- Tourism</li> <li>- Non-Profit/Charities</li> </ul> NED will be working with sector support organizations to push the surveys out to businesses, in addition to sending personal invitations.

<u>Action(s)</u>	<u>Status/Progress</u>	<u>Notes</u>
ERRT website updates	In progress	<p>Website updates are in progress to add the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The available webinars and advisory services of the Small Business Enterprise Centres including a calendar of events and centralized registration</li> <li>- Profiles of businesses that have successfully pivoted and/or innovated their products and services in the face of the pandemic</li> <li>- A web-form to collect on-going input on the impacts of COVID-19 from private businesses</li> <li>- New announcements of programs and funds available to businesses</li> </ul>
PPE Directory	On-going, plus maintenance	<p>Referrals to the Niagara PPE directory are on going as inquiries are received on where businesses can acquire PPE. New additions to the site are added as received. The directory is hosted on NED's website at <a href="https://niagaracanada.com/covid-19/ppe/">https://niagaracanada.com/covid-19/ppe/</a></p>
Expedited Planning approvals at all government levels	Completed and on-going	<p>Local area municipalities and the Region have been working with businesses on creative uses of public and private space to encourage business resiliency. Examples of this include the temporary outdoor patio expansions and the subsequent winter patio recommendations advancing with the new season.</p>

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
<p>Transition <a href="http://OpenInNiagara.com">OpenInNiagara.com</a> tool into regional online business directory</p>	<p>In-progress</p>	<p>The online OpenInNiagara.com directory was launched in May to allow businesses in Niagara a free channel to promote that they were open and/or offering modified services.</p> <p>The action plan identifies the need to transition this tool into a long-standing online business directory for buy-local and supply chain inquiries. NED is working to identify the best partner to assist in that transition and with the population of businesses in the directory, starting with the Niagara Employment Inventory database.</p>
<p>FedDev Ontario - Tourism Adaptation and Recovery Fund</p>	<p>Application submitted</p>	<p>FedDev Ontario launched an \$8 million Tourism Adaption and Recovery Fund initiative to assist tourism-dependent SMEs with the impacts of COVID-19. The ERRT joined together to submit an expression of interest for a program that would support Niagara's tourism operators. A decisions on this expression is expected in Nov 2020.</p>
<p>GTA Economic Development Alliance participation</p>	<p>Completed, bi-weekly attendance</p>	<p>NED continues to represent the region on bi-weekly GTA Economic Development Alliance meetings. This group is jointly promoting the impact being felt by businesses across the GTA to the provincial and federal governments and serves a resource for discussion on recovery planning best practices.</p>

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
ERRT Update calls to Task Force in partnership with Public Health	Initiated and conducted bi-weekly	NED facilitates bi-weekly calls with the members of the ERRT Recovery Plan Task Force. The calls provide updates on relevant public health guidelines as well as updates on the recovery plan actions. Four (4) calls have been hosted at the time of this report and the average attendance is 30 stakeholders at each meeting.
Training and education for businesses, hosting online webinars	Initiated, running until Feb 2021 as pilot	NED invested in the expansion of the Small Business Enterprise Centre services in Niagara. New staff have been hired and are well into their outreach efforts to offer their services. Webinars and consultation topics include business-planning, ecommerce, building their online presence, etc. The pilot runs from Sept 2020 – Feb 2021.
Supply chain replacement survey	Completed initial survey, now refocusing	Local Economic Development professionals assisted in the surveying of an initial group of Niagara businesses to determine supply chain replacement opportunities. The results were inconclusive. NED will now be targeting manufacturers through the third COVID-19 Business Impact survey to determine opportunities.
Monitor and assess the impact of remote education on Niagara's economy and employment needs	Initiated and underway	NED is pleased to be partnering with Niagara Workforce Planning Board who will be undertaking an analysis of the economic impact of students studying digitally on Niagara's economy. This analysis will look at the impacts on labour market, discretionary spending on goods and services, the housing market, and public transportation. The report is expected mid Dec 2020.

<u>Action(s)</u>	<u>Status/Progress</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Research	Initiated, reports forthcoming	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NED has initiated the purchase of data from a qualified provider that provides an outlook on the financial health of the private sector and sectors that are most vulnerable. The raw data is expected in Nov 2020 and a report on this data is expected later in 2020/early 2021.</li> <li>2. NED is partnering with Niagara Workforce Planning Board who will be undertaking an analysis of the economic impact of students studying digitally on Niagara's economy. This analysis will look at the impacts on labour market, discretionary spending on goods and services, the housing market, and public transportation. The report is expected mid Dec 2020.</li> <li>3. NED will be producing the latest economic update report on Nov. 9 at the Region's Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting. It will include data on the effect of COVID-19 on the economy.</li> <li>4. NED will be working through our real-estate software system and in partnership with local area municipalities and real estate stakeholders to monitor industrial and commercial vacancy rates as a result of the pandemic's impact.</li> </ol>

Regular updates on the progress of these actions are provided to the plan's ERRT Task Force group through bi-weekly calls facilitated by Niagara Economic Development as Project Manager. The list of Task Force members can be found in the attached "Niagara Economic Recovery Plan" document.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

No alternatives.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The ERRT Economic Recovery plan supports the Council Strategic Priority of "Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth".

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

- ED 11-2020 - Economic Recovery Plan Update

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**Prepared by:**  
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**Recommended by:**  
Valerie Kuhns  
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Economic Development

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**Submitted by:**  
Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1          Niagara Economic Recovery Plan (final)

NIAGARA ECONOMIC RAPID RESPONSE TEAM

# ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

Niagara  Region





On March 18, 2020, Niagara’s mayors and Regional Chair came together to launch the Niagara Economic Rapid Response Team (ERRT). Upper levels of government mandated the closure of all businesses and the subsequent provincial and regional state of emergency due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. Local municipal leaders recognized the detrimental impact these closures would have on local businesses and the regional economy and took action to mitigate the effects as much as possible.

Through this team, Niagara’s economic development professionals have been collaborating throughout the pandemic to connect Niagara businesses with the supports and resources they need to survive and recover.

Niagara is united in its support of the business community during this unprecedented crisis and will foster collaboration, innovation and resilience as we seek to safely re-open. The ERRT is committed to offering long-term, ongoing support to help ensure Niagara’s businesses remain supported and connected throughout this process and will re-emerge prosperous and sustainable.

The 13 municipalities across Niagara have each taken measures to relieve the burden on local businesses in their communities. These activities include deferrals of taxes and utility fees, increased online advisory services, access to personal protective equipment (PPE) waiving various penalties and interest on outstanding accounts, and launching shop local campaigns promoting businesses that are open and offering modified services.

Additional stakeholders like the Chambers of Commerce, Niagara Workforce Planning Board, and Employment Ontario providers have been, and will continue to be, critical partners in assuring that communications about new programs are widely shared and businesses’ challenges are being brought to the forefront. They are part of a larger network of community enablers that will play an active role in the ERRT recovery planning process and implementation.

The Niagara Economic Recovery Plan (the “Plan”) and its identified actions are reflective of the responses and input received from businesses through the survey responses, input from further by industry and sector consultation, as well as the results from corporate calling efforts.

The Plan will focus on local initiatives to address the needs of our businesses and connect them with resources to provide further assistance. This will include both strategies to re-open safely and to build more resilient businesses by learning from changes realized as a result of the pandemic. The plan is centred on encouraging and supporting businesses, investment, and job creation in order to proactively recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Plan has been developed in a way that aligns with local economic recovery efforts, as well as broader, province-wide priorities. This alignment has been obtained by engaging the local area municipality (LAM) staff responsible for economic recovery planning and through participation in the GTA Economic Development Alliance.

The GTA Economic Development Alliance is recently formed group, composed of 20+ municipalities that have come together to support economic recovery across Ontario. Current members are Aurora, Brampton, Burlington, Durham Region, Georgina, Halton Hills, Halton Region, King, Markham, Milton, Mississauga, Niagara Region, Oakville, Richmond Hill, Toronto, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville, York Region, the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO), as well as the regional investment attraction agency Toronto Global.

Based on the initial reporting through the first COVID-19 Business Impact survey, the impact of the pandemic was projected to be close to \$576.3 million within the first 3 months. It is recognized that for many Niagara businesses, the road to economic recovery will be long and difficult.

The Accommodation and Food Service and Tourism sectors were especially hard hit, being the first to be mandated closed and experiencing the highest reported staff lay-offs and revenue losses. Retail and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation were also hard-hit and experienced a significant loss in revenue and high lay-offs. An unprecedented number of people have left the workforce as a result of lay-offs due to COVID-19. There are significant workforce and labour market challenges that lie ahead to combat the negative effects of the pandemic.

The Niagara COVID-19 Business Impact Survey – Part 2 was distributed to approximately 10,000 businesses from May 15 until June 1, 2020, mainly through direct email.

This survey's questions centred on recovery, with questions that address the aid programs that businesses accessed, the areas where they require further assistance, the largest barriers to re-opening, and the like. The survey yielded responses from 1,382 business across all 12 municipalities in Niagara. The responses are representative of all industry sectors in Niagara's economy and respondents reported employing 47,456 staff.

The industry sectors where respondents reported the highest number of employees included accommodation and food services; arts, entertainment and recreation; manufacturing; retail trade; and, health care and social assistance. Respondents reported total layoffs of 17,950 staff across industry sectors, with 58% being full-time staff and 42% being part-time staff.

Through the survey, businesses reported a combined loss of \$425.11 million in revenue. It is apparent some industry sectors were affected disproportionately. Arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services reported the highest revenue losses.

Although many businesses reported accessing a number of aid programs, it is apparent that additional supports are required to assist them in re-opening and recovering. Respondents reported the highest needs as property tax deferrals, promotion and marketing assistance, deferrals on utilities, and advocacy to other levels of government.

We acknowledge the overall responsiveness of policymakers that introduced support and relief measures for many businesses and employees impacted. As the Province looks to re-open parts of the economy through the [Re-Opening Ontario after COVID-19 framework](#), the ERRT has shifted its focus and efforts to recovery planning.

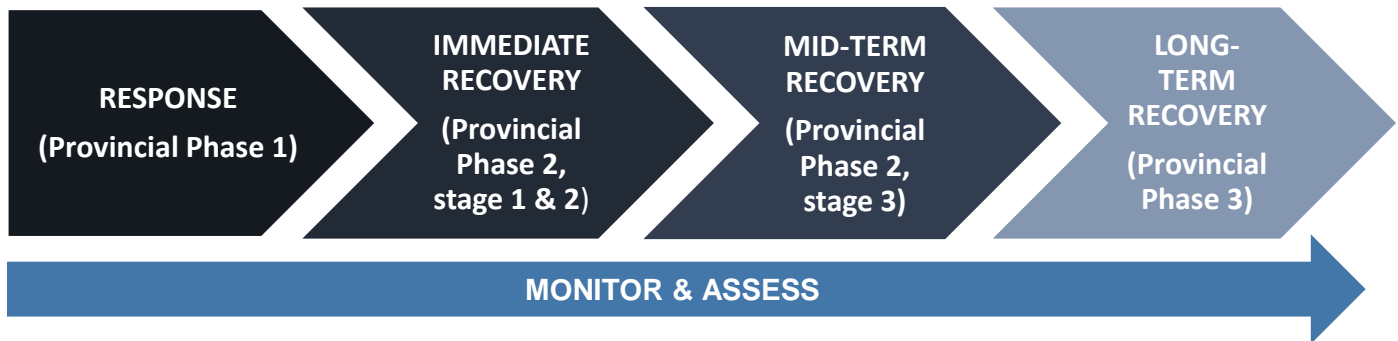
The proposed Plan is a series of actions that will create a positive investment climate in Niagara and help its local economy by supporting local businesses. Specifically, the plan is centered on the following 3 main themes: Research and Information, Advocacy, and Resilience.

In order to help move the economy forward, a series of actions will be taken immediately, while other measures will be actioned subsequently. The Plan uses a phased approach that will follow the Province's framework for re-opening. Guidance will be taken from the Province to guide how we move between phases. Input from the local Medical Officer of Health will be sought to help advise decisions locally on how to move between phases as well.

The Plan will be updated regularly and will likely change as the COVID-19 emergency evolves, as more information becomes available, and as the Province of Ontario updates its Emergency Orders. This will not be

a linear progression through the framework, as any sharp increase in the number of cases would require movement back to previous phases.

The proposed progression of this Plan is as follows:



The actions in the plan are intended to progress in conjunction with the Province’s framework. Any adjustment in the progression through that framework by the Province would require an assessment on the impact locally to this plan. As such, the plan will continue to assess, evolve, and adjust as necessary depending on the advice directed by the Province and in consultation with the local Medical Officer of Health.

Niagara’s ERRT will work in consultation with Niagara Region’s Strategic Communications and Public Affairs division to create a comprehensive communications strategy to support the Plan. This strategy will ensure local businesses remain engaged with the progression of the plan, and remain connected with the supports and initiatives outlined in the Plan.

As the region moves into Phase 3 and beyond, the efforts in the Recovery Plan will lead into the Long Term Economic Development Strategy that has been identified as a Regional Council strategic priority.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PILLAR	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PILLAR</p>	<p>Conduct a second COVID-19 economic impact (Business Impact) survey</p>	<p>Prepare a report on the second regional COVID-19 Business Impact survey results</p>	<p>On-going: Provide regular research updates to stakeholders on general market conditions, including local workforce changes, large expansion investments, business closures, etc. as available/released</p>
	<p>Maintain a strong base of data on the local economy and businesses, available to stakeholders to inform decision making</p>	<p>Identify vulnerable companies and sectors from the survey as a focus for municipal BR+E efforts</p>	<p>Conduct a third COVID-19 Business Impact Survey in phase 3 to determine the status of recovery of businesses</p>
	<p>Promote and post new Federal and Provincial initiatives and announcements on the ERRT website page</p>	<p>Prepare and circulate sector- and municipal-specific reports from second COVID Business Impact survey</p>	
	<p>Promote Provincial and Federal aid programs, including the Resiliency Help Desk at 1-866-989-1080 where businesses can access accountants or financial advisors</p>	<p>Monitor development application activity upon re-opening of economy, including year over year analysis as indicator of economic growth post-pandemic</p>	
	<p>Monitor and assess the impact of remote (online) education at Brock/Niagara College on Niagara's economy and business's employment needs</p>	<p>Recognize and showcase businesses that are successfully pivoting through the ERRT website and other channels</p> <p>Add a COVID-19 business impact feedback form on the ERRT website for ongoing data collection</p> <p>Provide regular/on-going updates to Regional Council on COVID-19 impact related activities, issues and efforts</p>	

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PILLAR	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
<p><b>RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PILLAR</b></p>		<p>Monitor activities and impacts in other comparable municipalities to benchmark Niagara and learn from best practices</p> <p>Host online webinars on topics relevant to supporting business</p> <p>With Emergency Management and Public Health, support businesses in re-opening in a safe and responsible way by sharing guidelines and protocols through update calls, as needed</p> <p>Survey businesses for commonalities in supply demand locally. Identify essential supplies and support companies in sourcing Niagara/Canada suppliers</p>	

ADVOCACY PILLAR	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">ADVOCACY PILLAR</p>	<p>Continued alignment between Regional and LAMs' Government Relations strategies and advocacy efforts.</p>	<p>Strive for consistent application of bylaw enforcement across LAMs and the Region</p>	<p>Immediate and longer term: Advocate for changes to the Ontario Planning Act to allow existing CIP funding programs to support</p>
	<p>Advocate for alignment and longer-term repayment schedules for all deferral programs to allow businesses reopening to generate sufficient cash-flow</p>	<p>Advocate for COVID-19 relief programs to continue into 2021 for tourism and hospitality sectors, including but not limited to CERB, CEWS, and rent relief programs</p>	<p>COVID-19 related relief efforts. For example: CIPs allowing for an enhancement of virtual a presence (e.g. website design)</p>
	<p>Continue to provide research and anecdotal findings from Niagara businesses to the appropriate levels of government within relevant Ministries, as well as AMO, FCM, FedDev and the joint Ontario government committee</p>	<p>Support Planning departments in review of red-tape reduction efforts to increase speed for development to re-start</p>	<p>Immediate and longer term: Advocate for accelerated broadband infrastructure investment in areas with limited/no service, working with SWIFT and other available programs</p>
	<p>Continue participating in the GTA and provincial recovery planning efforts to identify best practices and synergies across communities in recovery efforts</p>	<p>Advocate for digitization of Region permits and applications, where possible, to assist business cost savings</p>	<p>Immediate and longer term: Continued advocacy for infrastructure investments for major/regionally significant projects and expediting those already in process</p>
	<p>Monitor Provincial direction and decisions on childcare services through communication with Niagara Region Children's Services department and communicate to ERRT for assessment on local impact</p>	<p>Advocate to keep COVID-19 relief programs in place for employees while they are in re-training or re-skilling process</p> <p>Advocate for expedited planning approvals at the Provincial level including MTO, Greenbelt, Niagara Escarpment Commission, etc.</p>	

RESILIENCE PILLAR	IMMEDIATE	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 2em;">RESILIENCE PILLAR</p>	<p>Conduct significant engagement with stakeholders representing tourism, manufacturing and agri-business and Task Force members (see below)</p> <p>Expedite approval and coordination of use of public realm spaces by businesses to allow for distancing while supporting business resiliency</p> <p>Execute targeted business retention efforts (BR&amp;E) led by the EDOs in the local area municipalities with specific strategies to assist businesses in distress</p> <p>Encourage “buy-local” promotion via Social Media, particularly Linked-In &amp; <a href="http://www.openinniagara.com">www.openinniagara.com</a>. and amplify existing or complementary buy-local initiatives across Niagara</p> <p>Strive for increased digitization of government services including but not limited to: digital business advisory/support services, consultations and webinars, pre-consultation meetings, online applications, virtual town hall meetings, etc.</p> <p>Assist businesses that need access to capital by partnering on the promotion of the Regional Recovery &amp; Relief fund at Venture Niagara</p> <p>Maintain a listing of Niagara PPE suppliers on the ERRT website.</p>	<p>Work with Public Health to provide clear guidance on public safety and appropriate PPE for businesses</p> <p>Assist businesses in procurement of PPE by maintaining database on ERRT website and other tools</p> <p>Work with partners in workforce development – helping displaced workers find employment and deploy talent attraction initiatives to fill gaps</p> <p>Identify programs/funds for workforce training/re-training/re-skilling for a more flexible and adaptive workforce and assist employers in accessing them</p> <p>Assist businesses in increasing their online presence – promotion of Digital Main Street and/or other resources to get gain virtual presence</p> <p>Review decision-making process to allow for expedited approvals on development initiatives to support business re-opening</p> <p>Monitor any future wave of business closures or bankruptcies that may occur when relief programs end.</p>	<p>Monitor level of demand for office and retail space due to increased adoption of online technologies and work-from-home options by business. Creative thinking to repurpose use of any excess space made available.</p> <p>Supply chains have been strained. Seek opportunities for import replacement – sourcing new domestic suppliers, or supporting repatriation of manufacturing.</p> <p>Re-focus FDI strategies and messaging to opportunities post- COVID. Develop new tools to undertake investment attraction, including site selection virtually</p> <p>Retain and develop OpenInNiagara tool to be a comprehensive online, regional business directory tool with input from municipalities</p> <p>Include a portion in the Long Term Economic Strategy that addresses mitigation plans for future pandemic impact.</p>

The ERRT cannot achieve these actions on their own. There is a large group of community enablers whose support and resources will be necessary to achieve these actions. This group will provide input to the plan and provide resources and feedback.

This group of supporters will be referred to as the Niagara Economic Recovery Task Force (“the Task Force”). This group will be used as a channel for communication to provide updates on the recovery plan actions, as well as solicit feedback and engage in assessment of relevancy of these actions as time progresses. Information will be shared by Niagara Economic Development at regular intervals, through email and virtual meetings.

The proposed Economic Recovery Task Force members would include, but not be limited to:

- Niagara Region Economic Development
- EDO representatives from each of the Local Area Municipalities
- Niagara Workforce Planning Board
- Chambers of Commerce
- Innovate Niagara
- Niagara Falls Small Business Enterprise Centre & St. Catharines Enterprise Centre
- Niagara Association of Realtors
- Employment Ontario service providers
- Niagara Region Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities
- Niagara Region Children’s Services
- Business Development Bank of Canada and Venture Niagara
- Brock University and Niagara College
- Private sector participation
- Tourism, manufacturing and agri-business stakeholders
- Niagara Industrial Association
- Niagara Home Builders Association
- Niagara Construction Association
- St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation
- Tourism Partnership of Niagara and local DMOs
- Any additional members will be added where applicable to deliver on pillar activities

Underscoring the work being done by the Economic Recovery Task Force, there will be extensive public-private sector consultation and participation from Tourism, Manufacturing and Agri-business sectors to guide the work being done by the group. Additional industry sector consultation will be pursued as needed.

The Niagara Region Economic Development department will act as a Project Manager on this recovery plan. Encouraging participating in the Pillar groups, liaising with the Pillar Leads (where applicable), coordinating the meet-ups of different advisory stakeholders, compiling the updates and sending communications to all Task Force members.



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**MEMORANDUM**

**PDS-C-14-2020**

**Subject:** Niagara Biennial Design Awards - Update and Announcement of Award Winners

**Date:** November 9, 2020

**To:** Planning and Economic Development Committee

**From:** Julia van der Laan de Vries, Urban Designer

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on the Niagara Biennial and to introduce the Niagara Biennial Design Award Winners Video that will be presented at the November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting. The Awards video will be shown for the first time to members of the Committee and the public, announcing and celebrating winning projects and design achievements in Niagara. Award winners will be watching in anticipation to see if their submission is a winning project.

In spring of 2019, staff launched The Niagara Biennial program – a vehicle that promotes exposure of design achievements in Niagara by bringing together design professionals including architects, landscape architects, urban planners, artists, interior designers, engineers, and many others.

One of the key components of the Biennial is the Niagara Biennial Design Awards. The Awards build upon the success of the former Niagara Community Design Awards, which ran from 2005 to 2016. The new program celebrates the importance of design excellence to spotlight the unique design responses that reflect the varying contexts of our communities.

In the fall of 2019, the design awards program was launched through a campaign to encourage submissions within design categories that included: visionary plans, urban design, architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, outdoor art and student design projects. Eligibility required submissions to be located within the municipal boundaries of Niagara. Additionally, projects were to be completed between January 01, 2016, and December 31, 2019. The deadline for submissions was January 24, 2020. At the closing, 68 submissions representing the various design categories were received. The table below shows the submissions by design category and the number

of submissions from the 10 municipalities that participated. Submissions from Wainfleet and Port Colborne were not received.

<b>Submissions by design category</b>		<b>Submissions by municipality</b>	
Visionary Design	06	Fort Erie	04
Urban Design	05	Grimsby	03
Architecture	25	Lincoln	08
Interior Design	09	Niagara Falls	11
Landscape Architecture	05	Niagara-on-the-Lake	10
Commemorative Landscape	03	Pelham	05
Outdoor Art	11	St. Catharines	16
Student Designs	04	Thorold	05
		Welland	03
		West Lincoln	03

In March, 2020, a jury panel met to evaluate each of the submitted projects. The jurors were: Amy Friend, Gordon Stratford, Ken Greenberg, Linda Irvine and Lois Weinthal. These accomplished panelists brought a wide range of expertise in all of the design categories which informed the selection of winning projects. The Jury chose award winners within each of the design categories and noted other projects for recognition. The Jury also created a new design category called “Commemorative Landscapes” to celebrate a group of unique projects that combined the fields of outdoor art, story telling, memorialization and landscape architecture.

An awards ceremony was scheduled to be held in the spring of 2020, however, the planned ceremony was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Without an in-person ceremony to showcase the winning projects and to bring the members of the design community together in celebration of design in Niagara, staff sought to follow other recognized awards programs that are adapting to the global pandemic. Awards programs continue to promote excellence by delivering announcements using virtual platforms and videos. In this manner, a video was created to announce and recognize the award winners. This video will be presented at the November 9<sup>th</sup> 2020, meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee. The video will also be posted on the Region’s web site and will be accompanied by the Jury Report, which will provide background about the program including the Jury’s comments on each of the winning projects. Celebration and recognition of the winners will also be promoted through social media and a media release.

The next installment of the Niagara Biennial Design Awards program will celebrate design projects created between 2020 and 2022.

For more information on the Niagara Biennial Design Awards, please go to the Region's web page: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/culture-and-environment/biennial-awards/default.aspx>

**Other Pertinent Reports**

- PDS-19-2019 The Niagara Biennial Awards Program

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Julia van der Laan de Vries, BA, BLA, OALA  
Urban Designer

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**Subject:** Miller's Creek Marina  
**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee  
**Report date:** Monday, November 9, 2020

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## Recommendations

1. That this report **BE RECEIVED** by Planning and Economic Development Committee for information.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide information with regards to Miller's Creek Marina.
- There is an established history of support from the Town of Fort Erie and the Region for the development of Miller's Creek Marina.
- The Regional Official Plan includes policy that supports development and redevelopment of Miller's Creek Marina.

## Financial Considerations

Not applicable.

## Analysis

Miller's Creeks Marina is owned by the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC). It is located on the Niagara River, along the Niagara Parkway, in Fort Erie. The facility includes 110 seasonal boat slips and minor amenities that support boating, a small restaurant and active and passive recreation facilities. As of April 2020, reports indicated that the NPC suspended the marina operations for the boating season and that investment was required to update facilities and infrastructure, this also coincided with the closure of NPC facilities due to covid.



Figure 1: Miller's Creek Marina

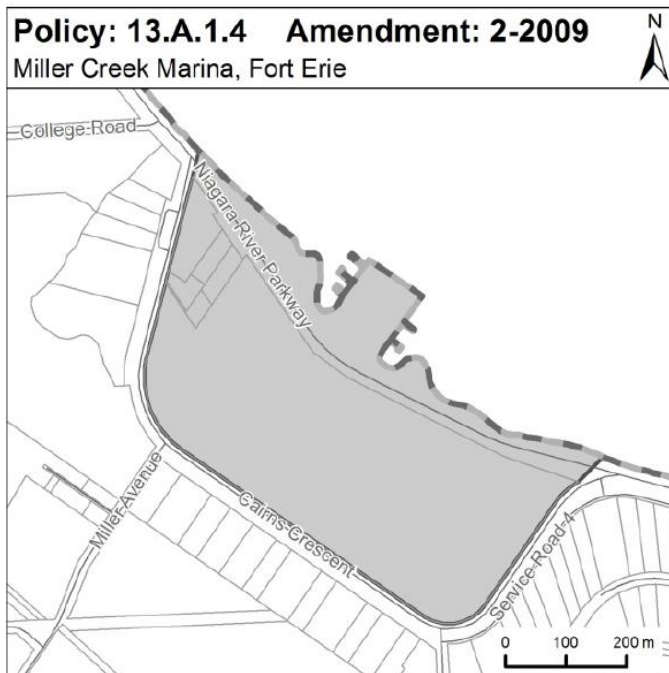


Figure 2: Miller's Creek Marina – Area covered by Regional Official Plan policy.

## Economic Development

The NPC released Requests for Proposals for the redevelopment of the marina in 2005, 2012 and 2017, all were unsuccessful. At Planning and Economic Development Committee on January 10, 2018, Memorandum ED-C 01-2018 (attached) prepared by the Director of Economic Development provided “*context to support and endorse the motion approved by The Town of Fort Erie regarding the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) proposed expansion and enhancement of Miller’s Creek Marina.*”

At the Regional Council meeting on January 18 2018, the following motion was passed in relation to Memorandum ED-C 01-2018:

*That Correspondence Item ED-C 01-2018, being a memorandum from D. Oakes, Director, Economic Development, dated January 10, 2018, respecting Niagara Parks Commission’s Proposed Expansion and Enhancement – Marina and Resort Development at Miller’s Creek, **BE RECEIVED**; and*

*That the resolution passed by Council for the Town of Fort Erie respecting Niagara Parks Commission’s Proposed Expansion and Enhancement – Marina and Resort Development at Miller’s Creek **BE ENDORSED and Niagara Region coordinate a meeting with the Town of Fort Erie and NPC to determine how the Region and Town can best support the project moving forward.***

The redevelopment of Miller’s Creek Marina has the potential to become a major tourism asset contributing significantly to the regional economy through the investment itself, the creation of new, well paying jobs and local supplier opportunities. A development in excess of \$100 million would not only revitalize and expand the existing marina infrastructure, but play an important role in the growth of the Town as a vibrant and liveable community.

## Planning and Development

Policy 13.A.1.4 of the Regional Official Plan provides support for the development of Miller’s Creek Marina. A development proposal that is submitted would be assessed by Regional planning staff based on the policy that is provided below.

*Policy 13.A.1.4*

*A marina with ancillary rural land uses is permitted on approximately 19 hectares, including water lots, east of Cairns Crescent in the Town of Fort Erie. The marina use, the marina redevelopment, and the ancillary uses are considered to be a resource-based rural recreational use which meets the policy objectives of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Provincial Policy Statement 2014. The rejuvenation and redevelopment of the marina is encouraged to support the tourism and boating economy on the Niagara River. The following special policies shall apply to the development and redevelopment of the marina:*

*a) The marina is the principal land use.*

*b) Ancillary uses including, the management or use of resources, resource-based recreational uses (including recreational dwellings), home occupations and home industries, limited residential development, cemeteries, and other rural land uses are permitted.*

*c) With regard to recreational dwellings and residential development, the following shall apply:*

- i. All forms of tenure will be permitted for new, expanded or redevelopment of the marina property*
- ii. Accommodation units within the marina property will be made available to the travelling public and will provide ongoing services and recreational facilities normally provided in a commercial setting.*

*d) Development and redevelopment shall be subject to the following being satisfactorily addressed:*

- i. The scale, size and density of development*
- ii. Compatibility of use*
- iii. Site characteristics*
- iv. Water quality*
- v. Protection of shoreline*
- vi. Environmental features and policies*
- vii. Navigability of the Niagara River*
- viii. Servicing*
- ix. Transportation*

*e) Details of the development and redevelopment shall be addressed through the Town of Fort Erie Official Plan and Zoning By-law and in accordance with the provisions of this Plan.*

*f) Policy 11.C.1 b) iii) shall not apply. (Policy 11.C.1 b) iii) there shall be no overnight accommodation for users or guests of the facility.)*

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

This development would relate to the following Council Strategic Priority:

- Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

- ED-C 01-2018

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**Prepared by:**  
Doug Giles  
Acting Commissioner  
Planning and Development Services

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**Prepared by:**  
Valerie Kuhns  
Acting Director  
Economic Development

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**Submitted by:**  
Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

### **Appendix**

Appendix 1 ED-C 01-2018 Niagara Parks Commission's Proposed Expansion and Enhancement – Marina and Resort Development at Miller's Creek



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## MEMORANDUM

ED-C 01-2018

**Subject: Niagara Parks Commission's Proposed Expansion and Enhancement –  
Marina and Resort Development at Miller's Creek**

**Date: December 15, 2017**

**To: Planning and Economic Development Committee**

**From: David Oakes, Director Economic Development**

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The purpose of this memo is to provide Planning and Economic Development Committee with context to support and endorse the motion approved by The Town of Fort Erie regarding the Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) proposed expansion and enhancement of Miller's Creek Marina.

Economic development staff have been working in collaboration with Fort Erie Economic Development and Tourism Corporation (FEDTC) on supporting the NPC in their pursuit to redevelop Miller Creek Marina as a major tourism asset of regional significance. Town and regional staff met with NPC officials throughout the process to provide advice while offering support by providing the opportunities to business networks and answering any questions on the project relating to issues outside the jurisdiction of Niagara Parks Commission. Request from both Regional and Town staff to be directly involved in the procurement process was respectfully denied. As a result, the Niagara Parks Commission was the lead on the procurement process, which resulted in zero submissions.

Discussions with FEDTC have indicated that Warren DAC Investments Limited remains interested in proceeding to develop the marina and adjacent lands at Miller's Creek Marina. As a result, a motion (attached) approved by the Town of Fort Erie is requesting that the NPC enter direct discussions with Warren DAC Investments Limited to move forward with the marina and resort development at the Miller's Creek Marina. Economic development staff support the intent of the Town motion and would recommend that Regional Council endorse.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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David Oakes EC.D., CEcD, MAES  
Director, Economic Development



# Community Services

## Legislative Services

December 12, 2017

Sent via email:  
[jthomson@niagaraparks.com](mailto:jthomson@niagaraparks.com)

Janice Thomson, Chair  
The Niagara Parks Commission  
7400 Portage Road South  
Niagara Falls, ON, L2E 6T2  
Canada

Dear Chair Thomson:

**Re: Niagara Parks Commission’s Proposed Expansion and Enhancement - Marina and Resort Development at Miller’s Creek**

Please be advised the Municipal Council of the Town of Fort Erie at its meeting of December 11, 2017 passed the following resolution:

**Whereas** the Niagara Parks Commission (“NPC”) considered options for the operation or closing of its marina on the Niagara River in Fort Erie, near Miller’s Creek, and

**Whereas** in 2005, the NPC agreed to work with the Town of Fort Erie to permit the Fort Erie Economic Development & Tourism Corporation (“EDTC”) to undertake a Request for Proposals process for the expansion and enhancement of the marina and potential development of the lands between the Niagara Parkway and Cairns Crescent, and

**Whereas** as a result of the cooperative efforts of the NPC, Town of Fort Erie and the EDTC, the submission of a successful proponent for expansion and enhancement of the marina and the development of a resort on the adjacent lands was accepted by the NPC and a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) was executed by the NPC and Warren DAC Investments Limited (“WDAC”) on February 18, 2007, and

**Whereas** over the next 4 years, WDAC fulfilled its responsibilities pursuant to the MOU, including operating the marina, obtaining appropriate land use approvals and in-water engineering works, and

..../2

Mailing Address:

The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie  
1 Municipal Centre Drive, Fort Erie ON L2A 2S6  
Phone: (905) 871-1600 FAX: (905) 871-4022

Office Hours 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Web-site: [www.forterie.ca](http://www.forterie.ca)

**Whereas** since 2012, the NPC has embarked on a number of processes with a view to proceed with a marina/resort development at the Miller's Creek Marina, and

**Whereas** over the next 4 years, WDAC fulfilled its responsibilities pursuant to the MOU, including operating the marina, obtaining appropriate land use approvals and in-water engineering works, and

**Whereas** the NPC did not extend the MOU, which it has claimed expired on or about January 26, 2012, despite WDAC's desire to continue with the MOU and the development of the marina and adjacent land; and

**Whereas** since 2012, the NPC has embarked on a number of processes with a view to proceed with a marina/resort development at the Miller's Creek Marina, and

**Whereas** the NPC's most recent initiative resulted at the end of August 2017 in no proponent submitting a response to the NPC's Request for Proposals for development at the marina, and

**Whereas** the NPC maintains that it continues to be committed to marina enhancements and development on the adjacent lands, but there seems to be no forward progress in that direction, and

**Whereas** the Council of the Town of Fort Erie understands that WDAC remains interested in proceeding to develop the marina and adjacent lands at Miller's Creek Marina.

**Now therefore be it resolved,**

**That:** Council of the Town of Fort Erie reiterates its continuing support for the expansion and enhancement of the marina and a resort development on the adjacent lands at the NPC's Miller's Creek Marina, and further

**That:** Council urges the NPC to engage with WDAC to move forward with the marina and resort development at the Miller's Creek Marina without any further delays, and further

**That:** A copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Chair of the NPC for action, and further

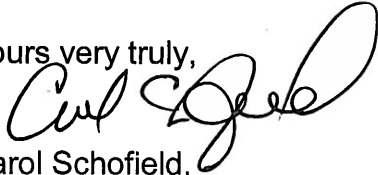
**That:** A copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of the Province of Ontario, the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Chair of the Region of Niagara, the M.P.P.'s in Niagara, the Honourable Rob Nicholson, M.P., and Warren DAC Investments Limited, and further

.../3

**That:** A copy of this resolution be circulated to the mayors of the local municipalities in Niagara for their support.

We thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Yours very truly,



Carol Schofield,  
Interim Manager, Legislative Services/Clerk  
[cschofield@forterie.ca](mailto:cschofield@forterie.ca)

CS:dlk

cc: The Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario, *Sent via email:* [kwynne.mpp@liberal.ola.org/premier@ontario.ca](mailto:kwynne.mpp@liberal.ola.org/premier@ontario.ca)  
The Honourable Eleanor McMahon, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport *Sent via email:* [eleanor.mcmahon@ontario.ca](mailto:eleanor.mcmahon@ontario.ca)  
The Honourable Bob Chiarelli, Minister of Infrastructure *Sent Via Email:* [bob.chiarelli@ontario.ca](mailto:bob.chiarelli@ontario.ca)  
Alan Caslin, Chair, Niagara Region *Sent via email:* [Alan.caslin@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Alan.caslin@niagararegion.ca)  
Mr. Wayne Gates, MPP-Niagara Falls, Legislative Assembly of Ontario *Sent via email:* [wqates-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:wqates-co@ndp.on.ca)  
Ms. Cindy Forster, MPP-Niagara Centre, Legislative Assembly of Ontario *Sent via email:* [cforster-qp@ndp.on.ca](mailto:cforster-qp@ndp.on.ca)  
Mr. Sam Oosterhoff, MPP-Niagara West-Glanbrook, Legislative Assembly of Ontario *Sent via email:* [sam.oosterhoff@pc.ola.org](mailto:sam.oosterhoff@pc.ola.org)  
Mr. James Bradley, MPP-St. Catharines, Legislative Assembly of Ontario *Sent via email:* [jbradley.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org](mailto:jbradley.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org)  
Mr. Rob Nicholson, MP-Niagara Falls, Parliament of Canada *Sent via email:* [rob.nicholson@parl.gc.ca](mailto:rob.nicholson@parl.gc.ca)  
Bob, O'Dell, Warren DAC Investments Limited *Sent via email:* [bob@robertodell.com](mailto:bob@robertodell.com)  
Niagara Area Mayors *Sent via email*

**From:** Niagara Chapter Trout Unlimited Canada; SORE; Peninsula Field Naturalists, Niagara Falls Nature Club; Niagara Beekeepers' Association of Niagara; Ontariogreen Conservation Association; Bert Miller Nature Club; Niagara Birding Conservation and Tourism Collaborative; Hamilton Naturalists; Friends of One Mile Creek; Extinction Rebellion Niagara; Miriam Richards, Professor Biological Sciences, Brock University; and members of the Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

**To:** Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee

Nov. 3 2020

Re: Woodland Tree Bylaw and Its Impact on Natural Heritage and Water Resource System Planning

Dear Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee:

The information that came forward to the Planning and Economic Development Committee about the Woodland Bylaw makes the issue of adopting the most robust Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems more important than ever.

As was made clear in answer to Councillor Butters' specific question about what the bylaw would do to preserve or enhance the existing 17% forest cover in Niagara, staff replied that there was nothing in this bylaw that would add to the existing tree cover in the Region. In fact, there is little in this bylaw that will actually protect our *existing* tree cover. Staff explained they were limited in making improvements to the Region's Forestry Bylaw by the Municipal Act and Forestry Act.

For instance, forests that have suffered tree loss due to emerald ash borer, and no longer meet the density requirements under the Forestry Act, including woodlands currently mapped as Significant Woodland or Environmental Conservation Area under the Official Plan, can be reclassified as not significant and can lose their protection. Nothing in the new bylaw changes this.

The new bylaw will not prevent the practice of some woodland owners from clearing the understory, which ensures that the woodland will lose its significance over time as no new trees will grow to replace the old.

The new bylaw only applies to specific lands and therefore does not cover much of the remaining wooded areas in Niagara. For the same reason, the bylaw cannot set tree replacement rules/ratios. Replacement orders are only put into effect, at the discretion of the Region's enforcement officer, if he determines a violation has occurred on woodlands covered by the bylaw. Tree removals that occur through applications under the Planning Act cannot be covered by the Region's bylaw. To protect any other wooded area, group of trees or specific trees, or removal of trees due to applications covered by the Planning Act, each municipality would have to enact their own Private Tree Bylaws.

There is no ongoing monitoring of woodlands covered by the bylaw. Offences are pursued on a complaint basis and the time limit is tight. The Region hoped to increase the time limit for pursuing charges from 6 months to two years but found out they couldn't because of the Provincial Offences Act.

Any fines levied due to an offense against the new Woodland Bylaw will not go to restoration efforts, tree planting grants or to land acquisition. Fines under this bylaw “are divided up on a pro rata share with the lower tier municipalities based on legislated requirements” — as contained in an answer by staff to public comments on the bylaw.

The old bylaw contained numerous exemptions to the bylaw, including many added in 2008 for agricultural use, and the new bylaw includes one more plus it no longer protects hedgerows less than 20 m wide. These will inevitably lead to further woodland losses.

Finally, there is nothing in the new bylaw that addresses two of the greatest threats we face — climate change and biodiversity loss.

While questions were asked about possible tree planting/restoration programs, it's important to note that these are significantly limited by three factors:

1. a severe lack of funding for those efforts,
2. lack of readily available land for naturalization, and
3. the reliance on volunteers and community groups to carry out work that should be paid employment by professionals.

Furthermore, unless restoration plantings outstrip the continuous losses due to development and other land uses — and there is zero evidence that they do — then Niagara's irreplaceable natural ecosystem will continue to diminish over time.

In summary, the Region's new Woodland Bylaw does not address the concerns articulated so well by Chair Bradley and Councillors Butters, Fertich, Easton and Greenwood about improving the Region's limited tree cover. Staff suggested that Council look to the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System planning to address concerns about protection of our unique, but diminished and fragmented, local ecology.

**That makes it more important than ever that you approve only the most robust Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems.**

Natural Heritage System (NHS) and Water Resource System (WRS) plans map significant environment and water resource features, delineate sufficient buffers to protect them and link them together to form an ecological system that is sufficient to provide:

1. the green infrastructure benefits we require,
2. enough nature to support local flora and fauna and
3. a resilient ecosystem that will continue to exist over time.

**Given the development pressure Niagara Region is under, this is the last chance we have to save Niagara’s unique natural environment for future generations.**

Taking all types of ecosystems into account including forests, wetlands, meadowlands etc. a 2011 study by the NPCA estimated that the watershed’s remaining natural areas contribute only 56 per cent towards what the system needs to remain viable, and therefore persists as a highly environmentally degraded and fragmented landscape. <https://npca.ca/our-voice/post/restoring-and-improving-niagara-peninsula-watershed>

What Planning staff identified to you as their preliminary preferred options at the July 15 PEDC meeting, 3B for the NHS and 2A for the WRS, come nowhere close to protecting our remaining natural areas. Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS is the best of the options presented, however, we think they could be improved upon and we will present some ideas to you in future correspondence/presentations. Please see the chart that shows the differences between the current options.

<b>Natural Heritage System</b>	
<b>Staff’s preliminary recommendation</b>	<b>Best option to protect environment and meet Region’s stated goals</b>
<b>NHS Option 3B</b>	<b>NHS Option 3C</b>
- Identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas	- Identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas
- Identifies supporting features outside of settlement areas such as potential enhancement areas	- Identifies supporting features <b>inside and outside of settlement areas</b> including potential enhancement areas
- Includes large and medium linkages outside of settlement areas	- Includes large, medium, and <b>small linkages</b> outside of settlement areas
	- <b>Includes small linkages inside of settlement areas where the potential area is in a natural state</b>
- Suggests policy minimum for buffers outside of provincial NHSs and both inside and outside of settlement areas	- Prescribes <b>mandatory</b> buffer minimums outside of settlement areas with <b>suggested policy minimums inside of settlement areas</b>
<b>Water Resource System</b>	
<b>Staff’s preliminary recommendation</b>	<b>Best option to protect water resources and meet Region’s stated goals</b>
<b>WRS Option 2A</b>	<b>WRS Option 2B</b>
- Would identify additional features only outside of settlement areas	- Would identify additional features and areas <b>Region-wide, including within settlement areas</b>

Please be aware that developing these options is just the first step to the creation of a Regional NHS and WRS. This phase only develops a concept of what features, buffers and linkages should be considered inside and outside of settlement areas. The next layer will be the mapping, then the consultation with municipal planning staff

and likely with other stakeholders including developers. There will be many opportunities to include or exclude areas from the final plan.

As well, there are municipal boundary expansions coming forward from Niagara Falls and Welland, and significant development applications in Fort Erie and elsewhere, that will affect what is left to protect.

**The decision on the NHS/WRS may be the most important decision you make during this term of Council, that will have the greatest impact on future generations.**

During the recent public consultations on both the Woodland Bylaw Review and the NHS/WRS, the public made it clear that they want the strongest possible protection for our remaining natural areas. We trust that you will give the public's concerns serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Dennis Edell, Niagara Chapter Trout Unlimited Canada

Lyle Hall, SORE, Niagara-on-the Lake

Bob Highcock, President, Peninsula Field Naturalists

Joyce Sankey, Conservation Director, Niagara Falls Nature Club

Lucy Sardella, Niagara Beekeepers' Association of Niagara

Liz Benneian, Executive Director, Ontariogreen Conservation Association

Lynda Goodridge, Bert Miller Nature Club

Marcie Jacklin, Niagara Birding Conservation and Tourism Collaborative

Miriam Richards, Professor Biological Sciences, Brock University

Chris Motherwell, Hamilton Naturalists

Klara Young-Chin, Friends of One Mile Creek, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Ryan Forster and Team, Extinction Rebellion Niagara

Annette Gibbons, Grimsby, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Dr. Carol Tuck-Riggs, Grimsby, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Jackie Oblak, Town of Pelham, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Christine Knighton, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Melissa McGlashan, Welland, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara



*Joe Schonberger*

November 5, 2020.

Planning and Economic Development Committee  
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**Re: Woodlands Conservation Bylaw Advisory Committee Considerations**

Dear Valued Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee,

I am an independent commentator. All the words and ideas herein contained are my own and are not meant to be reflective of any organization or committee that I may now or ever have served on.

As long as there have been Woodlands Bylaws in Niagara Region there has been an Advisory Committee. Within the context of Niagara Region there is nothing irregular about having one. The Advisory Committee worked closely with Staff to develop versions of circumference limit Bylaws as well as the Good Forestry Practices Bylaw of 2006. Much of that Bylaw has survived revisions in 2008 and 2020. The Advisory Committee was the “Project Team” of the day.

It is my understanding that the Planning and Economic Development Committee will be discussing the issue of whether to reinstate an Advisory Committee and that Staff has recommended that this function should be assigned to APAC.

A Woodlands Conservation Bylaw is more than just an opportunity for Staff to lay charges, collect fines, and order replanting. A successful Bylaw facilitates the proper harvesting of trees that are in woodlands using Good Forestry Practices and makes sure that the rules are followed when woodlands are lost for urban development. It is very important to understand what a Woodlands Conservation Bylaw can and cannot do.

I was a long time member of the Advisory Committee both at the Region and the NPCA. It should be understood that the Advisory Committee was a diverse group of Stakeholders which included farmers, loggers, Planners and other Municipal Staff , conservationists, and a person with a Forestry Management company. This was an experienced, engaged and knowledgeable group with a good mix of veterans and new arrivals. We were in a position of trust and responsibility at the Region and the Advisory Committee worked very well. At the NPCA it did not work well because of a poorly written section on the Advisory Committee, NPCA culture, and because there was no motivation for Staff to work with it. The Advisory Committee was purposely left to rot.

Now that the Bylaw is returning to the Region there is opportunity to reinstate a meaningful Bylaw Advisory Committee if Council so chooses.

I have reviewed PDS 25-2020. I am puzzled as to why Staff is so uninformed about the history of the Bylaw. There has, in fact, always been an Advisory Committee. There has also been an Agricultural Exemption to clear lands for Agricultural Purposes from at least the last Circumference Limit Bylaw to the present. What was added in 2006 was a requirement for a Farm Business Registration Number to qualify for an Agricultural Exemption to clear lands for Agricultural Purposes. What was also added to the 2006 Bylaw was an Exemption for personal use. Neither the agricultural exemption or the personal use exemption applied if the woodland was a Sensitive Natural Area as defined which includes Provincially Significant Wetlands. A Good Forestry Practices Permit has been required to harvest and sell timber since 2006.

The Advisory Committee was NOT formed in 2008 for the benefit and appeasement of the agricultural community. Regional Staff had proposed its elimination because no other Municipality had one. The NPCA asked for it to be retained and the existing Advisory Committee from the Region with

all of its diverse stakeholders moved to the NPCA with the Bylaw. When we saw the final version and the wording of the Advisory Committee section we knew that we had been had. We went anyway and did the best we could. We tried a lot harder than they did.

In the Fall of 2007 our Federation did meet with the NPCA General Manager, the Director of Water Management, and the Director of Land Management to discuss a variety of issues only one of which was the delegation of the Bylaw to the NPCA.

“Come work with us.” They said.

“It will be great.” They said.

“The Advisory Committee will play an important role at the NPCA.” They said.

One of life’s lessons is that sometimes people do not mean what they say. Another is that when Staff makes promises their successors feel no obligation to keep them.

In my experience on the Advisory Committee most Woodland problems involved urban development and golf courses

The Planning and Development Committee must carefully consider whether APAC which is an agricultural committee is the correct place to engage a diverse group of stakeholders in woodlands conservation matters and if there is interest in APAC to do it. Does APAC have the time and experience to do this function? I would see this as a better than nothing solution designed to create the appearance of public engagement. Is that enough?

There is merit in an Advisory Committee if its duties are properly prescriptive, if it meets on a regular basis, if it is properly informed, and if Staff is properly motivated to work with the Advisory Committee.

Thank you for your consideration of this. It is hoped that it was helpful.

Yours truly,  
Joe Schonberger.