



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

PEDC 1-2020

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

1:00 p.m.

Council Chamber

Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON

	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>	
3. <u>PRESENTATIONS</u>	
4. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>	
5. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	
6. <u>CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>	
6.1 <u>PDS 1-2020</u> New Niagara Official Plan - Public Consultation Summary A presentation will precede the discussion of this item.	3 - 33
6.2 <u>ED 1-2020</u> Q4 Economic Development Quarterly Update and Annual Strategic Action Plan Report Card A presentation will precede the discussion of this item.	34 - 76
6.3 <u>ED-C 1-2020</u> Tourism Stakeholder Consultation	77 - 80
7. <u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>	

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in meetings or events, please contact the Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 (office), 289-929-8376 (cellphone) or accessibility@niagararegion.ca (email).



making our mark

NIAGARA

OFFICIAL PLAN

New Niagara Official Plan

Public Consultation Summary

Planning and Economic Development Committee
January 15, 2020



Project Timeline



Public Consultation Formats

- Public Surveys (Imagine Niagara)
- Special Council Meeting
- Stakeholder Meetings and Local Council Updates
- Direct Public Input (Public Information Centres)
- Planning Advisory Committee



Imagine Niagara (2013/14) and Shape Niagara (2018) – Top Priority Themes



infrastructure
tourism engagement
housing
growth water jobs agriculture
transportation
environment



Special Council Meeting – July 2018

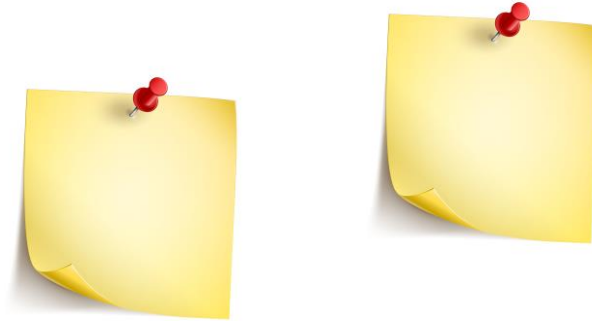
Key Themes:

- Agriculture
- Natural environment
- Growth management
- Consultation
- Land use designations



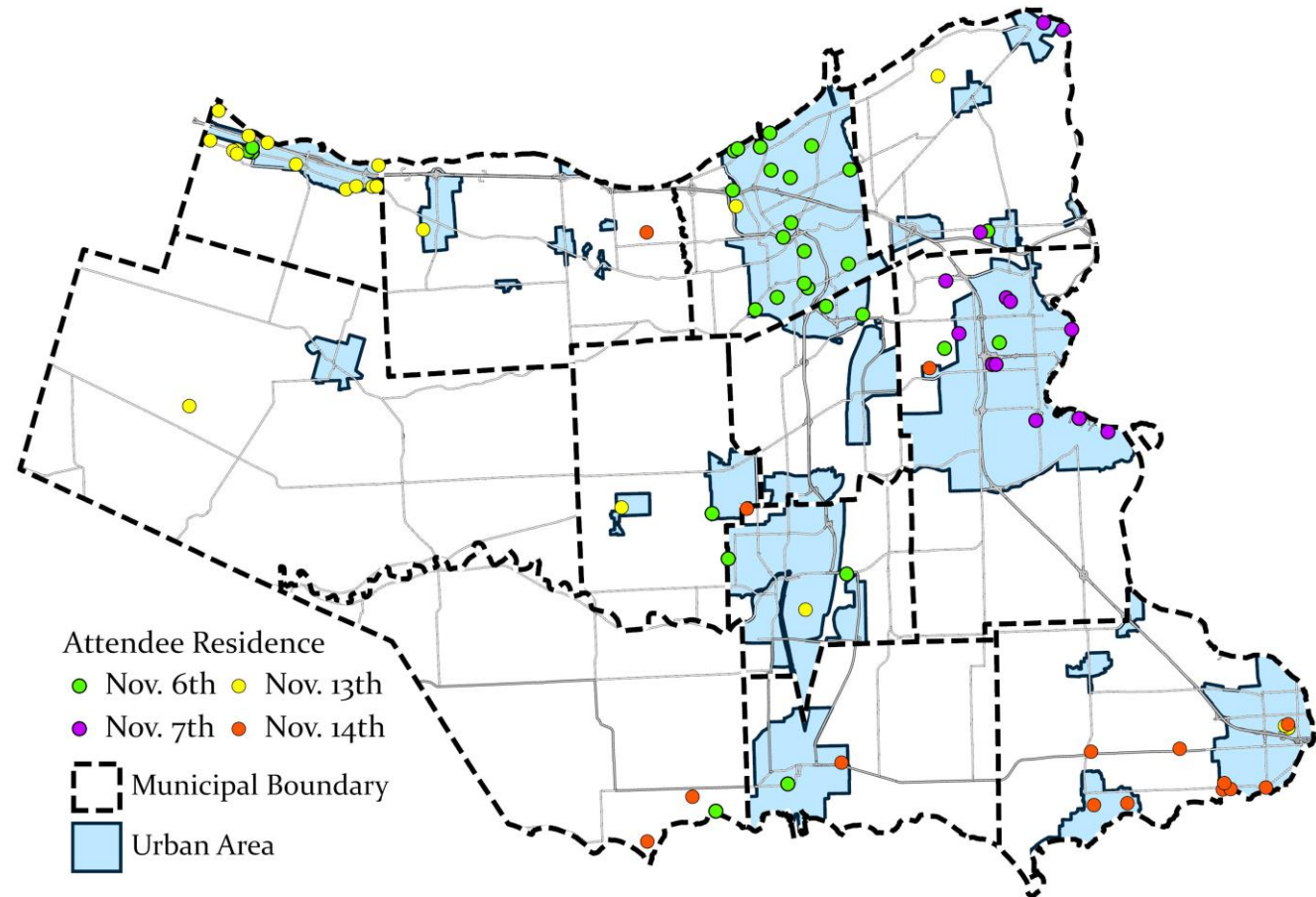
Public Information Centres (PICs)– November 2019

- 4 PICs:
 - Nov. 6 - Thorold
 - Nov. 7 - Niagara Falls
 - Nov. 13 - Grimsby
 - Nov. 14 - Fort Erie
- 161 attendees
- 213 interactive board comments
- 61 surveys completed



PICs– Map Where You Live

- 79 participants
 - 70% urban area
 - 30% rural area



PICs – Digital Survey

Survey Question	Top 3 Results
What is most important for the future of Niagara?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More transportation options 2. More housing options for all ages and incomes 3. More jobs
What is most important when it comes to managing growth in Niagara?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directing growth to appropriate locations 2. Using our land and resources wisely 3. Ensuring growth is supported by infrastructure
What do you value the most about Niagara's rural and agricultural areas?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The natural environment, open space and scenery 2. Wineries, events and tourism 3. Access to a variety of local food
What is most important for employment areas?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to major infrastructure 2. Locational / financial competitiveness 3. Flexible land use patterns
When planning growth in Niagara, it is important to address climate change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strongly agree (32) 2. Agree (11) 3. Strongly disagree (7)

Have your say!

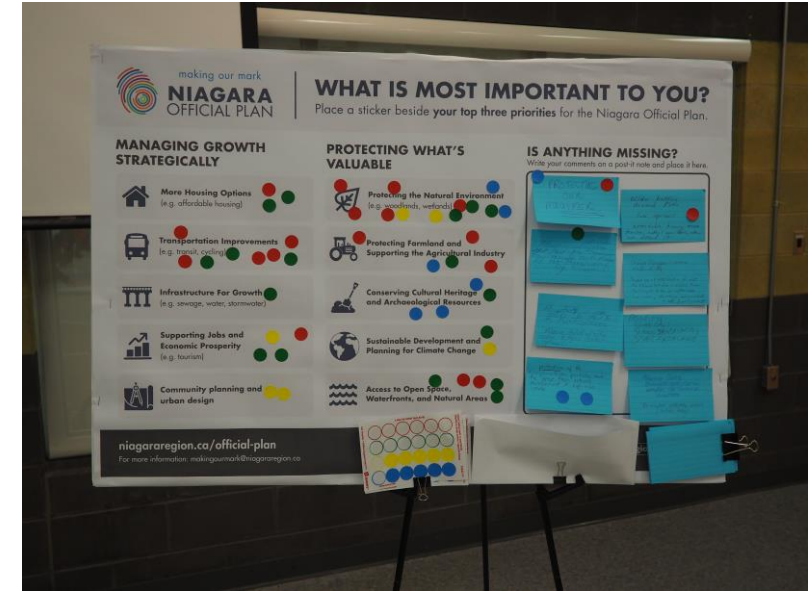


PICs– Interactive Boards

What is most important to you?

Top 5 Results:

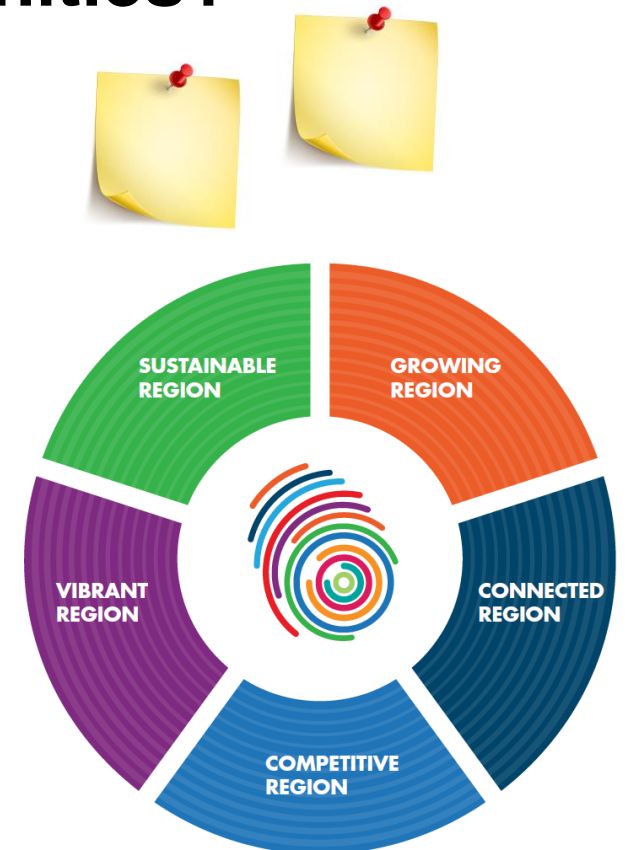
1. Protecting the natural environment
2. Transportation improvements
3. More housing options
4. Access to open space, waterfronts and natural areas
5. Supporting jobs and economic prosperity



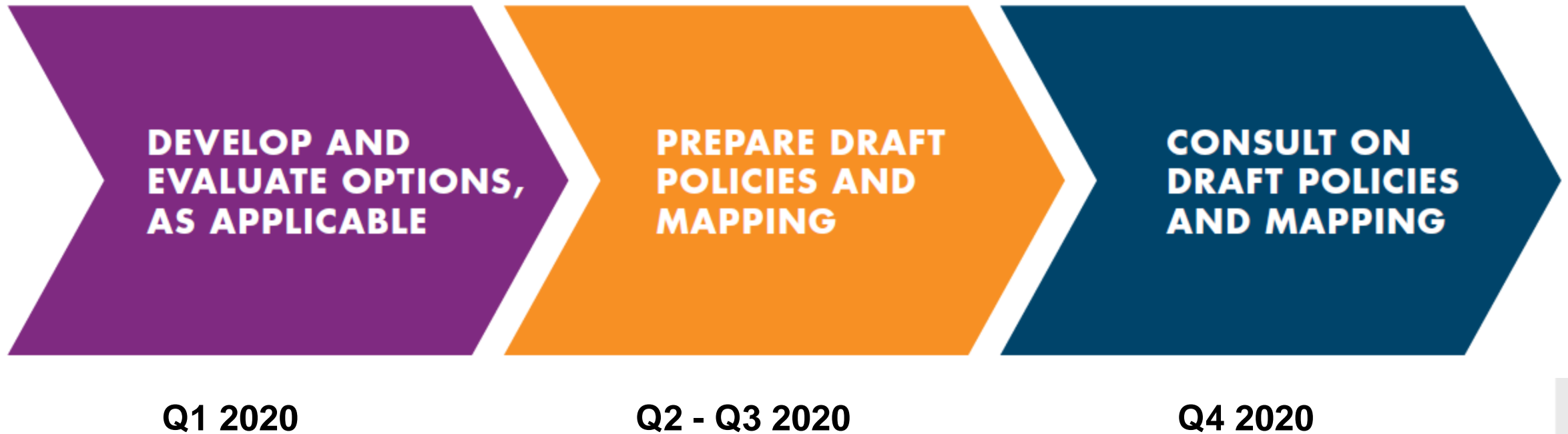
PICs– Interactive Boards

What are our biggest challenges and opportunities?

Biggest Challenges	Biggest Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low density development• Housing diversity• Proactive planning• Archaeological assessment• Public transit• Resource extraction• Infrastructure for growth• Impacts to natural environment• Extreme weather events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher-density development• More housing options• More secondary plans• Regional Archaeological Management Plan• Public transit/complete streets• GO train• Manage resource extraction• Protect natural environment• Action on climate change



Next Steps



Subject: New Niagara Official Plan - Public Consultation Summary

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Recommendations

1. That Report PDS 1-2020 **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
2. That a copy of Report PDS 1-2020 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Local Area Municipalities.

Key Facts Key Facts

- Consultation on the new Niagara Official Plan takes place at four different levels as outlined in this report.
- Significant stakeholder and public input has been received on the structure and contents of new Niagara Official Plan and on the key findings of the background studies that will inform the Official Plan.
- This report provides a summary of the input received to date through public surveys, stakeholder input, direct public input and the Planning Advisory Committee.

Financial Considerations

Council approved the resources to complete the new Niagara Official Plan (NOP) over a 5 year period as part of the 2017 Budget Process, predominantly funded through Development Charges.

Analysis

Public and stakeholder input is an important component of the Niagara Official Plan process and is required in to provide input into the preparation of planning policy and to provide a mechanism for Council to gauge public sentiment.

There are four different consultation formats where input has been received to date, details of which are as follows:

1. Public Surveys

The key themes that the public identified as being important to address were identified through Imagine Niagara (October 2013 – June 2014) and confirmed through Shape Niagara (March – August 2018). Together both of these surveys involved significant community outreach and generated thousands of responses. A summary of the important themes of these initiatives is shown in Appendix 1.

A Special Meeting of Council was also held in July 2018 to hear input on the need for a new Official Plan and what planning matters it could address. A more detailed summary of public comments can be found in Appendix 2.

2. Stakeholder Input

The Official Plan is being informed by various background studies/reports which have involved the input of relevant stakeholder groups. For example, the Natural Environment and Water Systems (NE&WS) background work involved meetings with environmental, agricultural and developer stakeholder groups. These groups will have further opportunity to provide input into the evaluation of options for the NE&WS. Local municipal planning staff also participate via Technical Advisory Groups and are updated on background work.

Local Councils have been updated on the new Niagara Official Plan process and the status of supporting background work twice to date. In general, local Council concerns or questions focused on: bringing local Official Plans in to conformity with the Regional Official Plan; affordable housing; natural heritage and water resource protection; urban boundary expansions; employment land conversions; protecting agricultural land and recognizing the importance of agriculture.

Discussions are ongoing with Indigenous groups.

3. Direct Public Input

Four Public Information Centres (PICs) were held to inform the public and gather input on key findings of the background studies. The PICs were held at Regional Headquarters, Niagara Falls, Grimsby and Fort Erie.

In general, the input provided by the public was confirming as to what planning staff believe to be the relevant planning issues, challenges and opportunities.

Key attendance and input highlights from the PICs are as follows:

- 161 people attended the four PICs;
- Each PIC had a few attendees from outside the host municipality, ranging from four to 9.
- The attendee distribution was about 70% urban and 30 % rural
- Over 200 comments were received; and
- 61 survey results were received;

Interactive PIC Board Input

A variety of interactive boards were placed around the room at the open houses to seek input on each of the topic areas. The first activity board (**Figure 1**) asked participants to place a sticker beside their top three priorities for the new Niagara Official Plan. The top priorities overall were protecting the natural environment, transportation improvements, and more housing options.

Figure 1 – What is most important to you?

Priorities	Sticker Tally
Protecting the natural environment (e.g. woodlands, wetlands)	32
Transportation improvements (e.g. transit cycling)	26
More housing options (e.g. affordable housing)	25
Access to open space, waterfronts and natural areas	21
Supporting jobs and economic prosperity (e.g. tourism)	19
Protecting farmland and supporting the agricultural industry	17
Infrastructure for growth (e.g. sewer, water, stormwater)	14
Sustainable development and planning for climate change	11
Conserving cultural heritage and archaeological resources	9
Community planning and urban design	9

Participants were also asked if anything was missing from the list. The majority of the comments related to the priorities identified in some capacity. However, some notable examples of additional priorities included poverty reduction, accessibility and inclusion.

The other activity boards asked participants to identify the biggest challenges and opportunities relative to various themes. Key challenges and opportunities are identified in **Figure 2** below. A more detailed summary of comments is included in Appendix 3.

Figure 2 – What are our biggest challenges and opportunities?

Theme	Biggest Challenge	Biggest Opportunity
Growing Region (growth, development & housing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-density development and uneven growth • Lack of diversity in housing types and affordable options, including for seniors and youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher-density development, including in proximity to GO Transit stations • More housing options (row housing, semi-detached, apartment buildings, etc.)
Vibrant Region (urban design & cultural resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development occurring without proactive, comprehensive plans, such as a secondary plans, and appropriate archaeology assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure plans are in place to guide development in order to achieve design excellence and conserve archaeological resources
Competitive Region (employment, agriculture & resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited public transit to access employment opportunities • Impacts of resource extraction on the natural environment, including our water resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost employment and tourism through public transit, including the GO train • Strong policies to manage resource extraction and final rehabilitation
Connected Region (transportation & infrastructure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring infrastructure (transportation, water, wastewater, sewer) has the capacity to support growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast, efficient and accessible public transit network and complete streets that accommodate all road users
Sustainable Region (natural environment & climate change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of trees and other natural features • Adapting to impacts of extreme weather events, such as flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger protections for the natural environment • Meaningful action on climate change across all sectors

Digital Survey

For those that participated in the digital survey the following planning themes were ranked in order of importance: more transportation options; more housing options for all ages and incomes; more jobs; protecting the natural environment; preserving farmland; and planning for climate change. There was no one dominant planning theme. Further planning for the other themes all impact climate change.

The top three planning objectives confirmed for managing growth were: directing growth to strategic locations; using our land and resources wisely; and ensuring growth is supported by infrastructure.

The natural environment, open space and scenery was significantly more valued than other reasons for enjoying the agricultural and rural areas such as wineries, events and tourism; access to a variety of local food; recreation opportunities; jobs and economic opportunities.

Urban Boundary (Settlement Area) Expansions

A variety of requests to expand urban boundaries were submitted as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review/new Niagara Official Plan process, as well as part of the Comprehensive Provincial Plan review in 2017.

Source of Request	Number of Requests	Area (ha)	Number in Greenbelt
Greenbelt Review	34	558	34
Municipal Council Request	6	1,136	1
Private Land Owner	35	592	16
Summary	76	2,286*	51

* 2,150 ha - accounting for overlap between municipal and private requests

At the time the above-referenced submissions were received, urban boundaries could be expanded only through the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review/new Niagara Official Plan process. Earlier this year, the Province amended the Growth Plan to allow the consideration of expansions up to 40 Ha, and boundary adjustments, in certain cases and subject to specific criteria, outside of the Official Plan process.

The Region's review of expansion requests is linked to the analysis of lands needs and will be reported further in 2020. In many cases, requests for urban expansions cannot be accommodated because they are located in the Greenbelt Area which automatically disqualifies consideration. Land owners who have made requests in these areas will be notified accordingly.

4. Planning Advisory Committee

To date, the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), consisting of eight citizens with a professional/academic background, has been providing input on visioning, directives and background information that will inform the development of the new Niagara Official Plan.

Alternatives Reviewed

The public consultation is following a consultation framework approved by Council in March 2019.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report highlights the various consultation steps to date on the new Niagara Official Plan as well as a summary of public input received to date. This process is important to address Council's priority as a Sustainable Engaging Government. The new Niagara Official Plan addresses Council's other priorities, being: Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth; Healthy and Vibrant Community; and Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning.

Other Pertinent Reports

PDS 9-2019 New Official Plan Consultation Timeline Framework
PDS 33-2019 Growth Management Program Update for New Official Plan
CWCD 421-2019 New Niagara Official Plan Updates

Prepared by:

Dave Heyworth, MCIP, RPP
Official Plan Policy Consultant
Planning and Development

Recommended by:

Rino Mostacci, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning and
Development
Planning and Development

Submitted by:

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.
Acting, Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Lindsey Savage, Senior Planner; Karen Costantini, Planning Analyst; and reviewed by Doug Giles, Director of Community and Long Range Planning.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Important themes- Imagine Niagara and Shape Niagara
Appendix 2	Summary of Public Comments- Special Council Meeting
Appendix 3	Detailed summary of PIC Comments

Appendix 1 – Priority Themes from Imagine Niagara and Shape Niagara

Imagine Niagara (2013-14) Municipal Comprehensive Review – Official Plan	Shape Niagara (2018) Council Strategic Plan
<p>8 priority themes, in order of importance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growing the economy 2. Employment 3. Natural environment 4. Rural and agriculture 5. Infrastructure 6. Transportation 7. Managing growth 8. Engagement <p>Gap areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency services • Youth retention • Community and social services • Culture • Health services 	<p>17 priority themes, in order of importance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jobs and economic prosperity 2. Transportation connecting people to jobs and services 3. Supporting populations in need through employment, affordable housing, transit 4. Environmental responsibility and sustainable development 5. Accountable and collaborative government 6. Active transportation 7. Preserving Niagara's natural assets 8. Infrastructure in support of growth 9. Affordable housing 10. Quality of life and public safety 11. Equitable access to regional services 12. Water and waste management 13. Tourism as an economic driver 14. Communication and engagement with the community 15. Youth and young family retention 16. Responsible spending 17. Mental health services

Appendix 2 – Overview of Comments from July 6, 2018 Special Council Meeting

Overview

- Requests to re-designate certain lands, remove certain lands from the Greenbelt Plan, and bring certain lands into the urban boundary
- Concerns regarding loss of tender fruit production in favour of grape production and cannabis, as well as illegal dumping on prime farmland
- Concerns regarding endangered special, ash die-off, Environment Impact Study review process, loss of forests, and climate change impacts
- Importance of watershed planning and protection of local fisheries
- Concerns regarding impacts of de-designating urban lands and the speed and location of development
- Importance of transparent consultation process and ensuring adequate time and care in the development of the new Niagara Official Plan

Key Themes

Requests to re-designate certain lands

- Request to re-designate certain lands from Agriculture to Rural in Pelham
- Request to re-designate certain lands in Thorold, Niagara Falls and Pelham from Good General Agriculture to Tender Fruit and Grape

Requests to remove certain lands from the Greenbelt Plan

- Request to remove certain lands from the Greenbelt Plan in Grimsby and St. Catharines that is not considered to be viable farmland
- Concern that the Greenbelt Plan is not sufficiently flexible to address on-the-ground realities of farming and agricultural viability

Requests to include certain lands within the urban boundary

- Request for certain lands in Niagara Falls to be included in the urban boundary

Protection of agricultural land and tender fruit production

- Concerns regarding loss of tender fruit production in favour of grape production and cannabis in Niagara-on-the-Lake
- Concern regarding illegal dumping on farmland and in environmental features and areas
- Agricultural and environmental policies are closely linked, particularly when it comes to watershed planning

Protection of the natural environment

- Need to address endangered species within Niagara Region
- There should be an automatic review peer review process for Environmental Impact Studies
- Ash die-off should not be used to remap Environmental Conservation Areas
- Concerns regarding impacts of illegal dumping and garbage dumps on drainage patterns
- Concern regarding loss of forests and impacts on climate change
- Request for watershed planning both inside and outside of the urban boundary and protection of local fisheries

Growth Management

- Concern regarding the speed of development in Grimsby and high-rise condominiums being built in appropriate locations
- If de-designation of urban lands takes place, it should be done on protected wetlands at the urban boundary

Other Comments

- Stakeholder consultations should be based on formal committee that are transparent
- Need to take considerable care to develop the new Niagara Official Plan to ensure it is an improvement over the status quo

Summary of Comments from July 6, 2018 Special Council Meeting

File No.	Type of Representation*	Name(s)	Organization	Municipality	Summary of Comments
CL-C 36-2018	Written submission & presentation	Gloria J Katch Andy Nero	Residents	Pelham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for properties located at 1155 and 1307 Rice Road in the Town of Pelham to be re-designated from agriculture to rural in the new Official Plan This should be part of the Region taking a closer look at the east side of Rice Road
CL-C 37-2018	Written submission	Irene Murray Sue Bates Michelle Wallis	Residents	Niagara-on-the-Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns regarding depletion of tender fruit production in favour of grape production in NOTL, as well as cannabis production in specialty crop areas- the best farmland in Canada
CL-C-38-2018	Written submission	Marco Marchionda	Marcasa Homes Inc.	Grimsby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for information regarding his property at 548 Main Street West in Grimsby as well as the 25 acres that surrounds his property Indicates his property is located within the Greenbelt Plan but Grimsby Town staff would like to see the land developed
CL-C-41-2018	Written submission	Ray and Liz Kowalik	Residents	St. Catharines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for property located at 1406 Third Street in St. Catharines to be removed from the Greenbelt Plan specialty crop designation The property is not viable farmland due to the small parcel size (resulting from MTO expropriation for the Highway 406 overpass) and salt damage Concerns that Greenbelt Plan lacks the flexibility required to address on-the-ground realities of farming and agricultural viability

File No.	Type of Representation*	Name(s)	Organization	Municipality	Summary of Comments
CL-C-43-2018	Written submission & presentation	Dr. John Bacher	Preservation of Agricultural Lands Society	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for a new Regional Official Plan is questionable • Agricultural and environmental policies are closely linked • Prospect of de-designation of lands within the urban boundary is disturbing; if de-designation of urban lands takes place, it should be done on protected wetlands at the urban boundary • Stakeholder consultations should be based on formal committees that are transparent • Comments on agricultural policy – lands between the Niagara Escarpment and Highway 20 mapped as Good General Agriculture in Thorold, Niagara Falls and Pelham should be designated as Tender Fruit and Grape • Comments on environmental policies – need to address endangered species; there should be an automatic peer review process for Environmental Impact Studies; ash die-off should not be used to remap Environmental Conservation Areas • Do not rush the Official Plan process; need to take considerable care to develop the plan
CL-C-45-2018	Written submission	S.A. Branscombe	River Realty Development	Niagara Falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for 63 acres of River Realty-owned lands in northwest Niagara Falls to be included in the urban boundary
CL-C-46-2018	Written submission	Matt Johnston	Urban Solutions	Grimsby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for 2.37 ha of land in Grimsby to be removed from the Greenbelt Plan

File No.	Type of Representation*	Name(s)	Organization	Municipality	Summary of Comments
n/a	Written submission	Gauruv Lall	Remax Escarpment Realty	Grimsby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to remove 18 acres from the Greenbelt Plan to develop the site (e.g. potential for residential development).
n/a	Written submission	George Trifunovic Philip Trifunovic Mike Trifunovic Peter Trifunovic	Resident	Grimsby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to build the Livingston Avenue extension and remove all properties that have been divided into two parcels by the extension from the Greenbelt Plan This includes 21 acres of land located at 468 Main Street West in Grimsby
n/a	Written submission	Sandra Horvath Nancy McKay Tom Smith	Christ Our Saviour Lutheran Church	Grimsby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to remove property located at 448 Main Street West in Grimsby from the Greenbelt Plan and complete the Livingston Avenue extension
n/a	Written submission & presentation	Jean Grandoni	Resident	Niagara Falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-designate land between Niagara Falls and Thorold and between the Welland River and the Niagara Escarpment from Good General to Tender Fruit and Grape Illegal dumping – stop illegal dumping on prime farmlands and in floodplains, creeks and creek valleys, drainage ditches, etc. Climate change – illegal dumping and garbage dumps alters drainage patterns; climate change is further impacted by cutting down forests; need stronger forestry protection Watershed planning – need watershed planning inside and outside the urban boundary; no diversions should occur; fisheries are forgotten local food supply
n/a	Written submission	Chris Jack	Resident	Grimsby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow down development, preserve farmland and do not build high-rise condos in places they do not belong in what used to be the fruit belt

File No.	Type of Representation*	Name(s)	Organization	Municipality	Summary of Comments
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about lack of community consultation, traffic and crime

Appendix 3A – Summary of Interactive Board Comments

Theme	Biggest Challenges	Biggest Opportunities
Growing Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting farmland and the natural environment, including water resources (e.g. our aquifer) Planning for climate change and extreme weather events (e.g. flooding) Sprawling, low-density development Ensuring intensification/density planning is done right Uneven growth and inconsistent development strategies Achieving a mix of housing and employment uses that allows people to work where they live Building complete communities for residents and visitors year-round, not just in the summer months Lack of diversity in housing types, including rental housing and affordable options for seniors, persons with disabilities and youth Lack of affordable retirement homes Concerns regarding the impact of investor activity and home-sharing (e.g. Airbnb) on the rental housing stock and housing affordability Limited transportation options for seasonal workers and youth Not enough proactive, comprehensive community planning (e.g. secondary plans, masterplans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher density, mixed use development in areas supported by infrastructure and services More apartment buildings, row housing, semi-detached dwellings, tiny homes and multi-ownership housing to expand affordable housing options Ensure affordable housing and support services are mixed into our communities rather than isolated Zoning to support residential intensification and home-based businesses Prioritize brownfield redevelopment over greenfield development Build the GO Transit Stations and undertake associated transportation improvements More housing options in proximity to Niagara's GO Transit Stations Implement Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan to support development and attract a diverse labour pool Protect the natural environment and build sustainable, healthy, liveable communities Plan for climate change by preserving greenspace, building bike lanes and supporting transit Nature-based tourism Opportunities associated with rehabilitated quarries (e.g. housing, recreation, ecotourism) Prepare secondary plans and master plans in consultation with the community for orderly growth
Vibrant Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Not in my backyard" (NIMBY) mentality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address NIMBYism Protect the environment and cultural and archaeological resources

Theme	Biggest Challenges	Biggest Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political support for design excellence rather than large-scale development • Low-density development • Large-scale development occurring without secondary plans • Following and enforcing by-laws • Assessing important archaeological sites in an appropriate manner • Paying for services should the population base decline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate Niagara's natural assets into urban design plans • Plant more trees to shade streets • Support and leverage the growth of culture and the arts in Niagara • Develop vibrant community hubs • Support intensification and improve the mix of housing and employment uses to allow people to work where they live • Build GO Train Stations that are easily accessible for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians • Ensure that regional plans recognize and leverage the strengths and success of individual communities within Niagara • Leverage the expertise of urban design staff at Niagara Region
Competitive Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of industry as the economy transitions • Limited public transit • High volume of commuters • Expansive parking lots that act at heat sinks • Protecting water resources • Concern regarding aggregate extraction deep into the aquifer • Concern that aggregate companies are not following regulations and are not held accountable (threat of aquifer contamination and negative impact on farmland) • Concern regarding fill in wet quarries and impact on the aquifer • Concern regarding wet quarries being converted to garbage dumps • Importation of fill from the Greater Toronto Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect a sufficient supply of employment lands across the region • Build GO Transit Stations and undertake associated transportation improvements to boost tourism • Increase density at GO Transit Stations • Implement Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan to support development • Explore regional rail service • Develop Fort Erie QEW Corridor • Limit importation of fill from the Greater Toronto Area • Prohibit fill in wet quarries • Recycle aggregate resources • Limit the amount of quarrying that can occur in a given area • Explore opportunities for community development in proximity to rehabilitated quarries

Theme	Biggest Challenges	Biggest Opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore creative opportunities to reuse depleted quarries, such as outdoor theatres or concert venues • Transform depleted quarries into geo-parks • Protect the natural environment and support eco-tourism • Promote international events in Niagara, such as ploughing matches, automotive exhibitions, and natural resource summits • Attract employment, educational and residential opportunities by capitalizing on Niagara's strengths, such as agriculture, natural environment, resources, new urban development, etc. • Attract green technology and internet technology businesses • Develop a regional employment program that addresses marketing the Region, housing for students and seasonal workers and transportation
Connected Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making necessary infrastructure investments • Ensuring transportation infrastructure has capacity to support new development • Limited transportation options for aging population • Need densities to support transit • Need more cycling lanes within and between communities that are separated from traffic • Raw sewage overflows • Water quality at beaches • Protecting our drinking water • Need to recognize the role of existing wetlands and dangers of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan • Build the GO Transit Stations and make associated transportation improvements (e.g. Livingston Ave. and Casablanca Blvd. in Grimsby) • Rethink rail service in Niagara to address climate change • Better connections between GO Transit stations and local transit • Connect smaller municipalities with nearby city centres through transit • Improve bus connections • Make bus travel faster and more efficient to improve ridership • Provide bus passes free of charge • Direct intensification to areas that support transit

Theme	Biggest Challenges	Biggest Opportunities
	<p>disrupting the course of water flows, especially in light of climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build complete streets and improve active transportation • Reduce commute times • Challenges and opportunities associated with a possible Mid-Peninsula Highway • Sewage lagoons can double as wetlands and waterfowl habitat • Adopt bolder vision for Water and Wastewater Master Servicing Plan
<p>Sustainable Region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban sprawl • Urban boundary expansions • Protecting drinking water • Waterfront development • Increase in algae making beaches unsafe to swim • Flooding and storm damage to waterfronts • Shoreline erosion (e.g. Lake Erie) • Loss of forest cover and natural features due to development • Concern that aggregate companies are not following regulations which impacts the natural environment • Inappropriate development • Challenge to achieve open creek conveyance (rather than pipes) • Illegal dumping in natural areas • Impact of infrastructure development on the natural environment (e.g. in Greenbelt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the natural environment, including natural features and areas within smaller communities and urban areas • Reduce tree-cutting for development, as trees sequester carbon and absorb water • Park naturalization and green roofs • Low impact development standards • Increase buffers for lakeshores, wetlands, and watercourses and naturalize the buffers • Connect natural features and areas within a natural heritage system • Purchase and protect land that can serve as linkages between natural features and areas • Protect vulnerable areas from recreational uses that may damage natural features • Establish targets relative to the protection of natural environment (e.g. tree canopy target) • Eliminate invasive phragmites • Replant areas that have been cleared due to ash borer • Identify flood zones and prohibit development in flood-prone areas • Develop a water usage plan

Theme	Biggest Challenges	Biggest Opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that sustainability and climate change is central to all chapters of the Official Plan • Go beyond provincial minimum requirements for climate change, which are inadequate • Set strong greenhouse gas reduction targets, including targets for net-zero communities • Use natural features and areas to mitigate and adapt to climate change • Prioritize sustainable development to address climate change • Electric vehicle infrastructure • More transit and cycling infrastructure • Relief roads to reduce congestion and pollution on the QEW • Ensure scientific studies guide planning and development • More recycling and community involvement • Electrify more of the Niagara River

Appendix 3B – Written Submissions

Overview of Top Three Themes

Protection of the natural environment

- Concerns regarding loss of environmental features and wildlife habitat
- Need a mapped natural heritage system and stronger environmental policies to protect the natural environment and plan for climate change
- Any references to biological offsetting should be eliminated from the plan
- Establish an Environmental Advisory Committee
- Hold meetings with environmentalists at more accessible locations (e.g. Fort Erie, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines)
- Importance of scenic conservation (e.g. scenic by-ways)

Managing growth and housing

- Need to use our land wisely and limit the number of single-detached dwellings, parking lots and big box smart centre plazas
- Concerns regarding lack of affordable housing
- Concerns that “Not In My Backyard” (NIMBY) opposition from residents and councillors is limiting the development of affordable housing
- Concerns regarding social impacts of higher-density development

Ensuring infrastructure supports growth

- Concerns regarding sewage overflows in extreme weather events and sewage flowing into Lake Ontario
- Should bury all hydro wires
- Expand GO Train service in Niagara
- Make improvements to Casablanca Blvd. and expand Livingston Ave. in Grimsby
- Request to add a portion of Highway 122 between Garrison Road and Dominion Road in Fort Erie to the Bikeways Master Plan
- Need infrastructure and political coordination and alignment to meet the aggressive population and employment numbers for Niagara Region
- Need to ensure infrastructure can adapt to the impacts of climate change
- Requests to include specific requirements relating to TransCanada Pipelines infrastructure in the new plan

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday January 15, 2020

NIAGARA
CANADA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2019-2024

- Developed in collaboration with local economic development officers, Niagara businesses, industry associations and post-secondary institutions
- Addresses issues that are important for Niagara's continued economic growth and prosperity
- Action Plan results can only be achieved through meaningful partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders
- Annual update on the Strategic Action Plan documents a number of initiatives that are supported but not necessarily led by regional economic development

REGIONAL COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2019-2022

01 STRATEGIC PRIORITY SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Objective 1.1 Economic Growth and Development

Forward thinking approach to economic development in Niagara through long term strategic planning and leveraging partnerships with post-secondary institutions

Objective 1.2 Support Retention and Development of a Skilled Labour Force

Objective 1.3 Collaborative Approach to Business Growth and Retention

Objective 1.4 Strategically Target Industry Sectors

REGIONAL COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2019-2022

01 STRATEGIC PRIORITY SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

CORPORATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Project Name: Economic Development Long Term Strategy

Project Timeline: 2020-2021

Project Objective: Improve economic growth within a 20 year horizon, inform future decision making and tie into other Regional plans

REGIONAL COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2019-2022

01 STRATEGIC PRIORITY SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

GOING FORWARD

- Project partners and establish steering committee and working group (January)
- Issue RFP, technical evaluation of proposals and award contract to consultants (February)
- Initial project meeting with consultants and approve work plan (February/March)
- Regional Council participation (2020-2021)
- Reporting to PEDC and Council (Quarterly)



QUESTIONS

Subject: Q4 Economic Development Quarterly Update and Annual Strategic Action Plan Report Card

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Recommendation

That this report **BE RECEIVED** by the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC) for information.

Key Facts

- Economic Development provides quarterly updates to the PEDC. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the department's activities for the fourth quarter (Q4) 2019.
- Economic Development activities support the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan approved by PEDC in March 2019. An update on the Action Plan is provided as an appendix to this report.
- Economic Development functional activities: Trade and Investment; Expedited Services for Business; Strategic Economic Initiatives and Strategic Marketing Initiatives, are grouped under the seven themes of the Strategy.
- The development of a Long Term Economic Development Strategy is one of Regional Council's strategic priorities. Work will begin on this strategy in 2020.

Financial Considerations

The activities described in this report have been accommodated within the Council approved 2019 Economic Development operating budget.

Analysis

Niagara Economic Development, in collaboration with local businesses, industry associations, community stakeholders, and post-secondary education institutions, has developed a five-year strategic action plan. The action plan is based on the extensive stakeholder engagement that was conducted throughout 2018. The success of Niagara Economic Development's Strategic Action Plan can only be achieved through meaningful partnerships and collaboration with our partners across Niagara.

Seven themes emerged from the development of the Economic Development Strategic Action Plan:

- Economic Development: Supporting Business Growth and Diversification across Niagara Region
- Employment Land Strategy: Identifying and Creating a Provincially Significant Employment Zone
- Marketing Niagara Region: Raising the Profile of Niagara as a Place to Live and Do Business
- Streamline Planning Processes: Expediting Approvals Process
- Increase Niagara's Competitiveness: Addressing Unnecessary Regulatory Burdens on Businesses
- Workforce: Meeting Current and Future Talent, Professional, Skilled Trades and Labour Needs
- Advocacy: Improving Transportation Infrastructure Ensuring Niagara Remains Competitive in Global Economy

Economic Development: Supporting Business Growth and Diversification across Niagara Region

Niagara Economic Development provides on-going assistance to the local municipalities to support their economic development functions. This includes: the services of the Niagara Foreign Trade Zone Manager, to engage companies in federal programs and encourage export activity; economic and business research and analysis; expedited development services and support to the local area municipalities without economic development offices on regionally significant projects.

Economic Development Officer (support for tourism, agriculture, succession planning and Local Area Municipalities (LAMs)).

Stakeholder meetings: 22 meetings with 16 different stakeholders including:

- Venture Niagara; Niagara Workforce Planning Board; Financial Institutions, Local Area Municipality economic development departments, etc.

Agri-business: 22 meetings with 15 stakeholders including:

- Partnership and promotion of the Niagara College Food and Beverage Summit to agri-business operators and stakeholders;
- Meetings with stakeholders to advance an Irrigation Ambassador position to advance the Niagara Irrigation Strategy;
- Coordination of a SWIFT presentation to the Agriculture Policy and Action Committee meeting;
- Co-coordination of the cannabis regulation presentation to PEDC and cannabis land-use planning sessions;
- Coordination of meetings with Niagara Region wastewater team and Niagara winery producers;
- Working with Cannabis regulatory bodies on potential Niagara presentation;

- Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (GHFFA) project advancement: working group meetings, and meeting for the Long Term Care Home local procurement project, updating the agri-business asset mapping tool with new data.

Tourism: 32 meetings with 25 stakeholders including:

- 3 RFPs released and promoted for Niagara 2021 Canada Summer Games business opportunities. RFPs included: project management services, merchandising and mascot fabrication;
- Brock University's Sports Tourism Report – engagement with stakeholders on the final report for feedback;
- Preparation of the Analysis of the Region's Role in Tourism report for PEDC, included engagement with tourism operators on the recommendation for a special event bid fund;
- Niagara Airports Feasibility and Future Business Modelling Study: RFP work was completed, document was provided to the Region in draft format, and internal/external stakeholders were engaged for feedback through 2 face-to-face sessions;
- Additional meetings include: sport tourism bid fund discussions, Canada Summer Games programming requests, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport discussions, GO train marketing meetings, etc.;
- Niagara Gateway Information Centre Q3 2019 reporting – The third quarter of 2019 saw an increase of 7,186 visitors to the kiosk compared to the same date range in 2018. Ticket sales sold through the kiosk totaled more than \$70,000 at the end of Sept. Roughly 27,769 tourists visited the kiosk between July, August and September.

LAM development: 33 meetings touching 9 local area municipalities:

- On-going support to advance 9 active site selection inquiries;
- Work includes Economic Development strategic planning in multiple municipalities, business expansion assistance to 4 existing businesses, Local Area Municipality fund application assistance, data and analysis preparation for multiple municipalities;
- Local Area Municipality Fund: 9 of 12 local area municipalities submitted projects that the Region partnered on and contributed to. These projects range from traffic studies, to downtown development projects, to agri-business innovation initiatives. Reporting for these projects will be submitted by end of Q1 2020.

Research/information requests, referrals, stakeholder engagement: 111 inquiries and requests from businesses and stakeholders. Examples include hiring assistance programs, sector information, data requests, stakeholder introductions, and partnership referrals.

Manager, Economic Research & Analysis (support to LAMs through information provision; support to Niagara Economic Development investment, trade and sector activities; and, support to business and other economic development stakeholders)

Research Projects:

- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy Brief with Niagara Community Observatory (completed);
- Exploring Goods Movement and Export Diversification for Niagara Region Firms (in progress);
- Niagara Trade Profile update (in progress);
- Niagara Tourism Profile (in progress);
- Transportation Data Portal Pilot Program with Transport Canada (in progress);
- Niagara Community Observatory: Transportation and Logistics Sector Policy Brief (in progress);
- Niagara Shop Floor Manufacturing Study with Niagara Industrial Association (in progress).

Research Inquiries:

- Total: 86
- Brock University: 8
- Niagara College: 2
- Internal (Niagara Region): 17
- Businesses: 17
- Stakeholders (e.g. Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce, Niagara Industrial Association, provincial/federal governments, port authority, news media, tourism organizations, Innovate Niagara): 23
- Local Area Municipalities: 19 (St. Catharines: 7; West Lincoln: 1; Fort Erie: 1; Niagara Falls: 1; Grimsby: 4; Welland: 3; Niagara-On-The-Lake: 1; Port Colborne: 1)

Presentations and Public Outreach:

- CKTB Interview: Manufacturing, September 30;
- Rotary Club Fonthill: Niagara Economic Update, October 20;
- CKTB Interview: Food & Beverage, October 7;
- Brock Presentation: Recreation & Sport Research, October 23;
- CKTB Interview: Niagara Economic Update, October 28;
- Niagara Economic Summit Presentation: Niagara Economic Update, November 1;
- CKTB Interview: Agriculture, November 4;
- RBC Presentation: Niagara Economic Update, November 19;
- CKTB Interview: Information Communications Technology (ICT), December 2;
- CKTB Interview: Charitable Donations, December 9;
- Niagara College Executive Team Presentation: Niagara Economic Update, December 12;
- CIBC Presentation: Niagara Economic Update, December 16.

Niagara Foreign Trade Zone Manager (export diversification for Niagara companies, outreach, marketing, implementation of the Niagara Foreign Trade Zone (NFTZ) strategy).

Business Outreach Program

- NFTZ added 14 clients to our Q3 list, now servicing 110 clients, from the manufacturing, agribusiness, and logistics sectors.
- Conducted two seminars at the Regional Headquarters and City Hall, Welland and completed five seminars in total as the NFTZ Series 2 for 2019. Series 2 seminars were comprehensive and included presentations by representatives from Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), EDC, International Trade Centres, and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation. Officials from the Netherlands presented on exporting opportunities into the EU during the Welland seminar. A total number of 62 firms and 81 participants attended the Series 2 Seminar from various municipalities within Niagara; most of them were first-time learners about the NFTZ services.
- NFTZ presentations were made to Innovate Niagara, TD Bank and ongoing support was provided to BMO and RBC.
- Participated in 5 Networking events which included:
 - Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) Annual Conference dedicated to helping manufacturers grow and become more competitive at home and around the world.
 - Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Annual Conference to strengthen the competitive advantage of our manufacturers & exporters by building knowledge and capacity in key areas, like LEAN and productivity; trade and export; energy and environment; leadership development; safety and more.
 - The annual HWY H2O Conference had insights related to business development for the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System. The event catered to a global market within the maritime industry.
 - Propel Port Colborne – Labour Force Breakfast, one of the initiatives undertaken by the City of Port Colborne based on a new Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. This was an opportunity to network with key Niagara industry leaders and discuss opportunities to further explore the issue of labour and skills shortages within the City and the Region.
 - Latin America Export Forum hosted by MEDJCT and Hamilton Niagara Partnership focused on exports to Latin America. It was well attended by our businesses and included the opportunity for them to have one-on-one meetings with Area Directors of specific markets.

Value Support

- Serviced clients with regular updates on FTZ programs and connected specific task force agencies with companies for client-specific support.

- Workshop on Export Business Plan: Trade Accelerator Program (TAP) hosted by the World Trade Centre/Toronto Board of Trade and co-hosted with support from Niagara Region. This was a two-day workshop assisting businesses in their strategic planning and support services for export markets. NFTZ made a presentation. Eight Niagara businesses participated in TAP. There were a total of twelve companies in the program. The NFTZ manager was a participant in the panel which provided mentoring sessions to the companies, to help them to build their business plan.

Administrative Update

- Regular administrative work updates were provided to the Economic Development Director and Niagara Development Corridor Partnership Inc. (NDCPi) CEO through bi-monthly meetings. Ongoing support and updates were given to Team Niagara representatives.
- The two year agreement between the Niagara Region and the NDCPi, to manage the day to day operations of the NFTZ, finished on December 31, 2019. Going forward the NFTZ will be administered through a position within Niagara Economic Development. A final report on metrics has been presented by NDCPi to Niagara Region Economic Development, as required by the agreement. It describes the successful leveraging of the NFTZ brand and the benefits to Niagara exporters, since its inception in 2017.

Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services (Incentives Review, research impact of Development Charges on economic development).

- Site Selection Support: A total of twenty-one site selection requests were received this quarter. This included leads directly related to the work done by the Manager of Trade and Investment, inbound inquiries through the Niagara Canada website, direct inquiries from private investors, and leads provided by the Consulate General.
- As part of a business development initiative NED has been working closely with an Ontario-based brownfield remediation consulting firm that is attempting to bring new products to market. They have identified Niagara as their first choice to establish a new manufacturing facility that would allow them to commercialize and manufacture their proprietary technology.
- Two Industrial Development Charge Grant applications were approved. This program has supported \$2.9 million in new investment and the creation of 30 jobs this quarter.
- Niagara Region has received one new application to the Niagara Gateway Economic Zone & Centre Community Improvement Plan. This has attracted an estimated \$8 million in new investment; upon project completion will create an estimated 51 to 74 new jobs.

As part of the on-going Regional incentive review and feedback provided to KPMG in respect to the on-going Sustainability Review, the Manager of Business Development and Expedited Services organized two inter-municipal meetings.

Employment Land Strategy: Identifying and Creating Regionally Significant Employment Lands

Existing employment lands in Niagara, which are located throughout the region, are generally smaller sites, which has limited the ability to create a truly regional employment area. Niagara Region Planning and Development, with support from Niagara Region Economic Development, is reviewing the opportunity to create a large provincially significant regional employment zone.

Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services (Support the Regional Employment Lands Study and act on recommendations, provide input into the Municipal Review /Official Plan, Site Finder, Premier Sites.)

- Collaborated with Niagara Region Planning and Development on the creation of a Niagara Employment Areas Strategy. This included one workshop with community and industry stakeholders and the revision of draft strategy materials.
- In collaboration with Niagara Planning and Development a joint event was held at White Oaks in Niagara on the Lake. This included community outreach regarding changes to policy surrounding employment areas as well as a Commercial and Industrial Real Estate update.
- In partnership with the City of Port Colborne and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, NED hosted a workshop to investigate efficiencies to reduce servicing timelines and costs. This focused on a Regional force main project and water and wastewater servicing for approximately 86 acres of un-serviced lands managed by the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Marketing Niagara Region: Raising the Profile of Niagara as a Place to Live and Do Business

The success of the Niagara Region, in terms of economic and population growth, is dependent on successfully marketing the region to target audiences. There are two distinct marketing initiatives. The first initiative is aimed at foreign and domestic companies and promotes Niagara as a competitive location in which to do business. The second initiative is focused on attracting new and recent immigrants to Ontario, to the region to increase the population and workforce and achieve long-term sustainable growth.

Manager, Trade and Investment (Identify Foreign Direct Investment (FDi) target markets and sectors, lead investment missions with partners, lead generation, organize and participate in inward missions.)

- The 4th Quarter was partially dedicated to continuing the process of adopting and compiling the last three year's FDI files in the new Index CRM system, utilizing the 'qualified leads' generated under the Trade & Investment platform as the "beta test" for the NED Team. In summary, this initial loading of active leads yielded the following data banks: 37 leads from the U.S. Great Lakes States; 47 leads from the United Kingdom; 45 leads from Europe; and, 23 leads from Mexico (the latter Mexican leads were generated by the Hamilton-Niagara Partnership; but the Manager, Trade and Investment, NED, was the only participant in the Mexican lead meetings on behalf of the Partnership), for a total of 152 working leads. By the close of Q4, this working qualified leads list had been reduced to 48 Active Follow-Up Leads. Q4 was dedicated to follow-up with these active leads; in addition to an ongoing 20 Qualified Lead Mission focused on the Great Lakes States. Note: U.S.-China trade tensions have impacted the delivery of this contract within the allotted time. As a result, the contract was extended into Q1, 2020.
- Also, in Q4, a Foreign Direct Investment Study was completed; and another one was launched. The first study, "A Comprehensive Review of Current Foreign Direct Investment Trends, as they impact Niagara Region", was completed to meet our expectations on December 20th. The second study, "An Investigation of Potential New U.S. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Markets – with Qualified Lead Generation", contract was awarded on December 20th 2019.

Manager, Strategic Marketing (Implementation of marketing plan to target audiences as a location for business and investment and to attract immigrants, Niagara Ambassador program, communications/PR campaign to promote Niagara's business and investment successes, implementation of a CRM system.)

Key Marketing Results

- Marketing plan on track for Q4 deliverables.
- Key results from fall advertising are strong, including:
 - Website traffic has doubled year-over-year, comparing the period from Oct 1 to Dec 15: 2019 traffic is 11,279 visits vs. 2018 traffic of 5,451 visits.
 - Contact Us form submissions from the website have also doubled during the same time period: 40 in 2019 vs. 21 in 2018.
 - Business inquiries and leads have tripled in the same time period: in an average month, we receive 5-7 organic inquiries or leads. With print and digital advertising we are averaging 20-25 per month.
 - Approximately 80 new subscribers have opted in to the Niagara Economic Development e-newsletter during this time period.

Marketing Projects

- Fall Advertising Campaign for business attraction, resident attraction and immigrant attraction launched at the end of Q3, with a large amount of activity executed in Q4, including:
 - Digital Marketing, including programmatic, social media advertising and Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising
 - Globe & Mail article, launched October 21
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/adv/article-for-growing-businesses-niagara-is-the-place-to-be/>
 - Toronto Life article, launched October 28
<https://torontolife.com/city/life/eleven-reasons-to-move-to-niagara/>
 - National Post article, launched November 4
<https://nationalpost.com/sponsored/life-sponsored/niagara-attracts-newcomers-with-social-supports-and-lower-cost-of-living>
 - National Post article, launched December 2
<https://business.financialpost.com/sponsored/business-sponsored/niagaras-secret-superpower-in-manufacturing>
 - Canadian Immigrant article, launched Nov 19
<https://canadianimmigrant.ca/living/niagara-a-welcoming-place-for-everyone>
 - Advertising in multicultural publications (Canadian Immigrant, Sing Tao, Latinos Magazine, CanIndia News) – October 3-November 15
- Additional advertising in Maclean's Magazine, Today's Parent, and the National Post will launch in January and February 2020.
- Website updates to niagaracanada.com, welcomeniagaracanada.com and liveinniagaracanada.com have been completed and launched in Q4
- Updated video for business attraction has been completed in Q4
- Updates to existing print and digital marketing collateral has been scoped and will be completed in Q1 of 2020.

Media & Thought Leadership

- Sponsorship of the CKTB 610 Business Trip from September 30 to December 13. This included daily promo reels and mentions of Niagara Economic Development, as well as speaking/interview opportunities for Economic Development and the Niagara Region on the following dates:
 - Blake Landry, Monday September 30 (manufacturing)
 - Valerie Kuhns, Friday October 4 (manufacturing)
 - Blake Landry, Monday October 7 (food and beverage processing)
 - Blake Landry, Monday October 28 (Niagara Economic Update)
 - Valerie Kuhns, Friday November 1 (Niagara Economic Summit)
 - Chair Jim Bradley, Friday November 1 (Niagara Economic Summit)
 - Blake Landry, Monday November 4 (agriculture)
 - Blake Landry, Monday November 11 (tourism)

- David Heyworth (Planning), Monday November 18 (environment & planning)
- Norman Kraft (Niagara Recycling), Wednesday November 20 (Region's recycling program and facility)
- Catherine Habermehl (Waste Management), Friday November 22 (waste management)
- Blake Landry, Monday December 2 (tech & innovation)
- Blake Landry, Monday December 9 (charitable sector & corporate responsibility)
- Ron Tripp, Friday December 13 (holiday food drive)
- Chair Jim Bradley, Friday December 13 (holiday food drive)

Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services

- Attended the 2019 Society of Industrial and Office Realtors' Broker of the Year Awards in Toronto on Tuesday, November 26.

Streamline Planning Processes: Expediting Approvals Process

Niagara Region has been proactive in supporting business growth and economic prosperity. Niagara Economic Development will continue to identify and reduce barriers to new private sector investment.

Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services (expedite approval processes working with the LAMs and Regional departments, host a workshop to identify and address barriers to industrial and commercial development.)

- Facilitated an in-person discussion between a property owner, the NPCA, and West Lincoln to understand environmental constraints and the ability to develop the property for agriculture and agriculture-related uses.
- Supporting Corporate Services to expedite the divesture process of 401A Lakeshore Road, St. Catharines, Ontario. This three parcel assembly is comprised of 18 acres of employment lands. NED is supporting Corporate Services to bring a report to Council in 2020 recommending the sale of the lands.

Increasing Niagara's Competitiveness: Addressing Unnecessary Regulatory Burdens on Business

Niagara Economic Development supports the Province's initiative to reduce the regulatory burden on business. In Niagara, development is regulated by a number of different bodies and complex policies. This has the effect of increasing the difficulty of manufacturers and agribusiness to do business that affects Niagara's competitiveness.

- Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services participated in a municipal workshop with Niagara Region Planning and local municipalities regarding changes to the Greater Golden Horse Show Growth Plan and the creation of Provincially Significant Employment Zones.
- In partnership with Planning and Development, NED responded to the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade's request for submissions to their Ontario Job Site Challenge. The purpose of the job site challenge was to assist the Province in identifying employment lands between 500 and 1,500 acres in size that would be promoted by the Province of Ontario in their Foreign Direct Investment initiatives.

Workforce: Meeting Current and Future Talent, Professional, Skilled Trades and Labour Needs

Access to a talented, professional, skilled and educated workforce is increasingly a concern for businesses and essential to ensure the continued growth of the regional economy.

Manager, Strategic Marketing (Promote Niagara as destination for skilled immigrants, working with the LIP)

- Welcome Niagara Canada website updates launched on October 1, with the immigration microsite being built out to increase accessibility and usability to newcomer audiences
- Advertising for resident and immigrant attraction, including sponsored content and digital advertising launched in Q4.
 - Digital Marketing, including programmatic, social media advertising and PPC advertising
 - Toronto Life article, launched October 28
<https://torontolife.com/city/life/eleven-reasons-to-move-to-niagara/>
 - National Post article, launched November 4
<https://nationalpost.com/sponsored/life-sponsored/niagara-attracts-newcomers-with-social-supports-and-lower-cost-of-living>
 - Canadian Immigrant article, launched Nov 19
<https://canadianimmigrant.ca/living/niagara-a-welcoming-place-for-everyone>
 - Advertising in multicultural publications (Canadian Immigrant, Sing Tao, Latinos Magazine, CanIndia News) – October 3-November 15
- Additional advertising in Today's Parent, and the National Post will launch in January and February 2020.
- Website traffic to the immigration site has increased almost 7-fold. Traffic from October 1 to December 15 was 7,060 in 2019 vs. 1,085 in 2018.

Advocacy: Improving Transportation Infrastructure Ensuring Niagara Remains Competitive in a Global Economy

Key infrastructure investments are required to increase Niagara's competitiveness and support business in the region as well as facilitate trade.

Meetings with the Niagara Region Government Stakeholder Relations Specialist to provide information as the Government Relations Strategy is developed.

Alternatives Reviewed

None applicable.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Economic development activities described in this report directly support three of Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Priorities:

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

Other Pertinent Reports

ED 1-2019 Economic Development Overview
ED 2-2019 Economic Development Strategy
ED 4-2019 Q1 Economic Development Quarterly Update Report
ED 8-2019 Q2 Economic Development Quarterly Update Report
ED 11-2019 Q3 Economic Development Quarterly Update Report

Prepared by:

Valerie Kuhns
Acting, Director
Economic Development

Submitted by:

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix 1: Niagara Economic Strategic Action Plan Report Card 2019

2019 has been an impressive year for the Niagara region in terms of the continued economic growth, new investments in Brock Linc, the Canada Summer 2021 Games, the recently announced Ryerson University and City of Niagara Falls Innovation Hub, and many more. Despite these successes it is imperative that the Niagara Region continue to take a proactive approach to supporting economic growth and attracting new investment to the region. With a forward looking agenda we will continue to report to Committee and Council on a quarterly basis in 2020 to ensure that our community stakeholders are informed of the actions and work being done by Niagara Economic Development.

Niagara Economic Development, in collaboration with local businesses, associations, community stakeholders, and post-secondary education institutions, has developed a five-year strategic action plan. The activities included below are based on strengths of the Niagara economy and addresses identified weaknesses, or gaps, that affect the region's competitiveness and ability to retain and attract investment. Most importantly, based on the extensive stakeholder engagement that was conducted throughout 2018 the result is that many of the activities reflect the input provided by the participants of the consultations. The success of Niagara Region Economic Development's Action Plan will only be achieved through meaningful partnerships and collaboration with our partners across Niagara.

Throughout the consultation process it became clear that no single department, government, association, institution, or business is capable of supporting the continued growth and success of the Niagara economy alone. It is with this in mind that the proposed Niagara Economic Strategic Action Plan has identified leaders and partners that will be necessary to enact this plan and support the continued economic growth of Niagara. This five-year plan provides a high-level overview and has been divided into seven target areas/goals based on the findings from the Stakeholder Consultation Plan:

- Economic Development: Supporting Business Growth and Diversification across Niagara Region
- Employment Land Strategy: Identifying and Creating a Provincially Significant Employment Zone
- Marketing Niagara Region: Raising the Profile of Niagara as a Place to Live and Do Business
- Streamline Planning Processes: Expediting Approvals Process
- Increase Niagara's Competitiveness: Addressing Unnecessary Regulatory Burdens on Businesses
- Workforce: Meeting Current and Future Talent, Professional, Skilled Trades and Labour Needs
- Advocacy: Improving Transportation Infrastructure Ensuring Niagara Remains Competitive in Global Economy

Each of the target areas will be operationalized through identified activities and associated timelines, activity leads, partners, and performance measures. Within the next five years Niagara Region Economic Development will undertake a long-term strategy review with a 20-year time

horizon. A successful Niagara Economic Strategic Action Plan will include increased job creation and retention; accelerated economic and greater competitiveness and prominence of the region through the action taken in associated with each of the seven target areas/goals.

The following Action Plan should be read using the following:

- **Time-Line:** The expected time horizon for the successful completion of the described economic development activity:
 - On-going: No assigned timeline
 - Short: One to two years (2019-2020)
 - Medium: Three to four years (2021-2022)
 - Long: Five plus years (2023+)
- **Activity:** The described activity to support regional economic development
- **Lead:** Identified organization(s), departments, or community stakeholder who will be responsible for the success of the Activity
- **Partners:** Identified organization(s), departments, or community stakeholder who will be necessary partners for the success of the Activity
- **Performance Measure:** How the success of the Activity will be measured

Economic Development: Supporting Business Growth and Diversification across Niagara Region

The Niagara region is home to a diverse economy that includes strong agri-business, manufacturing, and tourism sectors. The economic success of the region will be founded on supporting local businesses to grow and expand as well as attracting new businesses to the region. Niagara Region Economic Development is orientated towards facilitating inward investment, but has an important and critical role to support local economic development offices to facilitate growth within existing businesses.

GOAL: INCREASED BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
On-Going	Niagara Region Economic Development will support local municipalities in their economic development functions. This includes the services of the Niagara Foreign Trade Zone Manager to engage companies in federal programs to encourage export activity; economic and business research and analysis; expedited development services; and, support to communities without economic development officers on regionally significant projects.	Team Niagara	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development; Economic Development Officer; Manager, Economic Research and Analysis; Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services; NFTZ Manager.	Increased collaborative economic development activities between Niagara Region Economic Development and local economic development offices are achieved.
Throughout 2019, the Niagara Economic Development team has supported local municipalities by providing research and analysis; the services of the Foreign Trade Zone Manager to encourage local companies export activities; advice to municipalities without economic development offices; and expedited development services. In addition, Niagara Economic Development is responsible for external marketing and investment attraction. All of these activities have been reported quarterly to PEDC in reports ED 4-2019, ED 8-2019, ED 11-2019, and ED 1-2020.				
On-Going	Promote the Niagara Foreign Trade Zone programs through marketing activities and support the export diversification of existing Niagara manufacturing companies into new foreign markets.	Niagara Development Corridor Partnership Inc. (NDCPi) Niagara Region Economic Development:	Team Niagara NFTZ Task Force Local chambers of commerce Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade	Performance measures are outlined in the Niagara Foreign Trade Zone Strategy.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
		Niagara Foreign Trade Zone (NFTZ) Coordinator; Manager, Strategic Marketing		
<p>For the past year the Niagara Foreign Trade Zone has been actively involved in supporting the diversification of exports for existing Niagara manufacturers.</p> <p>The performance measure metrics achieved are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Numbers of serviced clients: 110 clients which is 26% of database of exporters. 2. Numbers of prospects: 230 companies representing 52% of database of exporters. 3. Outreach program: 8 meetings with International Trade Centres. 4. CBSA Duty Relief Programs: \$700,000 Duty Relief K90 Claims; \$358,000 Duty Drawback K32 Claims; \$380,000 Surtax Claims. 5. Inbound Missions: 3 inbound missions (Latvia, Czech Republic, and India). 6. Networking Events: 18 (including Innovate Niagara, Spark Niagara, TD Bank, BMO, and RBC). 7. Seminars held: 5 with a total of 62 companies and 81 participants (St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Niagara Region, Lincoln, and Welland). 				
Short	Engage the private sector as advisors to Niagara Region Economic Development through the Economic Development Working Group. Representation will include all sectors and major stakeholders.	Team Niagara Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development	Niagara Industrial Association Private sector businesses Brock University Niagara College	Regular Economic Development Working Group meetings to provide input into Niagara Region Economic Development initiatives.
<p>In 2019 the Province of Ontario announced that it would be conducting a Governance Review of Ontario's eight upper-tier municipalities; this included Niagara and the 12 lower-tier municipalities. The purpose of the review was to ensure that municipalities were working effectively and efficiently in relation to governance, decision-making, and service delivery. Due to the uncertainty created by the Governance Review, there were no meetings of the Economic Development Working Group throughout 2019. However, the group will be brought together again in 2020 to allow private sector stakeholders to provide input into the Niagara Region Economic Development initiatives, in particular the Long Term Strategy.</p>				
Short	Participate in a review of Niagara Region development charges, waivers, and other incentive programs.	Niagara Region Planning and Development Niagara ERMS	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services	Ensure Niagara Region has competitive development charges and incentives available for investors.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
<p>In 2018 Niagara Region began the process of conducting an internal review of existing grants and incentive programs; not including development charge grants. This resulted in the creation of an advisory committee made up of representatives from Planning and Development, Corporate Services, and Economic Development.</p> <p>Over the course of 2019, a number of meetings and workshops were held to discuss how best to initiate an internal review of Niagara Region's grant and incentive programs. This resulted in the identification of four target areas: affordable housing, brownfield remediation, employment, and public realm. The grant and incentive review will determine if the current suite of grants and incentives are meeting these goals, and if they are not, what changes need to be made. This process also included workshops with the local area municipalities to incorporate their participation into the Niagara Region's Grants and Incentives Review process.</p> <p>In January 2020, Niagara Region's Planning and Development Department will bring a report to the Planning and Economic Development Committee advising on the plan for consultation with the local area municipalities and the development of new grant and incentive policies and programs.</p>				
Medium	Conduct research into the impact of development charges on economic development with a focus on investment attraction, business expansion, and sector development.	Team Niagara Local municipal finance departments Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Economic Research and Analysis	Tourism stakeholders Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Niagara Region ERMS Niagara Region Planning and Development	Development Charge Impact Report is completed and circulated.
<p>The Niagara Region's Development Charge By-Law will expire in 2022. Corporate Services will be issuing an RFP in 2020 to retain the services of a consultant to conduct a new background study to support the creation of the Region's new Development Charge By-Law. This will require incorporating provincially mandated changes under Bill 108. The Development Charge Background Study will be done in tandem with a comparative analysis of Niagara Region to other municipalities and the efficacy of development charge incentives in business attraction, retention and expansion. This will ensure that the Region's by-laws, policies, and programs are positioned to effectively attract new investment to the region.</p>				
Medium	Define the role of Niagara Region Economic Development in tourism including research into new opportunities e.g. sports tourism.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development; Economic Development Officer	Team Niagara Tourism Sector Stakeholders	Tourism role defined and supported with appropriate resources.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
<p>The Tourism sector plays an important role in Niagara's economy and there is a robust network of stakeholders comprised of the Tourism Partnership of Niagara (RTO2), local Destination Marketing Organizations, Niagara Parks Commission, and others, currently supporting the sector. Report ED 7-2019 Brock University Centre for Sport Capacity on Sports Tourism was presented to PEDC in July and was referred back to the tourism stakeholders for feedback, with a report to PEDC. At the PEDC meeting on September 11th, Niagara Economic Development was also asked to provide a report on Niagara Region's role in the tourism sector including the identification of gaps in the current tourism sector support. Report ED 12-2019 Analysis of Niagara Region's Role in Tourism was presented to PEDC on November 6th. The recommendation was that the staff recommendation, to create a special event bid fund, be referred to the 2020 budget process and that the report be circulated for comment. Regional Council deferred the special event bid fund for consideration in the 2021 budget process. Comments from the Local Area Municipalities and tourism stakeholders on ED 12-2019 will be received until end of December 2019 with a report coming back to PEDC in early 2020.</p>				
Medium	Advance projects of regional significance, including but not limited to opportunities in new agricultural and manufacturing industries, and supply chain development opportunities to support business growth and retention.	Team Niagara	Niagara Region Economic Development: Economic Development Officer Agricultural producers Food processors Niagara Industrial Association Niagara College Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Local chambers of commerce Agriculture federations Niagara Region Agriculture Policy and Action Committee	Key projects are identified and necessary support provided.
<p>Throughout the year, Niagara Economic Development has been involved in a number of regionally significant projects, with other stakeholders, including: Divestiture of the Seaway lands; Regional Employment Lands study; Municipal Comprehensive Review; Economic Trade Corridor/National Trade Corridors Fund; Irrigation strategy; Promotion of skilled trades opportunities; Inter-regional transit; Incentives Review; Expansion of Go Train services, rural Broadband coverage etc. All are mentioned in more detail in other sections of the report card.</p>				
Medium	Support and coordinate facilitated stakeholder events to provide succession planning solutions for Niagara-based companies. For example, this could include identifying	Team Niagara Niagara Industrial Association Local chambers of commerce	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services	Succession planning strategies are promoted through stakeholders.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
	opportunities for the purchase of existing operations as a succession strategy.	Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Financial institutions with business advisory services		
Although the issue of succession planning is important for Niagara companies, no strategy has been developed to date. There have been informal discussions with other stakeholders who also have an interest, for example Niagara Industrial Association, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce. As this activity is aligned with the local EDO mandate, this will be brought to a Team Niagara meeting early in 2020 to determine next steps towards supporting a strategy.				
Long	Develop a joint aftercare program with local economic development offices to support new company investments in the region. This program will engage companies that have recently expanded into Niagara and their parent company to acknowledge their investment and the early identification of potential issues.	Team Niagara	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Trade and Investment; Economic Development Officer; Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services; NFTZ Coordinator	Aftercare program will be in place and functioning.
Providing on-going support to business that have chosen Niagara as the location for their investment is part of providing a high-level of customer service. It demonstrates that we are interested in not only attracting investment, but retaining those companies and helping them succeed. This is a long term objective and has not been addressed in 2019. Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by all 13 municipalities in 2012, it delineates economic development responsibilities between the Region and the LAMs. Company aftercare would be the responsibility of the local economic development offices. In 2020 Niagara Economic Development will identify if there are any gaps in aftercare provision that could be supported at the regional level.				
Long	Consult with sector stakeholders to explore the need for a formalized collaborative group to support and strengthen the nascent information technology sector in Niagara.	Innovate Niagara Spark Niagara Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Initiatives	Team Niagara Innovation and information technology sector stakeholders Niagara College Private sector partners, if needed Spark Niagara	Explore the need for additional support of the technology sector if required.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
	<p>In November 2019, Brock University's Niagara Community Observatory released, "Elusive Quest or Emerging Reality: Niagara's ICT Innovation Cluster", which took an in-depth look at Niagara's ICT sector. The report, based on research and analysis, demonstrated that Niagara's nascent ICT sector will require on-going support. It should not be considered a standalone sector, rather, it is a platform that will be foundational to every other sector of the region's 21st century economy. As a result, the report found a need for a clearer vision and a more strategic approach to investment in the region's ICT sector.</p> <p>For example, Ryerson University and Spark Niagara recently announced \$3 million in Federal funding for the development of a Ryerson University-Niagara Falls Innovation Hub that will be built in downtown Niagara Falls. This will create a new and unique space that will add to the entrepreneur ecosystem in Niagara. Niagara Economic Development will continue to work with local partners to ensure that Niagara's ICT sector receives the required on-going support.</p>			

Employment Land Strategy: Identifying a Creating Regionally Significant Employment Lands

Existing employment lands in Niagara are located throughout the region. The development of these lands has historically been aligned with the economic development initiatives of the individual municipalities with little regional involvement. This has resulted in a number of smaller employment areas that have limited the ability to create a truly regional employment area. Niagara Region Planning and Development, with support from Niagara Region Economic Development, is reviewing the opportunity to create a large provincially significant regional employment zone. This will allow Niagara region to be more competitive in its investment attraction initiatives, both foreign and domestic.

GOAL: SUPPORT THE AVAILABILITY OF SHOVEL READY INDUSTRIAL LAND IN NIAGARA FOR DEVELOPMENT

Time-line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
Long	Work with the St. Lawrence Seaway to identify and promote development opportunities for Transport Canada owned lands to attract investment in manufacturing, shipping, and distribution.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services	Transport Canada St. Lawrence Seaway Management Company Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority Niagara Region Planning and Development Niagara Region Public Works Team Niagara NFTZ Coordinator	Identify lands for development and estimate development costs.
<p>The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Company has been experiencing increased year-over-year traffic through the Seaway system that connects ports as far west as Duluth, Minnesota to the North Atlantic. The Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority has also been experiencing increased traffic. The result of the increased traffic and exports is the exploration of new development opportunities in the Niagara region that could result in new local economic growth.</p> <p>Niagara Economic Development has been involved in discussions and meetings with the City of Port Colborne and the St. Lawrence Seaway to identify opportunities that could expedited the servicing of City owned employment lands and a parcel of St. Lawrence Seaway managed lands. As part of an on-going Environmental Assessment to determine the best location to bring services under the canal Niagara Economic Development is ensuring an economic development perspective is incorporated to ensure that the servicing of employment lands is included.</p> <p>Niagara Economic Development has also had on-going meetings with the Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority as they are considering alternative solutions to the expansion their port facilities in Hamilton. This has included looking at locations in Niagara, along the Welland canal, where</p>				

Time-line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
additional port facilities could be located. This would create new job opportunities throughout the region and relieve pressure from the Hamilton facilities.				
Long	Niagara Economic Development will support the Regional Employment Lands Study and act on the recommendations that involve regional economic development.	Niagara Region Planning and Development	Niagara Region Economic Development: Managers, Strategic Initiatives and Business Development and Expedited Services Niagara Region Public Works Local Area Planning Departments Team Niagara	Employment Lands Study will be completed and finalized. Determine the feasibility of creating a Regionally owned provincially significant employment zone within the Niagara Economic Zone & Centre
In 2019 the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing made changes to the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan that directly impact the employment lands and employment areas. This update involved changes to employment lands, areas, and the creation of Provincially Significant Employment Zones. This announcement required Niagara Region's Planning and Development Department to reflect those changes in their on-going Employment Lands Study. Phase One is expected to be completed in early 2020 and allow for recommendations, such as the creation of a new potential employment area, to be incorporated into Phase Two. This will have a direct impact on the Niagara Region's new Official Plan.				
Long	Provide input into the Niagara Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (Official Plan) to ensure the economic development perspective is considered.	Niagara Region Planning and Development	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development; Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services; Economic Development Officer Team Niagara Local Planning Departments	Collaboration with Niagara Region Planning and Development Department and input into the Official Plan provided.
Niagara Economic Development and the Planning and Development Department have worked collaboratively throughout the Municipal Comprehensive Review process to ensure that any policy changes related to employment were through an economic development lens. Niagara Economic Development is participating in the review and implementation of the Regional Official Plan Act 16 – Employment Policies amendment to the current Official Plan. This will in turn inform the new Regional Plan that will be drafted in 2020-2021.				

Marketing Niagara Region: Raising the Profile of Niagara as a Place to Live and Do Business

The success of the Niagara region, in terms of economic and population growth, is dependent on successfully marketing the region to target audiences. Niagara Region Economic Development, through collaboration and partnership with local stakeholders, will manage two distinct marketing initiatives. One will be targeted at foreign and domestic companies that are looking to expand their operations with the goal of raising the profile of the Niagara region as a competitive place to do business. The second will be predicated on the successful attraction of new residents to the region to increase the population for the long-term sustainable growth of the Niagara region. In collaboration with other community stakeholders Niagara Region Economic Development will work towards attracting new and recent immigrants to Ontario as well as families that are looking for an alternative to the lifestyle available to them in the Greater Toronto Area.

GOAL: MARKET NIAGARA TO ATTRACT NEW BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND RESIDENTS

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measures
On-Going	Identify target markets for investment attraction activities in designated sectors and geographies. This includes leading investment missions, qualified lead generation initiatives, and participating in trade shows and events.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development; Manager, Trade and Investment Team Niagara	Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Niagara Development Corridor Partnership	KPIs in Manager, Trade and Investment work plan achieved including qualified lead generation, trade missions, and trade shows.
Investment attraction activities in 2019 have been focused on the U.S., U.K. and Europe within the target sectors of manufacturing and agribusiness. Investment missions have included participation by economic development officers from the LAMs (in U.S. missions) and have resulted in 152 working leads which by the end of 2019 were converted to 48 active follow up leads. All of these are captured in the CRM. Global events are having a major influence on Foreign Direct Investment (FDi) activity including the uncertainty over BREXIT and the U.S. tariff war with China. A study to review FDi trends as they relate to Ontario and Niagara was completed in December 2019 and will inform the 2020 FDi work plan. A second study to look specifically at potential new U.S. markets was started in December 2019 and will also inform the 2020 work plan. Quarterly Team Niagara meetings have included updates on the FDi work plan throughout the year.				
On-Going	Conduct targeted marketing activities to promote Niagara as a location for business investment.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Managers, Strategic Marketing and Trade and Investment	Team Niagara	Marketing plan developed with the associated KPIs achieved.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measures
An annual marketing review of past results, and an annual marketing plan have been developed on an ongoing basis. In the annual marketing plan, targeted activities include a mix of media relations, digital advertising, social media advertising, print advertising, content marketing, and sponsorships.				
Short	Coordinate with stakeholders to develop a communications and public relations campaign to promote Niagara's business and investment successes.	Team Niagara Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Marketing	Niagara Region Strategic Communications and Public Affairs Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Economic Development Working Group Niagara College Local chambers of commerce	Communications Plan developed and implemented.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2019 Fall Marketing Campaign was specifically focused on highlighting business and partner success stories, as supporting reasons for why businesses in the GTA should invest in Niagara. Four articles were developed for the Financial Post/National Post, Globe & Mail, and Maclean's Magazine focused on agri-business, manufacturing, the startup/innovation sector, and investment advantages in Niagara. Partners and businesses included or profiled in these articles include: Niagara College, Vineland Research, Brock University, Steelcon Fabrication, Colliers International Niagara, Peninsula Plastics, Niagara Industrial Association, Caddle, Innovate Niagara and Spark Niagara. Additional articles for resident and immigrant attraction were developed for the National Post, Toronto Life, Canadian Immigrant Magazine, and Today's Parent, as well as supplementary digital marketing and social media marketing. The CKTB 610 Business Trip was sponsored to highlight the interesting and innovative business stories in Niagara, to drive more awareness of business activity locally. Interim marketing results demonstrate doubling of website traffic year-over-year, and tripling of business investment inquiries and leads compared to a similar time period last year. 				
Short	Develop and implement a Niagara Ambassadors program with local business leaders from different sectors to promote the region and meet potential investors in Niagara.	Team Niagara Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager of Strategic Marketing, Manager, Trade and Investment; NFTZ Coordinator	Economic Development Working Group Local chambers of commerce Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Niagara-based businesses	Ambassadors identified and engaged in both inbound and outbound investment attraction activities.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measures
	The Niagara Ambassador Program was launched in May to positive local reception. There are currently 46 ambassadors: 40 are digital ambassadors, and 24 have opted in to be business ambassadors. Regular digital communications are distributed to the Ambassador group to promote the region, and individual business ambassadors have been engaged to be profiled in marketing initiatives and to attend business delegations held in Niagara.			

Streamline Planning Processes: Expediting Approvals Process

Under the direction of Niagara Regional Council, Niagara Region has been proactive in supporting business growth and economic prosperity. Over the next five years, Niagara Region Economic Development will continue to identify and reduce barriers to new private sector investment. This will be accomplished by ensuring that the Niagara Region and local area municipalities have competitive and complementary permit approval processes. Niagara Region Economic Development with local area municipalities will proactively engage the private sector to have a customer-first approach to business development and investment in Niagara.

GOAL: ENSURE THAT NIAGARA REMAINS PRO-DEVELOPMENT AND BECOMES A DESTINATION OF CHOICE FOR FUTURE INVESTMENT

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
On-Going	Engage and work with Regional and local area planning staff on industrial and commercial projects. This could include identifying opportunities for closer collaboration with local municipal partners to ensure timely approval processes.	Team Niagara Niagara Region Planning and Development	Local planning and building departments Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services	Increased investor awareness regarding permit and development timelines.
<p>In November 2019, the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade announced the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund that will provide grants and loans to businesses and support to economic development initiatives. The first round of program intake for this new program will be in January 2020. To ensure that the Niagara region is positioned to take advantage of this new provincial funding a workshop with the Senior Business Advisor for Niagara from the Ministry was organized with representatives from the local area municipalities. This ensures that any applications to the program will be coordinated and adhere to the requirements outlined by the Province.</p> <p>In 2019 Niagara Region's Planning and Development Department, in conjunction with the 12 Local Area Municipalities, agreed to an updated Memorandum of Understanding that confirms that roles and responsibilities of the Niagara Region and the Local Area Municipalities. Key changes to the MOU included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a model that demonstrates how planning services are appropriately resourced and structured; • Deliver timely, accurate, effective, and customers-focused planning services; • Pursue improvements that achieve good planning, streamlining, predictability, and consistency; • Eliminate unnecessary duplication to maximize existing resource, technical expertise, and support departmental coordination. 				
On-Going	Host a facilitated workshop with businesses and stakeholders to identify	Team Niagara	Niagara Region planning and development	Meeting scheduled with development

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measure
	and address barriers to industrial and commercial development.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Business Development and Expedited Services	Local planning and building departments Commercial and industrial realtors Industrial, commercial, and institutional construction companies	stakeholders to ensure open communication. Barriers and challenges addressed on an on-going basis.
<p>Niagara Economic Development, in collaboration with Niagara Region Planning and Development Department, coordinated a workshop for commercial and industrial realtors and developers. The workshop focused on providing an update on recent regional policies and initiatives that had been undertaken to address identified barriers to commercial and industrial development. It was also an opportunity for the private sector to provide feedback to the Niagara Region. The majority of the feedback provided focused on changes to the Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan and the impact that the new Glendale District Plan will have on future development opportunities.</p> <p>It is important to note that the Greater Toronto industrial real estate market is currently experiencing unprecedentedly low vacancy rates. Some commercial and industrial brokers believe the Toronto market's industrial vacancy rate could be as low as 0.2%. This has led to companies looking outside of the GTA for new opportunities to either lease or build new employment space. The majority of employers, however, are not looking for owner operated and properties. This has created an opportunity for developers to build new industrial buildings to meet a growing demand for businesses that are looking to lease space. This is a great opportunity for the Niagara region to accommodate businesses that considering locating outside of the GTA, but require to be in close proximity to that market.</p>				

Increasing Niagara's Competitiveness: Addressing Unnecessary Regulatory Burdens on Businesses

Niagara Region Economic Development supports the Province's initiative to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses across Ontario. Development in Niagara is regulated by a number of different polices and bodies including, but not limited to, the Green Belt, Niagara Escarpment, Provincial Policy Statement (Provincially Significant Wetlands), Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Niagara Escarpment Commission, and provincial ministries. This complex regulatory environment has the effect of increasing the difficulty of doing business and affecting Niagara's economic development competitiveness. Niagara Region Economic Development will work with local community stakeholders to address concerns regarding the existing regulatory environment and advocate for necessary changes that are aligned with Niagara Region's pro economic development agenda, while ensuring that Niagara's unique environmental landscapes are recognized economic assets and protected.

GOAL: REDUCE REGULATORY BURDEN ON BUSINESSES IN NIAGARA

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measures
On-Going	Support advocacy initiatives to the federal government for the Niagara region to receive the Economic Trade Corridor designation and infrastructure funding through the National Trade Corridors Fund.	The Offices of the Regional Chair and CAO Local Mayors	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager Strategic Initiatives; NFTZ Coordinator Niagara Region Planning and Development Niagara Region Public Works Local Members of Parliament Local chambers of commerce	Application submitted and infrastructure funding awarded from the National Trade Corridors Fund and the Economic Trade Corridor designation.
In collaboration with Public Works, Niagara Economic Development, assisted in the development of a second Expression of Interest to the National Trade Corridors Fund, with support from MP Vance Badawey's office. Research on trade activity, including exports and imports, conducted by Niagara Economic Development helps to build the case for Niagara to receive the Economic Trade Corridor federal designation and have an Expression of Interest accepted to get to the full application phase of the National Trade Corridors Fund. All of this work would be in support of the start of the construction of the East West Corridor. Niagara Economic Development is a partner in a project with Transport Canada and the McMaster Institute for Transportation and Logistics, 'Exploring Goods Movement and Export Diversification for Niagara Region Firms' to understand issues faced by exporters in Niagara. This study will be completed early in 2020 and initial results support the need for increased infrastructure to support the flow of goods across the border.				
Medium	Support the work of agricultural stakeholders to find solutions to on-going irrigation issues.	Agriculture sector stakeholders	Team Niagara	Identify resources to implement the irrigation strategy.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partners	Performance Measures
			Niagara Region Economic Development: Economic Development Officer Niagara Region Planning and Development APAC	
<p>In 2017, an Irrigation Strategy was funded in part by the Niagara Region in partnership with agriculture stakeholders to address the issue of access to irrigation water for St. Catharines, Lincoln, and Niagara-On-The-Lake farmers as a pilot program. The Irrigation Strategy was completed and circulated to partnering parties, but the action items were never advanced on due to lack of funding and a single point of contact responsible for advancing them. An application was made in 2018 to the EcoAction Plan program for an Irrigation Ambassador position, but the application was not chosen for funding.</p> <p>In partnership with the Planning Department, funding of \$32,000 was provided by the Niagara Region to the Ontario Tender Fruit Growers to revive the commitment from these pilot municipalities to advance the Irrigation Strategy. The Town of Lincoln, the City of St. Catharines, the Town of Niagara-On-the-Lake, and others have all contributed funds and support to create a 12 month-contract Irrigation Ambassador position meant to advance on a number of action items from the Irrigation Strategy 2017. The position was posted in Fall 2019 and will be awarded in early 2020. The position will work out of the Ontario Tender Fruit Growers office and will be accountable to an Irrigation Steering Committee representative of the funding organizations.</p>				
Long	Support regional advocacy initiatives to advance land use planning policies that support agriculture uses and business development opportunities where appropriate.	Niagara Region Planning and Development	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director of Economic Development Local area municipalities Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Niagara Escarpment Commission Agriculture sector stakeholders	Advocacy plan developed and implemented.
<p>The Niagara Region recently provided a response to the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade's request for information on their "Job Site Challenge" initiative. This provided the Niagara Region with the opportunity to provide direct feedback to the Province regarding its policies surrounding employment lands and the unique assets, but also challenges that face Niagara region in being competitive in attracting new investments that would require large investments that were aligned with the Province's initiative.</p>				

Workforce: Meeting Current and Future Talent, Professional, and Skill Trades and Labour Needs

Access to a talented, professional, skilled, and educated workforce is increasingly a top concern for businesses and essential to ensure the continued growth of the regional economy. The proximity of the Niagara region to significant national and global economic drivers makes the region both attractive to new investment as well and new opportunities build, attract, and retain a talented and skilled workforce within Niagara. Correspondingly, the existing job skills gap is not isolated to Niagara, but affecting communities across Canada. This challenge has been raised not only by local businesses looking to recruit new workers, but also companies looking to expand into Niagara. Finding a solution to this issue will require efforts and action from all levels of government, educational stakeholders, and employers themselves. Niagara Region Economic Development will work with local partners to create a solution that address the challenges directly related to Niagara's workforce. Additionally, developments in other jurisdictions have shown the importance of ensuring that the local workforce has the on-going training and professional development not only for today's jobs, but for the jobs of the future.

GOAL: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESS SKILL GAPS THAT ARE AFFECTING TALENT RECRUITMENT

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
Short	Niagara Region Economic Development to partner with the Local Immigration Partnership to promote Niagara as a destination for skilled immigrants.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Marketing	Local Immigration Partnership Niagara College Niagara Workforce Planning Board Niagara Folks Arts Festival Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Welland Heritage Council (?)	Marketing plan will be developed with associated KPIs achieved.
<p>Niagara Region Economic Development to partner with the Local Immigration Partnership to promote Niagara as a destination for skilled immigrants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development and the Local Immigration Partnership have partnered to update the immigrant attraction website, specifically to increase accessibility and usability to newcomer audiences. Focus groups were conducted in partnership with the Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre in Q1 2019, and website updates planned and executed in Q2 and Q3. Advertising for resident and immigrant attraction, including sponsored content and digital advertising were planned in Q3 and launched in Q4. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Marketing, including programmatic, social media advertising and Pay Per Click advertising Toronto Life article, launched October 28 https://torontolife.com/city/life/eleven-reasons-to-move-to-niagara/ 				

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Post article, launched November 4 https://nationalpost.com/sponsored/life-sponsored/niagara-attracts-newcomers-with-social-supports-and-lower-cost-of-living ○ Canadian Immigrant article, launched Nov 19 https://canadianimmigrant.ca/living/niagara-a-welcoming-place-for-everyone ○ Advertising in multicultural publications (Canadian Immigrant, Sing Tao, Latinos Magazine, CanIndia News) – October 3- November 15 • Additional advertising in Today's Parent, and the National Post will launch in January and February 2020. • Website traffic to the immigration site has increased almost 7-fold. Traffic from October 1 to December 15 was 7,060 in 2019 vs. 1,085 in 2018. <p>Economic Development sits on the LIP Regional Council, as well as the Community and Inclusivity Working Group which is also led by the LIP, and works in partnership with local community partners like the Niagara Workforce Planning Board, Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre, Fort Erie Multicultural Centre, and others to advance immigrant attraction and inclusivity in the Niagara region.</p>			
Medium	Develop an educational campaign aimed at parents and students to promote skilled trade occupations in collaboration with other stakeholders.	Niagara Workforce Planning Board Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Marketing	Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Niagara College Local boards of education Team Niagara Local chambers of commerce	Educational campaign developed and promoted.
	<p>Educational campaigns are being developed at different levels of government, industry associations and school boards. All have the same objective to promote skilled trade occupations. In 2019 both the federal and provincial governments set up advisory boards to look at this issue. Locally, the Niagara Industrial Association is reaching out to high schools via its members to recruit apprentices directly, with some success. The Niagara Workforce Planning Board, in collaboration with Niagara College, is partnering with local school boards to bring in panel members from industry to speak to students and their parents.</p>			
Long	Facilitate the development of stakeholder partnerships to meet current and future talent, professional, skilled trades, and labour needs through collaboration with Brock University and Niagara College.	Niagara Workforce Planning Board Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Initiatives	Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Brock University Niagara College Team Niagara Local Boards of Education Local Chambers of Commerce	Alignment of stakeholder strategies to develop a work-ready labour force.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
The availability of a skilled workforce is a priority for a number of stakeholders in Niagara. Each organization or company is addressing this issue as part of their strategic plan. At the moment these strategies are not formally aligned, although there is collaboration between the various stakeholders. As a Long Term Economic Development Strategy will be developed in 2020, in partnership with stakeholders, there will be an opportunity to bring the strategies together and strengthen the work to develop a skilled workforce for Niagara.				
Medium	Support the capacity for increased innovation, science, and technology transfer between post-sector educational institutions and Niagara-based businesses to increase their competitiveness.	Brock University Niagara College Niagara Industrial Association Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Initiatives	Team Niagara Niagara Workforce Planning Board Local board of education Local chambers of commerce MEDJCT	Alignment of research and academic programming to support regional economic development, including ongoing training, professional development for individuals participating in the workforce across the region.
<p>Brock University announced in 2019 the official launch of BrockLinc, which will provide local industry, entrepreneurs, and community members access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to participate in hard and soft skill development through experiential learning. • General business and skills development through resources of the Goodman Group, Innovate Niagara, and other community resources • The implementation of a curricular/co-curricular program that will allow for life-long learning opportunities <p>Niagara College is also home to the Walker Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation Centre and the Canadian Food and Wine Institute. These two institutes are mandated to work with small businesses to assist companies adopt new technologies and adopt “lean” production best practices. Niagara College is actively investigating opportunities to identify where increases increase competitiveness can be achieved via technological adoption and increased productivity.</p> <p>Staff from Niagara Economic Development sit on the advisory boards for the Walker Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation Centre and the Canadian Food and Wine Institute to ensure that economic development remains at the forefront of these two institutions.</p>				

Advocacy: Improving Transportation Infrastructure Ensuring Niagara Remains Competitive in Global Economy

The Niagara region is strategically located on one of the key transportation corridors into the eastern United States. This provides businesses the opportunity to move goods in and out of the region, which is fundamental to their success. To further leverage our geographic advantage it is critical that transportation infrastructure can support increased trade with the United States. This requires key investments, in partnership with the federal and provincial governments, in regional infrastructure to increase Niagara's competitiveness and attractiveness to new businesses.

In 2019 there were a number of new initiatives that were focused on improving Niagara's transportation and other supporting infrastructure that is seen as critical to supporting the business and economic growth. This ranged from Federal transportation corridor funding applications, increased support for public transportation, and continued investment in broadband infrastructure just to name a few. These are all areas that are critical not only to economic growth, but the sustainability of Niagara as a whole.

GOAL: IMPROVE NIAGARA'S TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
On-Going	Support advocacy efforts to the provincial government for funding of the East/West Corridor highway.	The Offices of the Regional Chair and CAO Niagara Region Public Works Niagara Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Initiatives	Niagara Region Planning and Development NFTZ Coordinator Local area municipalities City of Hamilton Regional MPs/MPPs	Solid business case established and presented to the provincial government.
On-going conversations are taking place with Vance Badaway, MP's office regarding Niagara region as an Economic Trade Corridor. The Niagara Region is looking forward to another submission opportunity to the National Trade Corridors Fund. After the last Expression of Interest submission, the Niagara Region participated in a debriefing with the Federal Government. Going forward Niagara Economic Development will work with the Government Relations Specialist and their strategy. This will include engaging the Provincial government; the Local Area Municipalities, and building the relationship with the City of Hamilton to demonstrate a start to finish partnership for the East West Corridor.				
Short	Support advocacy efforts for the development of a fully integrated intra-regional transit system with schedules that support employment.	Niagara Region Public Works	Niagara Region Planning and Development Niagara Region Economic Development: Director of Economic Development	Regional transit system developed.

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
			Local area municipalities Local chambers of commerce Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Brock University Niagara College Tourism stakeholders Niagara Workforce Planning Board	
The 2020 budget provides funding for a pilot project to provide on-demand transit in West Niagara providing connections into existing transit services in Niagara ultimately allowing for intra-regional travel throughout the entire region. There is also a governance study in progress that will review governance models and recommend a preferred model for Niagara Region going forward to ensure full integration of transit in Niagara.				
Medium	Ensure access to broadband is available to all areas in Niagara, both urban and rural.	SWIFT NRBN The Office of the Regional Chair and CAO Appointed Regional Councilor	Niagara Region Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Initiatives Niagara Region IT Local area municipalities Agriculture sector stakeholders	Progress in achieving regional broadband coverage for Niagara.
<p>The Niagara Region is providing on-going investments in IT infrastructure that will help address the needs of residents and businesses in rural Niagara. Currently, 54% of Niagara's population lack access to reliable and affordable broadband service. The Niagara Region is incentivizing the construction of fiber and other digital infrastructure in areas that will not be immediately served by the private sector therefore trying to serve the widest area possible. Agribusinesses that are primarily located outside of Niagara's urban areas are continuously adding new technologies to their operations. Increasingly, rural businesses require broadband internet access in order to compete in a global market place.</p> <p>Niagara Region's IT department has been actively involved with Southwestern Integrated Fiber Technology (SWIFT) to address the lack of broadband internet access in rural Niagara. In 2019 SWIFT began the Request For Proposal that will release upwards of \$180 million in Federal funding to build out high-speed internet infrastructure in underserved Southwestern Ontario regions. It is expected that Niagara Region and community partners like the Niagara Region Broadband Network (NRBN) will be able to access this funding in late 2020. This should result in the rapid roll-out of new IT infrastructure beginning in 2021.</p>				

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
NRBN has applied to the Connect to Innovate Federal program that will invest \$500 million to bring high speed internet to rural communities across Canada. The Niagara Region has committed \$1.4 million, and should NRBN's application be successful, will be used.				
Medium	Support the creation of a business case for expanded services in Niagara with Metrolinx.	GO Implementation Team Metrolinx	Niagara Economic Development: Manager, Strategic Initiatives Tourism Stakeholders	Maintain on-going support.
In November 2019 Metrolinx released an updated Initial Business Case for the Niagara Expansion project with a recommended service option. The Niagara Expansion project will now proceed to a Preliminary Design Business Case to refine costs and scope of the proposed service option. Work with Metrolinx continues with respect to service expansion. Niagara Economic Development is a member of the GO Implementation Team.				
Long	Support expanded economic opportunities at municipally owned airports.	Niagara Region Planning and Development Niagara Region Public Works: Director of Transportation Niagara Region Economic Development: Director; Economic Development Officer	Niagara District Airport Niagara Central Airport Local area municipalities Tourism stakeholders Team Niagara	Maintain on-going support to the Airport Strategic Plan.
In July 2019 the Niagara Airports Feasibility and Future Business Modelling Study RFP was awarded to HM Aero by Niagara Economic Development. In December an internal and external presentation was made on the draft report to get stakeholders' feedback. The final report is due to be presented to Regional Council in February 2020. This report identifies potential business opportunities for the Niagara District Airport and the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport. It does not address potential governance models or potential transition planning to the Region. It will be used, in conjunction with other reports, to inform Regional Council as they consider ownership of the airports in 2020.				
Long	Research the feasibility for public-private partnerships to extend natural gas into rural areas of Niagara.	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development; Manager, Research and Analysis	Private-sector natural gas providers Team Niagara Local area municipalities Niagara Region Public Works Niagara Region Planning and Development Federations of Agriculture	Completed feasibility report.
The Province of Ontario is currently focused on increasing broad band internet access to rural and northern communities across the province. As a result, the desire to extend natural gas servicing areas into non-urban areas is not a priority. It would therefore be a better use of Niagara				

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
Economic Development's resources and time to focus on the areas that are aligned with the Province. At this time, however, we need more information about the rural areas that are most in need of servicing and what Enbridge, and other natural gas providers, business plans are for the near future.				
Long	Support advocacy efforts to the provincial government for lower electricity costs to regain the manufacturing sector's competitiveness in southern Ontario.	The Office of the Regional Chair and CAO Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development	Team Niagara Local offices of Niagara's Members of Provincial Parliament Local chambers of commerce Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Large scale users of electricity	Provide business case research to support advocacy efforts.
In 2019, the Niagara Industrial Association contracted with Armstrong Strategy to provide a response to the Province about high electricity pricing. This is an issue for large hydro users. Niagara has lower transmission costs due to our proximity to the source but still pays the same prices as the rest of the province. Our direct competitors in the New York State have lower hydro costs which give their manufacturers a competitive advantage.				
Long	Support the Region's advocacy efforts to develop a provincially funded campaign to promote skilled trades and labour and the available careers in manufacturing and other sectors to parents and students to ensure positions are filled.	The Office of the Regional Chair and CAO Niagara Economic Development: Director of Economic Development; Manager Strategic Initiatives	Team Niagara Niagara Industrial Association Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade Niagara College Brock University Local chambers of commerce Niagara Workforce Planning Board	Provincial campaign in place with results.
Both the Federal and Provincial governments are starting to address the need to educate parents and students about careers in skilled trades. In 2019 the Federal government has set up an industry advisory committee to lay the groundwork for a national campaign to encourage apprenticeships and promote the skilled trades as a career of choice. The Province has recently appointed two Training and Skills Advisors to consult with industry and stakeholders on modernizing the skilled trades and apprenticeship system. Locally, the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities has set up the Niagara Strategic Engagement Apprenticeship Team to support the growth of apprenticeships locally.				
Niagara Economic Development and the Niagara Industrial Association recognize the importance of encouraging youth to enter the skilled trades. Niagara Economic Development will continue to work with community stakeholders and educational institutions to ensure that skilled trades and other opportunities in the manufacturing sector are recognized as viable careers.				

Time-Line	Activity	Lead	Partner(s)	Performance Measure
Long	Collaborate with and support key stakeholders to determine the feasibility of a Niagara port facility.	Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority St. Lawrence Seaway Management Company	Niagara Region Economic Development: Director, Economic Development; Manager, Strategic Initiatives; Manager, Trade & Investment Team Niagara Transport Canada	Feasibility study completed.
<p>Niagara Economic Development is actively involved in on-going conversation with both the Hamilton Oshawa Port Authority and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Company on the possibility of new investment and the creation of port facilities in the Niagara region. There have already been significant investments in 2018 and 2019 at the Port Weller Dry Docks by Heddle Marine and the St. Lawrence Seaway. These investments will enhance Port Weller's ability to expand its operational capacity beyond its current capacity. In a presentation to both Planning and Economic Development Committee and Regional Council Heddle Marine outlined its proposal to become Canada's third official shipyard in a National shipbuilding Strategy. Heddle Marine had requested a Letter of Support from the Niagara Region, which Niagara Economic Development was in complete and full support.</p>				

MEMORANDUM

ED-C 1-2020

Subject: Tourism Stakeholder Consultation

Date: January 15, 2020

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee

From: Valerie Kuhns, Acting Director, Economic Development

The purpose of this memo is to update Planning and Economic Development Committee on the request made at the November 6, 2019 meeting related to report ED 12-2019.

At the Committee meeting, Economic Development staff presented Report ED 12-2019 - Analysis of Niagara Region's Role in Tourism. Following the presentation, staff were directed to circulate the report the tourism stakeholders for comment.

The list of stakeholders consulted included the Tourism Partnership of Niagara, representatives from the 5 Destination Marketing Organizations in Niagara, the Niagara Park Commission, and all local area municipalities.

The Clerk's department circulated this report to stakeholders for comment with a deadline of providing comments back to the Economic Development Officer of Friday, December 20, 2019.

The feedback received from the stakeholders includes the attached letter co-written by the Chair of Niagara Parks Commission, Sandie Bellows, and the CEO of the Niagara Parks Commission, David Adames (Attached as Appendix 1).

No other comments were received from the remaining stakeholders that were consulted.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Valerie Kuhns
Acting Director, Economic Development



December 12, 2019

Jim Bradley, Regional Chair
Region of Niagara
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

RE: Niagara Region's Role in Tourism Report ED 12-2019

Dear Regional Chair:

Niagara Parks would like to thank you and Regional Council for forwarding Report ED 12-2019, Niagara Region's Role in Tourism. The Niagara Parks' Board of Commissioners received a copy of the Report at its meeting of December 12, 2019 and appreciates the opportunity to provide comment.

As you and your colleagues know, Niagara Parks is proud to work with stakeholders like the Region to support and grow tourism in Niagara and very much views collaboration as important to continuing to position Niagara as the leader in tourism in Canada. We concur with the Region that it does have a very important role to play in tourism and that tourism, as a key economic sector and driver for Niagara, must be part of the Region's Economic Development Strategy. As we have previously presented to Regional Council, Niagara Parks' most recent economic impact study shows that our contribution and impact to tourism includes the following:

- Niagara Parks employs over 1,800 staff in high season
- Niagara Parks welcomes over 3.8 million unique visitors
- Economic impact from visitors' spending contributes:
 - Over \$1 billion to GDP
 - 15,900 jobs
 - \$458 million in tax revenue to three levels of government



In terms of Report ED 12-2019, Niagara Parks offers the following comments:

- **Transportation:** For any key tourism destination, transportation, and the access that different modes of transportation provides, is essential to supporting tourism growth. Enhancing transportation options in Niagara will provide more opportunities for both tourists and local residents to explore and take advantage of the rich tourism offerings across the region. It is important to support the four international border crossings into Niagara; the Metrolinx service; intra-regional transit; state of good repair for highways; cycling lanes on regional roads and cycling paths/routes; and future growth of Niagara District Airport, supporting the potential of water access across Lake Ontario to Toronto and encouraging the re-activation of VIA Rail service to Niagara. Niagara Parks has been working with Metrolinx over the past three years on a promotional partnership supporting the weekend tourism train service to Niagara and will continue this relationship, including providing WEGO transit connection to the train station in conjunction with the City of Niagara Falls. Niagara Parks is developing a cycling strategy and will continue to partner with key cycling organizations to support this growing market segment.
- **Wayfinding Signage:** Niagara Parks would like to work with the Region on the development of a wayfinding plan. Over the past year, Niagara Parks has been implementing our wayfinding plan along the 56km Niagara River corridor and will be finishing the final phases over the course of 2020 and 2021.
- **Economic Development Strategy:** Niagara Parks will continue to work with the Region, City of Niagara Falls and Metrolinx on extending the service into Niagara, to ensure a seamless connection for visitors.
- **Facilitation and Coordination/Planning and Policy:** Niagara Parks is a proud supporter of the Niagara 2021 Canada Summer Games and is looking forward to hosting golf at Legends on the Niagara as well as the closing ceremonies at Queen Victoria Park. From an investment attraction perspective, Niagara Parks is moving forward



with key tourism product development and investment, including the Niagara Parks Marina at Miller's Creek and the adaptive re-use of the de-commissioned hydro-electric power plants located within Queen Victoria Park. These projects are intended to attract significant investment and Niagara Parks welcomes the support of the Region in advancing these important projects.

- Special Event Bid Fund: Sport tourism, already a key part of the tourism industry in Niagara, could be strengthened significantly through the legacy of hosting the Niagara 2021 Canada Summer Games. Niagara Parks would be pleased to support the Region's efforts to bid and host future national and international sport events.

Please contact me at your convenience to discuss this correspondence should you have any questions. We look forward to working with you and staff on advancing tourism for the benefit of Niagara.

Sincerely,

David Adames
Chief Executive Officer

Sandie Bellows
Chair

- c. Niagara Parks Commissioners
Mark Evely, Legislative Coordinator, Office of the Regional Clerk
Kelly Provost, Economic Development Officer, Region of Niagara