

Natural Environment Work Program – Phase 4: Identification and Evaluation of Options

Planning and Economic Development Committee
PDS 26-2020

July 15, 2020

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**July 15, 2020 – Presentation to Planning and Economic
Development Committee**



Project Overview – Natural Environment

Project Phase	Activities
1	Project Initiation and Procurement
2	Background Study and Discussion Papers for Mapping and Watershed Planning Priority Areas
3	1 st Point of Engagement: Inform on Background Study
4	Develop and Evaluate Options for Natural System(s)
5	2 nd Point of Engagement: Consultation on Options for the Natural System(s)
6	Develop Regional Natural System(s)
7	Develop OP Policies & Finalize Mapping
8	3 rd Point of Engagement: Draft OP Policies and Schedules
9	Other Implementation Tools



Overview of Phase 4

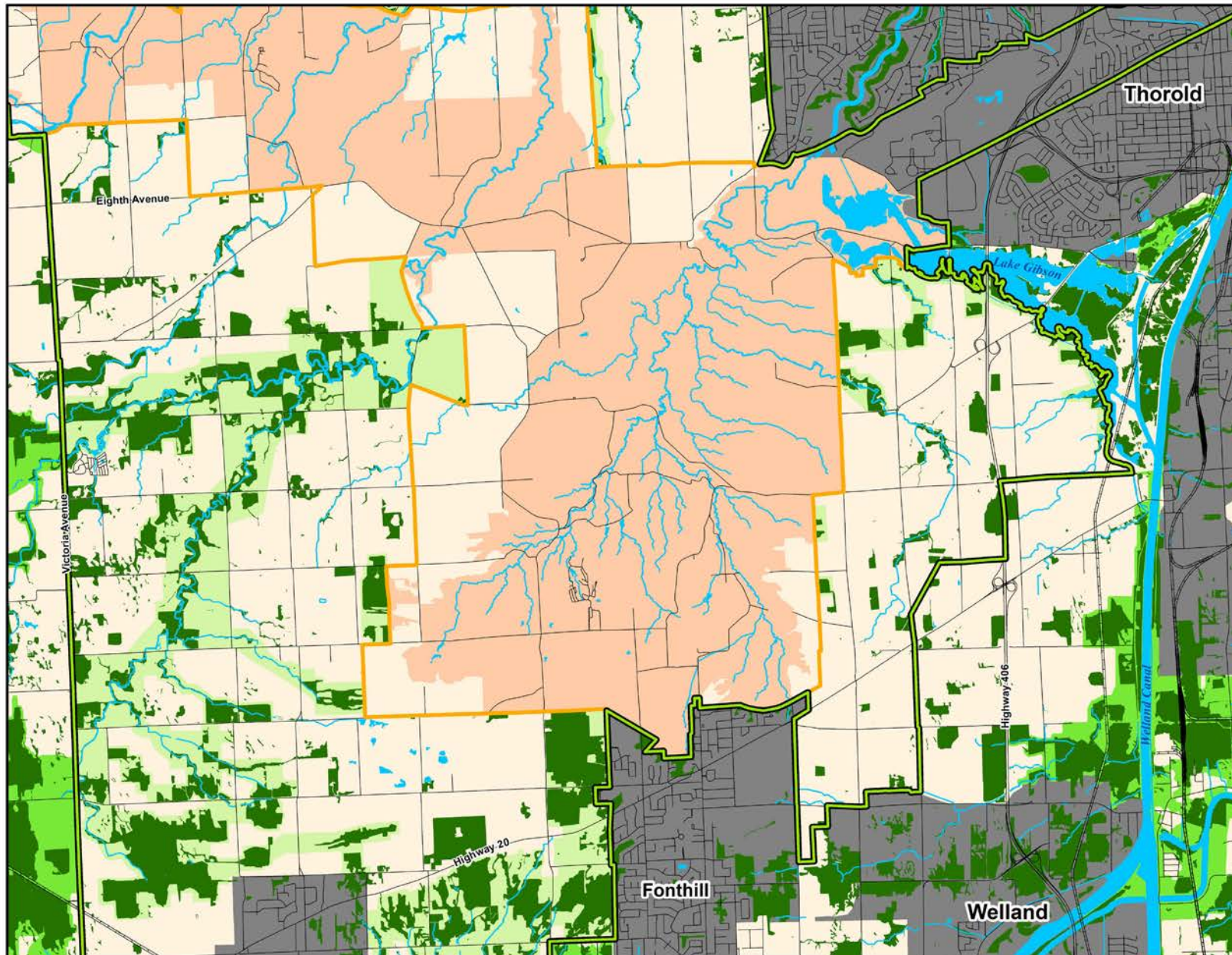
- Incremental step between the background reports and the mapping and policy development process
- Goal is to establish the overall direction for the natural heritage system (NHS) and water resource system (WRS)
- Based on concepts for the natural systems only. Mapping, criteria, and policies were developed to a level-of-detail that was required to support the evaluation and engagement process only
- Detailed and region-wide mapping to be completed in subsequent phases of the work program



Identification & Evaluation of Options

- Separate process for the NHS and WRS
- Range of considerations needed to be reflected in the development of options
- All options would 'conform' with provincial requirements – some options would meet minimum provincial standards other options would exceed minimum standards
- Evaluation process was undertaken based on criteria that were established during the completion of the background studies and during the 1st point of engagement



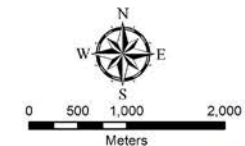


Niagara Region Natural Environment Work Program Conceptual Natural Heritage System Options 1 and 2

Legend

- Greenbelt Plan
- Niagara Escarpment Plan
- Escarpment Protection Area
- Key Natural Features
- Growth Plan NHS Outside of Greenbelt Plan Area
- Greenbelt NHS
- Waterbodies
- Watercourses
- Roads
- Railway
- Settlement Areas

Conceptual figure for
discussion purposes only



north-south
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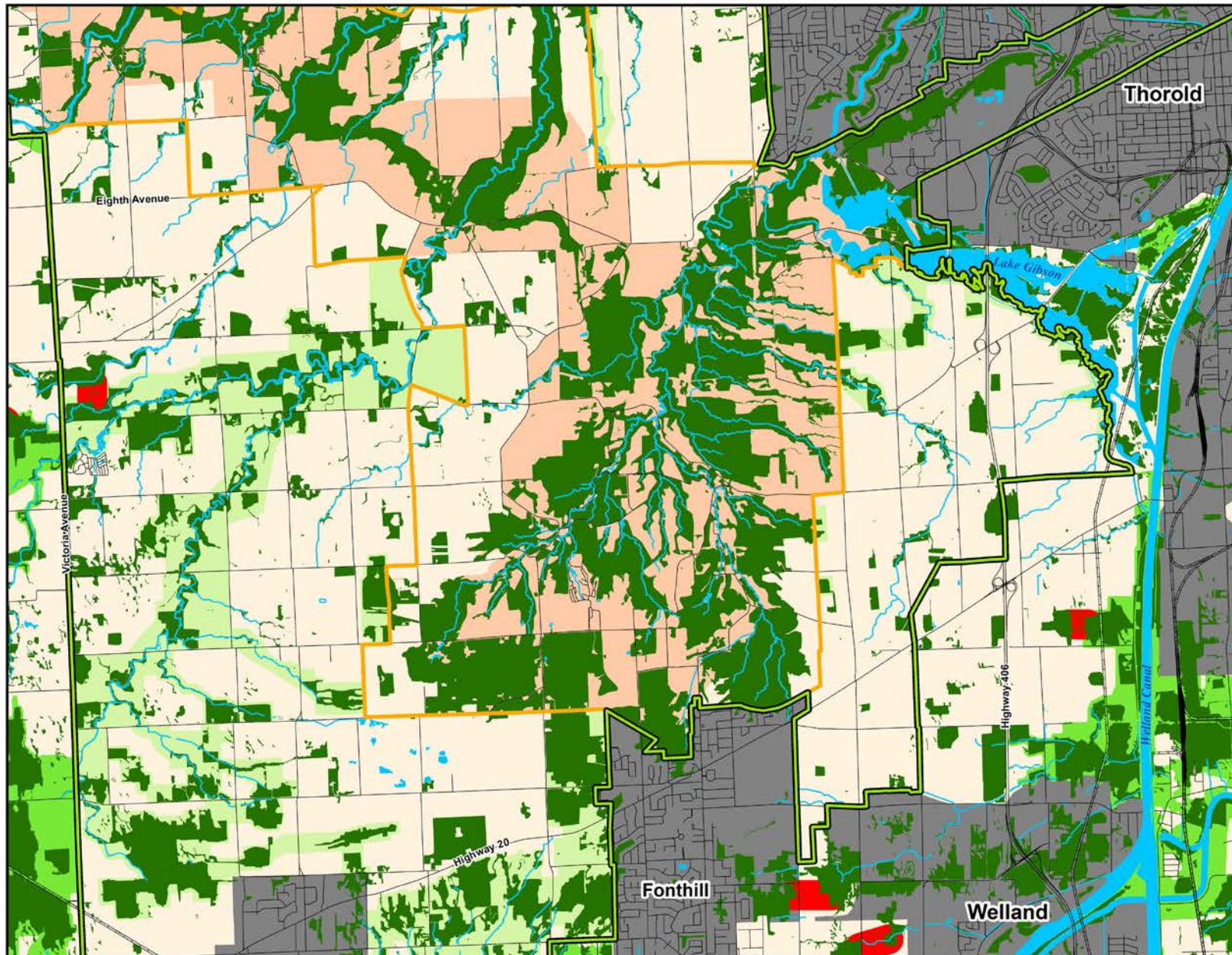
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Comparison of Option 3A, 3B, & 3C

	N.H.S. 3A	N.H.S. 3B	N.H.S. 3C
Component Features and Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Natural Heritage Features within the N.E.P. • Other Key Natural Features and Areas outside of provincial N.H.S.s, but only outside of settlement areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Natural Heritage Features within the N.E.P. as per Option 3A • Other Key Natural Features and Areas outside of provincial N.H.S.s both outside and in settlement areas • Supporting Features and Areas outside of settlement areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Natural Heritage Features within the N.E.P. as per Options 3A and 3B • Other Key Natural Features and Areas outside of provincial N.H.S.s both outside and in settlement areas as per Option 3B • Supporting Features and Areas in all of the Region, including both outside and within settlement areas
Connecting the System (linkages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Linkages only between Key Natural Features and Areas outside of settlement areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large and Medium Linkages between Key Natural Features and Areas outside of settlement areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large, Medium and Small Linkages between Key Natural Features and Areas outside of settlement areas • Small Linkages between Key Natural Features and Areas in settlement areas where the potential linkage area is in a natural state
Buffers/ Vegetation Protection Zones (to Key Natural Features and Areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested policy minimums outside of provincial N.H.S.s and outside of settlement areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested policy minimums outside of provincial N.H.S.s, both inside and outside of settlement areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory buffers outside of settlement areas (that can be reduced through study) with suggested policy minimums inside settlement areas



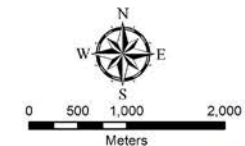


Niagara Region Natural Environment Work Program Natural Heritage System Option 3A

Legend

- Key Natural Features
- Large Linkage (400m Wide)
- Growth Plan NHS Outside of Greenbelt Plan Area
- Greenbelt NHS
- Greenbelt Plan
- Niagara Escarpment Plan
- Escarpment Protection Area
- Waterbodies
- Watercourses
- Roads
- Railway
- Settlement Areas

Conceptual figure for
discussion purposes only

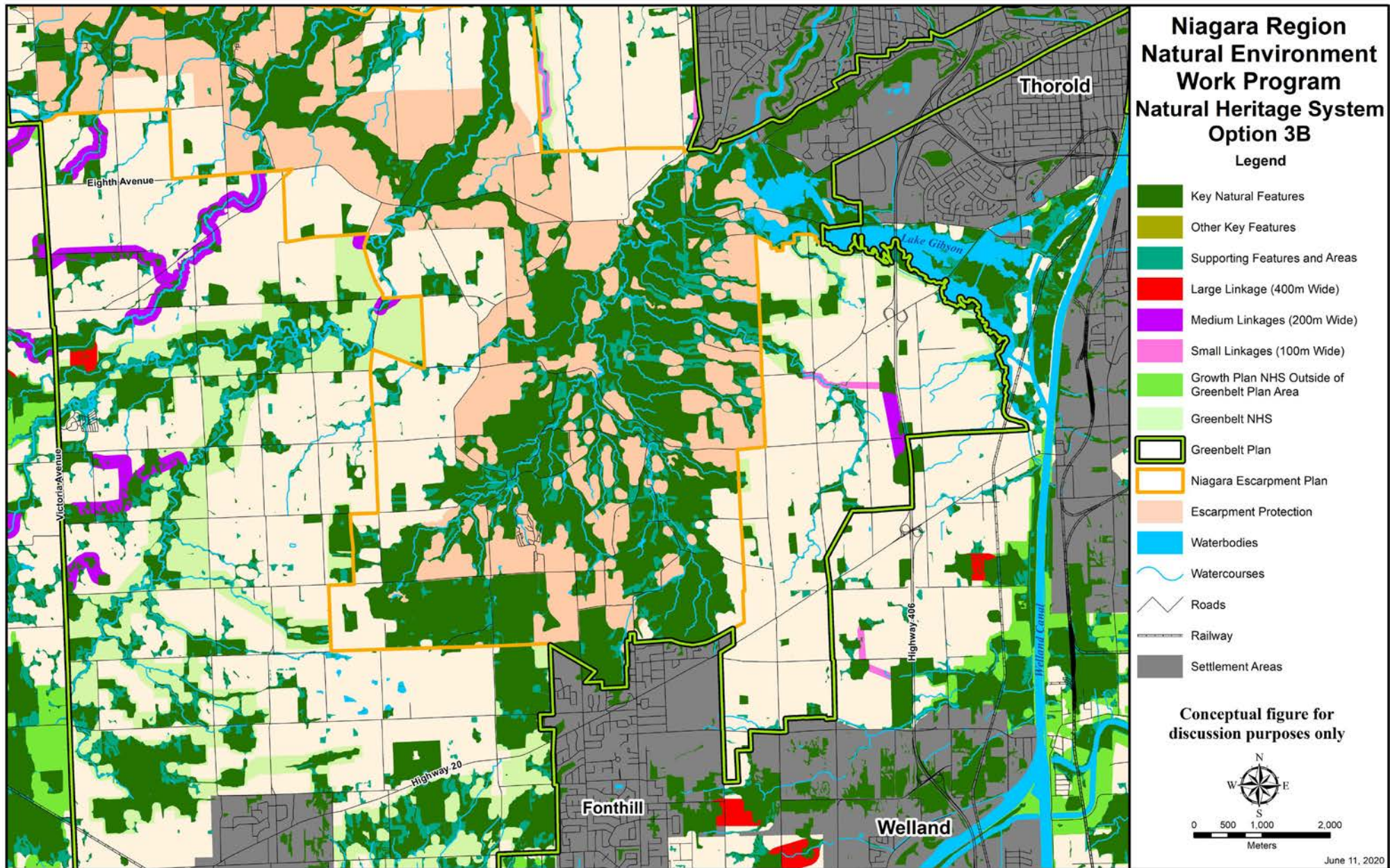


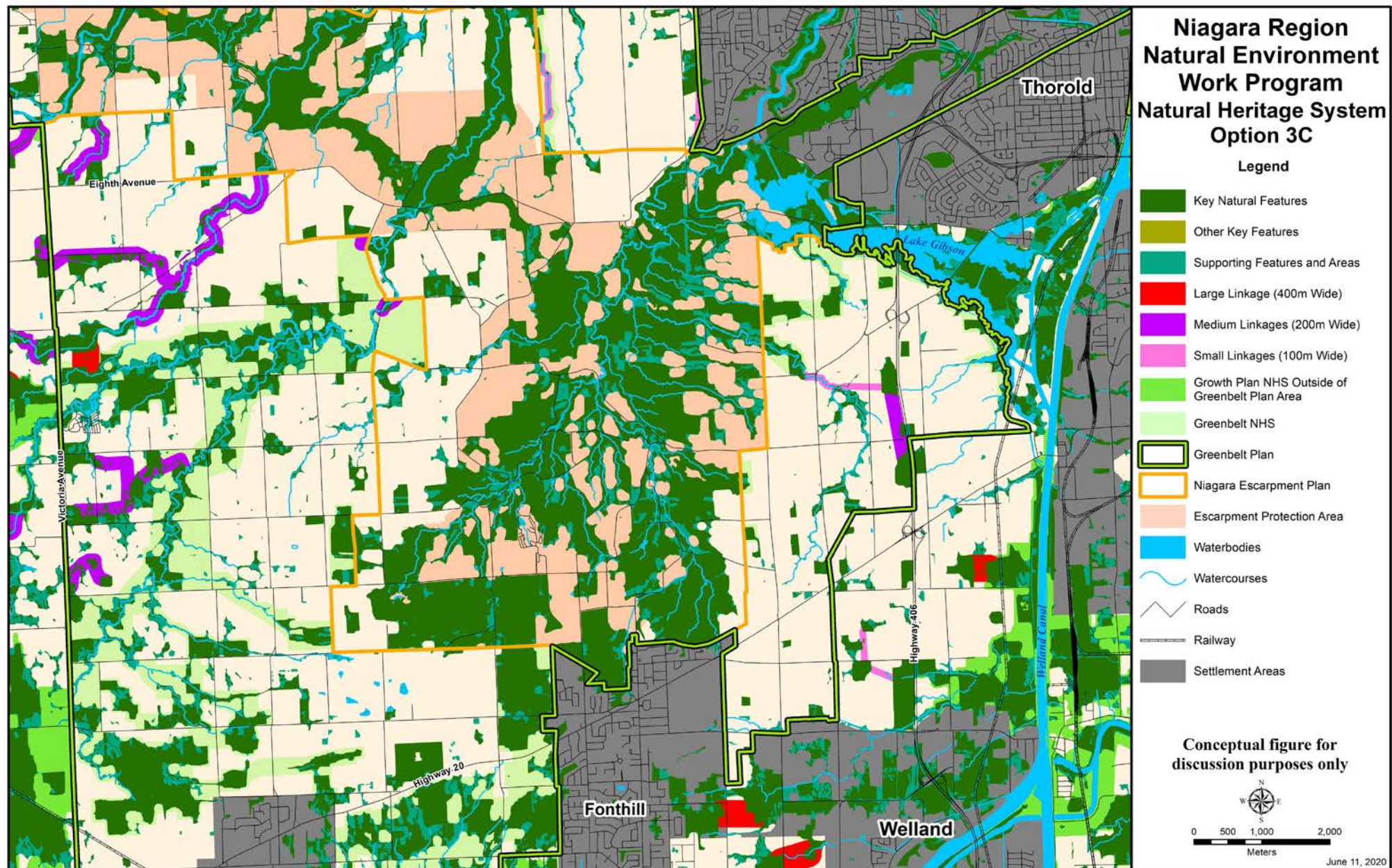
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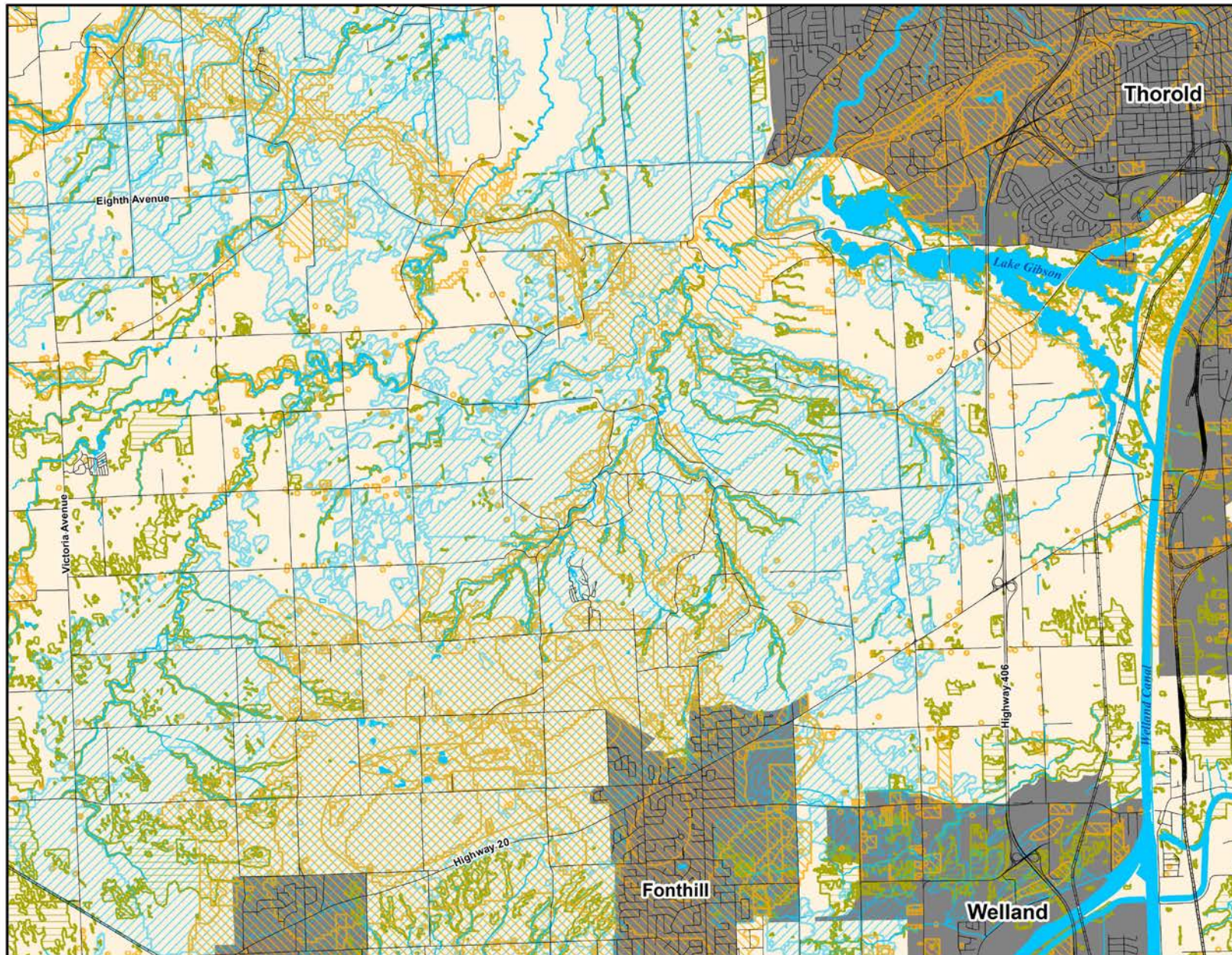


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Niagara Region Natural Environment Work Program Water Resource System - Option 1 and 2 Legend

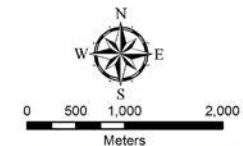
Key Hydrologic Features

- Wetlands
- Waterbodies
- Watercourses

Key Hydrologic Areas

- Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas
- Highly Vulnerable Aquifers
- Roads
- Railway
- Settlement Areas

Conceptual figure for
discussion purposes only



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Preliminary Preferred Options

- Option 3B was identified as the preliminary preferred option for NHS
- Option 2A was identified as the preliminary preferred option for NHS
- Both options share similar characteristics:
 - Exceeds minimum provincial standards
 - Incorporates public and stakeholder feedback
 - Provides a balanced approach which directs optional components outside of settlement areas
 - Supports the Region in achieving other objectives such as mitigating the impacts of climate change



Next Steps



1. Initiate 2nd point of engagement with public, stakeholders, and Indigenous groups
2. Incorporate the input received
3. Report back to PEDC with recommendation for final preferred option
4. Initiate the detailed design process

