
Subject: Niagara Official Plan: Land Needs Assessment and Settlement Area Boundary Review Update

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Recommendations

1. That Council **ENDORSE**, in principle, the use of the Made-in-Niagara Forecast and the Revised Land Needs Assessment (Appendix 1 of Report PDS 33-2021), to advance the Niagara Official Plan, the Water and Wastewater Master Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, the Development Charge Background Study and By-law, and other Regional programs; and
2. That Report PDS 33-2021 **BE CIRCULATED** to local area municipalities, partner agencies and the Province.

Key Facts

- This report recommends a “Made-in-Niagara” growth forecast to 2051. The Forecast is a land needs assessment (“LNA”) derived from the Provincial Land Needs Methodology. The Region must conform to the Provincial requirements, including this Methodology.
- The Made-in-Niagara Forecast provides a 2051 population of 694,000 people and 272,000 jobs.
- The Made-in-Niagara Forecast is similar to the previously-released forecast from May 2021, provided in the May Joint Report PDS 17-2021. Population forecasts have increased slightly in two municipalities to account for market demand and provide additional affordable housing options. Importantly, the updates since May are focussed exclusively in built-up areas – not greenfields – meaning that it does not result in additional residential land needed through urban boundary expansions.
- The Made-in-Niagara Forecasts and updated LNA result in a Region-wide net community area land need of 495 Ha and net employment area land need of 210 Ha. The Region-wide intensification rate is 60%, which is 10% greater than the minimum

required. Density is 50 people and jobs per Ha for greenfields and larger densities in the Region's Strategic Growth Areas.

- Feedback was carefully considered in making this recommendation. Staff have considered other key interests, like the Natural Environment System ("NES"), agricultural system, and affordability.
- The Forecasts need to be endorsed in principle at this time. These are used to make decisions about changes to urban and rural boundaries (called the Settlement Area Boundary Review or "SABR"). They are also used as part of the Niagara 2051 program to inform the Water/Wastewater Master Servicing Plan and Transportation Master Plan. The Region's infrastructure is paid for through Development Charges based on this information.
- Changes to municipal boundaries through the SABR can only occur as part of the Region's new Official Plan (with very limited exceptions). Staff need endorsement of the Made-in-Niagara Forecasts to move forward with the SABR. No decisions on SABR itself are requested now - that will be reported on further this Fall.
- The Forecasts and updated LNA are sought for endorsement in principle to allow the programs noted above to move forward. Adjustments to the forecasts are likely, prior to finalizing, to reflect any recommended employment conversions and other matters. This will be provided for consideration at a future Council meeting.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations directly related to this report. However, as described below, a decision on the Made-in-Niagara Forecast is critical to establishing the 2022 Development Change By-law where growth-related costs are recovered.

This report is prepared as part of the Niagara Official Plan ("NOP") program. Council approved the resources to complete the NOP over a 5 year period as part of the 2017 Budget Process.

The growth forecasts identified here will be used in the upcoming revisions to the Water and Wastewater Master Servicing Plan ("MSP"), Transportation Master Plan ("TMP") and Development Charges Study ("DCS"). Those studies identify projects to be built based on the growth forecasts.

The DCS sets out a calculation of how all or a portion of those costs can be recovered through development charges. The Development Charge By-law must be passed in advance of current by-law expiry in August 2022. The Made-in-Niagara Forecasts are needed at this time for the inputs to the Development Charges work so that program can be advanced in time for the August 2022 deadline.

Analysis

On May 20, 2021, Regional Council received PDS 17-2021 Niagara Official Plan Consolidated Policy Report (the “May Joint Report”). The May Joint Report provided a comprehensive update on the NOP process and draft materials for consultation with local municipalities, stakeholders and public.

Staff asked for feedback by July 2, 2021 so it could be considered as part of this report, among other things. Feedback has been carefully considered and is described further below.

Two separate reports are advanced at this time. This report (PDS 33-2021) relates to the updated Made-in-Niagara forecasts and its relationship to SABR and Niagara 2051.

A second, related report, is PDS 32-2021, provided at this same August 11, 2021 PEDC meeting. That report speaks to the additional work that has occurred relating to other Official Plan matters since the May Joint Report. Although these reports are under separate cover, they have been prepared comprehensively with continued consideration of integrated planning of the new NOP.

At this time, the Region seeks endorsement in principle of the Made-in-Niagara Forecast. This allows the SABR program to move forward, and advancement of the Niagara 2051 work, including the Development Charges By-law.

Adjustments to the forecast and LNA are likely to be proposed prior to finalizing these documents. As described further below, employment conversion requests have not yet been considered. Depending on the outcome of that review, the forecast and LNA may be revised for Council consideration.

Further, the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology contemplates that final adjustments may be made, after all other steps are undertaken, to account for specific circumstances like vacancy rates, constrained land from infrastructure, lands that may not develop because of landowner choice, and other economic or demographic factors.

Revised forecasts and LNA will be provided to Council in a future report for consideration.

Growth Forecast Consultation

A Place to Grow (2020) (“Growth Plan”) establishes a *minimum* population and employment forecasts for upper- and single-tier municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Region must plan for these minimum forecasts and assign the forecast to local municipalities.

The Region has done significant forecasting work over several years. Most recently, its forecasting work was set out as part of the May Joint Report, PDS 17-2021 [Appendix 3.3](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-3-3.pdf) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-3-3.pdf>), Growth Allocation Update to 2051 (Hemson, 2021). This work aligned regional forecasts with the recently-released 2020 *Growth Plan* (the “May 2021 Forecast”).

The May 2021 Forecasts distributed the minimum Growth Plan Schedule 3 forecast of 674,000 people and 272,000 jobs throughout Niagara’s 12 municipalities. Forecasts were distributed based on the Preferred Growth Option, established through Niagara 2041 (Niagara 2041: Preferred Growth Option (Hemson, 2019), with revisions made based on the new 2051 planning horizon and emerging development trends. This was based on the 2020 Growth Plan and a newly released Provincial LNA Methodology.

The May 2021 forecasts provided information on housing mix within each municipality and areas within them. This work was done to show how the forecasts represent market-based housing demand and support affordable housing.

The May Joint Report also provided specific data on affordability. Appendix 5.2, Niagara Region Housing Affordability and Growth Plan 2051 (CANCEA, 2021) set out that achieving the minimum Growth Plan forecast of 674,000 people would keep the Region’s Core Housing need at 13%.

The CANCEA conclusion was clear: if the Region grew too slowly, affordability would worsen.

The Region also released its Regional Structure through the May Joint Report. The Regional Structure identified locations and density targets for Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs). SGAs will accommodate a significant amount of growth, support infrastructure investment and contribute to complete communities.

On many occasions before and after the May Joint Report release, the Region met individually with planning staff at each local municipality to discuss growth forecasts, SGAs, intensification rates, densities, and related matters.

Since May 2021, the Region held five public information centres (PICs) and held dozens of meetings with interested parties about these same growth-related matters.

Additionally, the Region progressed on the TMP, MSP, and DCS update. This process involves a Niagara 2051 working group of various staff across many departments and consultation events held in the spring 2021.

Almost all feedback was supportive of the Region's process. The Region received comments on specific aspects of its May 2021 forecasts, with some parties recommending adjustments or changes reflecting a variety of interests.

Importantly, there was general public support, and local planning staff support, of the Region's overall land needs program and the Regional Structure components.

A comment summary of the land needs-related comments is provided in **Appendix 3**. The full set of comments received can be viewed here: [Niagara Official Plan](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/>).

Additional comments, unrelated to land needs, are reported in PDS 32-2021.

Since the release of the May 2021 Forecasts, the Region carefully considered feedback received. Staff also conducted a further review of individual growth areas and existing and proposed development applications. Additional progress on the detailed work towards finalizing the NES has been made since May 2021.

On this basis, Staff recommend two categories of change be made to what was released in May 2021.

The first is additional intensification growth be allocated to Lincoln and Welland.

The second is including the most current information on the NES.

These topics are described in the following sections of this report.

Summary of Changes to the Land Needs Assessment

The Growth Plan (2020) allows Niagara to use alternative growth forecasts beyond those identified in Growth Plan Schedule 3. The Made-in-Niagara Forecast is an alternative growth forecast.

This alternative growth forecast can be only be advanced by a Region or single-tier government.

Details of the Made-in-Niagara Forecast are provided in **Appendix 1**. This is a revised version of [Appendix 3.2](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-3-2.pdf) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-3-2.pdf>) of the May Joint Report.

The Province provided three growth scenarios in its draft materials for the 2020 Growth Plan. One of those scenarios was a high growth forecast of 700,000 people for Niagara. At that time, Niagara Region staff supported the high scenario.

The proposed, Made-in-Niagara Forecast of 694,000 people is slightly below this high scenario identified by the Province.

The May 2021 Forecast identified a total population of 674,000 people. The additional 20,000 people above the May 2021 forecast have been allocated to Lincoln and Welland. Lincoln's 2051 population has been revised from 35,660 to 45,660 in the current forecast. Welland's 2051 population has been revised from 73,000 to 83,000.

Based on the analysis and consultation noted in the previous section, the Region proposes the following Preliminary Municipal Growth Allocations: 2021 and 2051 (i.e. the Made-in-Niagara Forecast):

Table 1: Preliminary Municipal Growth Allocations: 2021 and 2051

Municipality	Population 2021	Population 2051	Households 2021	Households 2051	Employment 2021	Employment 2051
Fort Erie	33,930	48,050	14,150	21,510	10,530	17,430
Grimsby	30,300	37,000	11,470	16,070	10,690	14,670
Lincoln	26,860	45,660	9,590	19,405	11,390	15,960
Niagara Falls	97,220	141,650	38,520	58,740	37,780	58,110
Niagara-on-the-Lake	19,970	28,900	7,910	12,500	11,800	16,960
Pelham	19,320	28,830	7,150	11,280	4,810	7,140
Port Colborne	19,250	23,230	8,210	10,500	5,910	7,550
St. Catharines	140,250	171,890	58,550	78,320	61,780	81,010
Thorold	24,440	39,690	9,230	15,660	8,530	12,080
Wainfleet	7,000	7,730	2,580	3,040	1,400	1,830
Welland	56,210	83,000	23,610	37,540	18,030	28,790
West Lincoln	16,370	38,370	5,330	14,060	4,460	10,480
Niagara Region	491,120	694,000	196,300	298,645	187,110	272,000

Revised Intensification Rates

Through the comments received and additional analysis done by the Region, Staff determined that the draft May 2021 Forecasts for Lincoln and Welland were likely to be achieved earlier than set out. In our view, higher forecasts were required to ensure alignment with infrastructure investment and to better align with planned development.

In Lincoln and Welland, the additional growth proposed is within the existing urban, built up areas with development or redevelopment potential. Thus, this is considered “intensification” growth. This kind of development supports a broader, more affordable housing mix of more townhouses and apartment units.

These changes reflect the planned infrastructure to sustain the anticipated growth. The Region seeks to proactively plan to accommodate the growth to ensure communities are more sustainable, better connected, healthy and safe.

As note above, the additional forecasted growth to Lincoln and Welland are within the built-up areas as intensification. In other words, more development is proposed within the existing boundaries. There is no impact to Community Area (residential/mixed use) land need to accommodate this additional population and these changes do not result in need for additional land through boundary expansions.

The “intensification rate” is a measure of how much growth is going to built-up areas rather than new greenfield areas. In the updated Forecast, Lincoln’s intensification rate has increased from 80% to 90%, and Welland’s from 60% to 75%. When these changes are incorporated to a Region-wide average, the Region’s intensification rate increases from 56% to 60%.

Table 2 is the revised intensification rates by municipality and the overall Region rate.

Table 2: Revised Intensification Rates to 2051

Municipality	Intensification Rate
Fort Erie	50%
Grimsby	98%
Lincoln	90%
Niagara Falls	50%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	25%
Pelham	25%
Port Colborne	30%
St. Catharines	95%
Thorold	25%
Wainfleet	0%
Welland	75%
West Lincoln	13%
Niagara Region	60%

The above paragraphs describe the changes in terms of population and intensification rates – the Region also looks at this in terms of units. The number of additional units proposed is 10,500. These additional units are predominately medium- and high-density housing types, such as townhouses, apartments, and other multi-unit dwellings.

Increasing this unit type is key to help address core housing need, driven primarily by affordability.

The diversification of Niagara’s existing, low-density housing stock is supported by the Region’s recent housing analyses completed by CANCEA, included in Appendix 5 to the May Joint Report, and noted above. The CANCEA work concluded that more dense forms of housing is needed to support Provincial growth targets, and consequently, to address rates of core housing need over time.

In short, more dense forms of housing are needed to address affordability.

Updated Natural Environment Work

Work on the Natural Environment program has been ongoing for many years.

Since May 2021, the Region has refined the analysis of Natural Environment developable area. The most current information suggests a need to remove non-developable lands from the land needs assessment calculation.

In other words, more land should be protected than identified in the May 2021 Forecast; in turn, less land is available for development. This results in a greater *overall need* for land (since less is available for development). This means a small increase of land needed for the Community Area (i.e. residential and mixed use) and a modest increase in land needed for Employment Areas (i.e. mostly industrial areas).

At the May 20, 2021 Regional Council meeting, Council directed Staff to prepare materials for Natural Environment System (NES) Options 3B and 3C, with a decision by Council on the preferred NES Option to be made at a later time.

Importantly, the land need difference between NES Option 3B and 3C is negligible. Regardless of which NES Option is selected at a later time, the land needs will be similar. For this reason, there is no need to await an Option selection to advance the land needs at this time. When an Option is selected, minor adjustments can be made to the land needs, if needed, before it is finalized..

Community Area Land Needs – Rural Settlement Areas

As directed by the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology, an additional assessment was undertaken for Rural Settlement Areas.

Niagara has a modest population and employment base outside of urban settlement areas. Growth is anticipated to continue within rural areas and rural settlement areas. Between 2021 and 2051, Hemson Consulting forecast an additional 900 housing units and 8,090 jobs will occur in the rural area.

The Rural Settlement Area assessment determines where the forecast growth will occur within the rural areas and if additional land is required within rural settlement areas primarily focussed in Wainfleet and West Lincoln.

Further details of the rural settlement area assessment is provided in **Appendix 1**.

August 2021 Preliminary Draft Land Needs Assessment

As discussed above, the May 2021 Forecast was refined based on the alternative Made-in-Niagara Forecast, higher Regional intensification rate and recent NES work.

The detailed Forecast is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Table 3 below is a summary of the overall preliminary land needs by municipality.

Table 3: August 2021 Preliminary Draft Land Needs Assessment

Municipality	Community Area Land Needs (ha)	Employment Area Land Needs (ha)
Fort Erie	105	155
Grimsby	5	(5)
Lincoln	0	15
Niagara Falls	270	10
Niagara-on-the-Lake	5	(20)
Pelham	40	0
Port Colborne	(160)	(40)
St. Catharines	15	30
Thorold	(155)	(35)
Wainfleet	0	0
Welland	0	45
West Lincoln	370	45
Niagara Region (net)	495	210

In the May 2021 Forecast, the Region's net overall community land need was 460 Ha and net employment area land need was -20 Ha.

The net Community Area land need in the current Forecast and LNA is similar to the May 2021 Forecast. The net Employment Area land need is now 210 Ha compared to the previous surplus of 20 Ha.

Through consultation with the Province, the Region has also been advised that the LNA should result in a single number for land need; a blended number where Community Area land need and Employment Area land need are combined. This combined net land need is 705 hectares.

For the reasons noted elsewhere in this report, adjustments may be made to this preliminary forecast. Those adjustments will be provided to Council for consideration at a later time.

Employment Area Requests for Conversion

The Region is considering Employment Land Employment Area conversions as part of its new Official Plan. The Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology implementation section contemplates that this should be considered for reducing the amount of settlement area expansion required for forecasted growth.

Employment land exists both within and outside of Employment Areas in almost all of Niagara's communities. Through the NOP, the Region is mapping Employment Areas, or clusters of employment uses, to define these boundaries. Employment Areas are of Regional interest as they relate to the provision and protection of employment land employment jobs, typically those within industrial areas and business parks.

The Growth Plan contains criteria for conversion of employment lands within an Employment Area and provides direction for when conversions can be considered as part of a Municipal Comprehensive Review. In Niagara's case, this is the NOP process.

Information on conversion criteria considerations was provided in the Employment Policy Paper PDS 17-2021 – [Appendix 10.2](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-10-2.pdf) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-10-2.pdf>).

The Region received seven requests for Employment Areas conversions. These requests remain under consideration and will be reported further as part of the SABR review. The conversion requests are summarized in **Appendix 3**.

One of the tests for employment conversion is land need. Based on the current LNA presented with this report, the Region has a demand for 210 Ha more employment area. In other words, on a regional scale, there is a net land need demand for more employment area, not removal of employment area through conversions. However, individual conversion sites remain under review based on local considerations.

As indicated above, the review of conversion requests is part of the SABR review, with recommendations to be reported in the fall, including any associated adjustments to the forecast and land needs.

Settlement Area Boundary Review

Only the Region can make settlement area boundary changes and the NOP is the time to do so.

In order to make SABR decisions, the Made-in-Niagara Forecast needs to be endorsed. If not, Staff will not know how much land is needed to review and adjust boundaries accordingly.

The SABR will review candidate land adjacent to the existing settlement area boundaries to determine the most appropriate location for settlement area expansion to be accommodated. Regional staff have developed criteria and an assessment process to consider both urban and rural settlement area boundary expansions.

The location of SABR expansion requests are mapped on **Appendix 2**.

SABR Assessment Criteria and Process

The SABR assessment criteria was developed based on direction from the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), the Growth Plan, and Regional considerations. Staff consulted local area planners on many occasions, as a group and in individual meetings. Local planning staff support the criteria.

Additionally, the draft criteria was publically shared as part of the May Joint Report [Appendix 18.2](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-18-2.pdf) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-18-2.pdf>) for urban areas and [Appendix 18.3](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-18-3.pdf) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/pds-17-2021-appendix-18-3.pdf>) for rural settlement areas. Since that time, until July 2, 2021, the Region received comments on the criteria. With one small site-specific exception, no negative comments on the criteria were received. In fact, in many cases, the draft criteria are already under use by those making submissions to support a SABR request.

For these reasons, the Region will continue to use the criteria in its SABR review this summer and fall.

The criteria are divided into two parts. The first is an initial screening of the requests. Not all requests could be considered eligible for reasons related to Provincial Plan prohibitions. For example, the Greenbelt Plan prohibits expansion into the Specialty Crop Area and the Niagara Escarpment Plan also prohibits expansion of Minor Urban

Centres. The Region has no ability to make these changes, and therefore, these types of requests will not proceed.

As a result of this initial screening, 17 requests are being removed from further consideration.

If part one is satisfied, a request proceeds to the second part which contains more detailed criteria, including:

- Sanitary Servicing
- Municipal Water Supply
- Transit and Transportation
- Environmental Protection and Natural Resources
- Agricultural / Agri-food Network
- Aggregate Resources
- Growth Management

To undertake the second part of the SABR process, a review team comprised of regional staff across many disciplines has been assembled (including those relating to water, wastewater natural environment, transportation, aggregates, agriculture and growth management). The team may also draw on additional staff resources, if required, in relation to some topic areas where specific knowledge would assist. Local municipal staff will also participate within their respective areas.

For the SABR process, staff will rely on primary sources of study reference and technical data. The expectation is the same sources of information will be used for all sites being reviewed.

Additionally, any supplemental information provided by requestors will also be reviewed. Not all SABR requests received have supplemental information – it was not required. The supplemental information will be carefully considered; however, no additional weight is given to those requests that have supplemental information.

Some local municipalities have undertaken expansion-related study work or specific comments on expansions that will be carefully considered by the Region's review team.

Criteria for rural settlement area (Hamlet) review differs from the urban SABR. Rural settlement expansion focuses on maintaining rural character and supporting the

agricultural community and rural population needs. Rural settlement areas will continue to be serviced through private systems.

SABR Request Details

The Region received about 87 private owner submissions related to the SABR process. These are specific to the existing Official Plan process; separate from comments made to the Province through the 2017 Coordinated Plan Review (CPR). CPR comments are not currently being processed by the Region (with three exceptions) since these matters are for Provincial review period only. The Region cannot make changes to Provincial Plans as part of the Niagara Official Plan process to accommodate expansion.

The three noted exceptions are sites in Lincoln (Albright Manor), Niagara Falls (Cotton Construction), and Niagara-on-the-Lake (Queenston Quarry) that were changed in the Niagara Escarpment Plan to Urban Area or Escarpment Recreation Area during the past review. Since these changes were made by the Province, the Region is processing these sites through its SABR.

In addition to the private owner requests for this Official Plan, the Region has received a number of local municipal requests for expansion consideration. The requests have been delivered through local Council resolution and will be reviewed along with all other requests made. Some local municipalities are still working on such recommendations, for circulation to the Region in the near future.

Local municipal requests comprise an additional 30 locations to date.

In addition to the private requests and municipal requests, noted above, the Region is reviewing additional candidate lands. The Region must consider what lands should be included – whether or not a request has been made – to ensure a holistic and objective review of Provincial policy in determining “the most appropriate location” for expansion.

As of writing, the total number of locations for expansions is approximately 147, including all categories described above.

A map of the SABR expansion areas is set out in **Appendix 2**.

SABR Consultation

In preparing this report, careful consideration was given to comments provided on land needs, SABR requests and criteria, and employment conversions. All comments

received prior to July 15, 2021 were reviewed in preparing this report. Comments were requested by July 2, 2021.

The Region received over 20 comments related to the LNA. These submissions, as well as responses, are summarized in **Appendix 3**. Generally, the submissions are favourable and support the direction of the LNA. Some landowners made land need- or conversion- related suggestions specific to their interests.

As noted above, the Region also received a number of SABR and conversion requests. These requests have been acknowledged and remain under consideration. Recommendations will be made in the fall.

Prior to advancing SABR recommendations, staff will gather public input. The Region has created a public mapping tool that illustrates the requests for expansion and allows for comments. It is available at the following link: [Niagara Official Plan](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/) (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/>).

In addition to the SABR website, additional public consultation is planned to receive input in the candidate locations. This is not intended to be a forum to have requests added or removed from consideration. It will be a dialogue to inform the process and received information on the assessment process and recommendations.

Policy Review

The *Planning Act, 1990* requires all municipal Council decisions to be consistent with, conform to, or not conflict with the applicable Provincial policy. Regional and local planning staff must provide planning advice and make recommendations under the same requirements.

Below outlines relevant Provincial Policy for the LNA and SABR process. The Made-in-Niagara Forecast and updated LNA conforms to, is consistent with, and does not conflict with these documents, as applicable.

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2020

The PPS, 2020 provides direction on land use planning to promote sustainable, strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment.

Section 1.1 - Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development and Land Use Patterns supplies many of the referenced policies appearing in the SABR Assessment Criteria including:

“1.1.1 Healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by:

a) promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities over the long term;

c) avoiding development and land use patterns which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns;

d) avoiding development and land use patterns that would prevent the efficient expansion of settlement areas in those areas which are adjacent or close to settlement areas;

e) promoting the integration of land use planning, growth management, transit-supportive development, intensification and infrastructure planning to achieve cost-effective development patterns, optimization of transit investments, and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs; ...

g) ensuring that necessary infrastructure and public service facilities are or will be available to meet current and projected needs;

h) promoting development and land use patterns that conserve biodiversity;”

Respecting the policy context for use in the SABR assessment from a community building perspective, the consistent theme of healthy, livable, safe communities that are efficiently designed, cost effective, transit-supportive and integrated, underscores the direction expansion consideration should take while reminding and recognizing future expansion needs to be a consideration.

Section 1.1.3 – “Settlement Areas” includes direction for settlement area boundary expansions only at the time of an MCR and only after there has been demonstrated need. New to the 2020 PPS is a policy that refers to satisfying market demand.

Policies of Section 1.1.3 also direct that agricultural land and industry be held in regard of decisions being made concerning expansion. This too is reflected in the SABR Criteria to be used in expansion review.

Other policies of the PPS, such as Housing, Employment, Infrastructure, Transportation and Wise Use and Management of Resources, all provide important direction for the completion of the LNA and the criteria considerations for the SABR.

A Place to Grow - Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020)

The Growth Plan provides a strategic, long-range growth management framework for the Greater Golden Horseshoe area. The Growth Plan supports Ontario's vision of building stronger, more efficient, prosperous communities through appropriate growth management.

Similar to the PPS, the guiding principles of the Growth Plan are focused on achieving complete communities, stimulating economic growth, prioritizing intensification and higher densities to optimize infrastructure investments, and mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change.

Policy 2.2.1.5 identifies the Province's Land Needs Assessment methodology to be used by the Region to assess the quantity of land required to accommodate forecasted growth to 2051.

Policy 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan speaks to Settlement Area Boundary Expansions.

Specifically, Policy 2.2.8.2 provides the direction for expansions to proceed through the MCR process based on the components and direction of the LNA. Further, Policy 2.2.8.3 requires any expansion be justified based on a comprehensive list of criteria. These policies were used to develop the Region's SABR criteria and have included consideration for transportation, infrastructure, NES, agricultural lands and operations, and the applicable requirements of other Provincial Plans.

The Greenbelt Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan were also reviewed. The policies of both provide direction for enhancement and protection of the natural and agricultural systems. Expansions into the Greenbelt and Niagara Escarpment areas are prohibited.

Next Steps

The Region will continue to move forward with the NOP work program. Once the SABR and conversion review process is complete, Staff will prepare a report with recommendations in fall 2021.

The Made-in-Niagara Forecasts will be integrated into the Niagara 2051 strategies: the MSP, TMP and DCS and DC By-law. These strategies work together to ensure the planned growth is serviced and paid for.

Alternatives Reviewed

Alternative 1: Council could not endorse any land needs assessment at this time. This alternative is not recommended as any delay has consequences to the Niagara Official Plan, the MSP, TMP and DCS and DC By-law, for the reasons noted in this report. The Made-in-Niagara Forecasts set out in this Report have been developed to conform to Provincial Policy and are based on significant local planning and public consultation.

Alternative 2: Council could endorse a land need assessment that differs from the Made-in-Niagara Forecast set out in this Report. This option is not recommended as the detailed work undertaken led to adjustments to the intensification growth for Welland and Lincoln. Differing from the Made-in-Niagara Forecast could lead to a misalignment between how growth is planned, serviced and paid for through development charges.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The land needs assessment and Niagara Official Plan is important to address Council's priorities, being:

- Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth;
 - Through the identification and protection of employment areas.
- Healthy and Vibrant Community;
 - Through responsible management of growth by directing population and employment allocations as determined through the LNA.
 - The growth management work will also retain, protect and increase the supply of affordable housing stock to provide a broad range of housing to meet the needs of the community.
- Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning.

- Through coordinating growth with infrastructure investment to support existing and future growth in Niagara. The Made-in-Niagara Forecast will be integrated into Niagara 2051 strategies to ensure the Region is responsibly coordinating work related to growth.

Other Pertinent Reports

Report	PDS 17-2021 – Niagara Official Plan Consolidated Policy Report (May Joint Report)
Report	PDS 32-2021 – Update on Niagara Official Plan-Further Draft Policy Development

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Niagara Official Plan: Revised Land Needs Assessment Summary (August 2021)

Appendix 2 Settlement Area Boundary Review: Request Mapping

Appendix 3 Summary of Comments Received Relating to Land Needs Assessment
and Settlement Area Boundary Review

DRAFT



NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

Revised Land Needs Assessment Summary

Results subject to refinement in draft Official Plan.

Niagara Region
August 2021

GROWING REGION



Table of Contents

Land Needs Assessment Overview.....	3
How to Read this Report	4
Public Consultation and Engagement	5
Summary of Updates since the Draft May 2021 Land Needs Assessment	8
Community Area Land Needs Assessment.....	11
Component 1: Population Forecasts.....	11
Component 2: Housing Need.....	11
Component 3: Allocation of Housing Need to Local Municipalities	13
Component 4: Housing Supply Potential by Policy Area.....	15
Component 5: Community Area Jobs	18
Component 6: Need for Additional Land	20
Community Area Land Needs Summary.....	22
Additional Considerations and Revisions.....	22
Employment Area Land Needs Assessment	23
Component 1: Employment Forecasts.....	23
Component 2: Employment Allocation	24
Component 3: Employment Area Capacity	25
Component 4: Need for Additional Employment Area Land.....	26
Employment Area Land Needs Summary	27
Rural Land Needs Assessment	28
Land Needs Assessment Results.....	29
Conclusion.....	29
Glossary of Terms	30

Land Needs Assessment Overview

The Land Needs Assessment (“LNA”) is a technical, Region-led process that determines the amount of land required for each local municipality based on the Provincially-allocated overall growth to 2051.

Specifically, the Region must calculate the amount of designated land each local municipality requires to accommodate population, housing and employment forecasts provided in *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (“Growth Plan”).

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, as directed by the *Growth Plan*, released the *Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (the “*Methodology*”) in August 2020. The Region is required to use the Methodology in combination with the policies of the *Growth Plan* to determine the amount of land required to accommodate forecasted growth.

The *Methodology* is used to calculate two separate land needs, one for *Community Area* and one for the *Employment Area*.

Conducting the LNA is an iterative process and requires substantial direction and input from background strategies associated with the Niagara Official Plan (“NOP”) as well as consultation with the public, local municipalities and Province.

An earlier Draft LNA Summary was released in May 2021 for the purpose of consultation and refinement. Feedback was received from local municipalities, consultants and the public. Commentary was generally supportive; feedback was made on allocations, methodology assumptions, existing intensification potential and affordable housing.

Advancement of related to NOP strategies and Niagara 2051, a joint working group made up of the Transportation Master Plan, Water/Wastewater Master Servicing Plan and Development Charge has also occurred since the release of the May 2021 LNA.

The Revised LNA presented in this report is based on the feedback received on the May 2021 draft and updates from associated NOP strategies and Niagara 2051.

The LNA results provided here are for the purpose of informing the Settlement Area Boundary Review and the Transportation Master Plan, Water/Wastewater Master Servicing Plan and Development Charge Background Study associated with Niagara 2051. The LNA may be further refined through the consolidated Official Plan process later this year.

How to Read this Report

This report follows the Provincial *Methodology* process and provides a summary for each component outlined within it. The report does not represent the final land needs assessment; that will be included as a companion to the Official Plan in 2022.

The Revised LNA is based on consultation with the Province, local municipalities, stakeholders, public and Niagara 2051 working group. Details on specific revisions and rationale are provided throughout the report.

The LNA results presented here should not change significantly over the remainder of the Official Plan program. However, advancement and/or refinement to associated Official Plan Strategies may change the output of the LNA.

The Province is the approval authority on the LNA and requires consultation be done prior to submitting the final LNA. The Province has provided feedback on the May 2021 Draft LNA and will continue to be consulted while the LNA is finalized.

The Final LNA will be submitted with the consolidated draft Official Plan for Provincial review and approval.

A **Glossary of Terms** is provided at the end of this summary to provide clarity on frequently used terms and terms from Provincial policy.

Public Consultation and Engagement

The Municipal Comprehensive Review (now called the Niagara Official Plan) was first initiated in 2014 and has been through significant consultation and continuous evolution.

The following summary identifies milestone consultation efforts made so far which covered growth allocations and land needs assessment.

Project Phase	Date	Description
Niagara 2041: Growth Options	November 17, 2015	Public Information Center: Town of Grimsby
	November 18, 2015	Public Information Centre: City of Port Colborne
	November 19, 2015	Public Information Centre: City of St. Catharines
Council approved Phase 1 and 2 Report (PDS 15-2016)		
Niagara 2041: Preferred Growth Option	June 15, 2016	Public Information Centre: Town of Fort Erie
	June 16, 2016	Public Information Centre: Township of West Lincoln
	June 22, 2016	Public Information Centre: City of Welland
	November 30, 2016	Public Information Centre: City of Niagara Falls
	December 6, 2016	Public Information Centre: City of Thorold
	December 7, 2016	Public Information Centre: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
	December 8, 2016	Public Information Centre: Town of Lincoln

Project Phase	Date	Description
Preferred Growth Option Forecast approved for Development Charges Study (PDS 37-2016)		
2017 Provincial Plan Review and Release of Growth Plan (2018)		
Regional Council deem Pre-2017 Growth Plan MCR complete and Growth Management work transitioned into new Niagara Official Plan (PDS 21-2018)		
Niagara Official Plan: Employment Strategy	October 10, 2019	Industry Stakeholder Session: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
Niagara Official Plan: Growth Strategy	November 6, 2019	Public Information Centre: City of Thorold
	November 7, 2019	Public Information Centre: City of Niagara Falls
	November 13, 2019	Public Information Centre: Town of Grimsby
	November 14, 2019	Public Information Centre: Town of Fort Erie
Niagara Official Plan: Employment Strategy	February 25, 2020	Industry Stakeholder Session: Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
Release of Growth Plan (2020) and Revised Land Needs Assessment Methodology		
Settlement Area Boundary Review Program: Growth Plan Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment Update presented to Council (PDS 29-2020)		
Niagara Official Plan: Growth Management and Employment Surveys	September – October, 2020	Online surveys related to Growth Management and Employment directions and options
Niagara Official Plan: Land Needs, Growth Allocations and Settlement Area Boundary Adjustment	October 7, 2020	Virtual Public Information Centre

Project Phase	Date	Description
Niagara Official Plan: Employment Strategy	October 8, 2020	Virtual Public Information Centre
Niagara Official Plan Consolidated Policy Report (PDS 17-2021). Appendix 1 to Report PDS 17-2021 provides a detailed list of all Official Plan consultation efforts.		
Niagara Official Plan: Growing Region	June 9, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
Niagara Official Plan: Vibrant Region	June 10, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
Niagara Official Plan: Competitive Region	June 16, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
Niagara Official Plan: Connected Region	June 17, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
Niagara Official Plan: Sustainable Region	June 23, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
Feedback on Niagara Official Plan Consolidated Report, and associated materials, was requested by July 2, 2021		

Summary of Updates since the Draft May 2021 Land Needs Assessment

On May 20, 2021, Regional Council received PDS 17-2021, Niagara Official Plan Consolidated Policy Report. The report provided a comprehensive update on the NOP process and draft materials for consultation with local municipalities, stakeholders and public.

Staff asked for feedback by July 2, 2021, so it could be considered as part of this report, among other things. Feedback has been carefully considered and is described later in this report.

The May 2021 report provided a Draft LNA, based on a Regional forecast of 674,000 people and 272,000 jobs throughout Niagara's 12 municipalities. Forecasts were distributed based on the Preferred Growth Option, established through Niagara 2041 (Niagara 2041: Preferred Growth Option (Hemson, 2019)), with revisions made based on the extended planning horizon and emerging development trends. Municipal specific forecasts, housing mix and employment mix were all extended to 2051 and provided in PDS 17-2021 Appendix 3, Growth Allocation Update to 2051 prepared by Hemson ("*2051 Growth Update Memo*", 2021). Updated forecasts and assessment were based on the 2020 Growth Plan and associated Provincial LNA Methodology (the "*Methodology*").

The May 2021 Forecasts provided information to address housing mix within each municipality, as well as areas within them (Delineated Built-up Area, Designated Greenfield Area and Rural Area). This was done as a component of 2020 Provincial LNA Methodology and meant to show how the forecasts are representing market-based demand for housing and support affordable housing.

The Region retained a consultant to review core housing needs, which is driven primarily by affordability in Niagara. This was reported in PDS 17-2021 Appendix 5.2, Niagara Region Housing Affordability and Growth Plan 2051 (CANCEA, 2021). CANCEA concluded that achieving the *minimum* Growth Plan forecast would keep the Region's core housing need at 13%. More growth – particularly more medium and higher density housing – is needed to better address core housing need (i.e. affordability).

Before and after the May Joint Report release, the Region met individually with planning staff at each local municipality to discuss growth forecasts, among other things. The Region also held five public meetings and dozens of meetings with

interested parties about its forecasts, land needs, and boundary matters. The need to address housing affordability was raised consistently in these meetings.

Additionally, the Region has progressed on the Transportation Master Plan (“TMP”), the Water and Wastewater Master Plan (“WMP”) and its Development Charge Background Study and By-law update (“DCS”). This process is collectively called “Niagara 2051”. It involves a working group of staff across many departments and public consultation events held in the spring 2021. More is planned in 2021 and 2022.

Since the release of the May 2021 forecasts, the Region carefully considered individual feedback received. Staff also conducted a further review of individual growth areas and existing and proposed development applications. Additional progress on the background work to the Natural Environment System has been made since May 2021.

On this basis, Staff identified two categories of change that have modified the LNA from what was presented in May 2021. The first is that additional population and intensification growth be planned for Lincoln and Welland. The second is that adjustments be made to better integrate the Natural Environment Option 3B/3C in to the growth forecasts.

The Growth Plan (2020) allows Niagara to use alternative growth forecasts beyond those identified in Growth Plan Schedule 3. The forecasts provided here are referenced as the “Made-in-Niagara Forecast” since they represent an alternative growth forecast that works better for the Region.

Through the comments received, and additional analysis done by the Region, Staff determined that the draft May 2021 Forecasts for the Lincoln and Welland were likely to be achieved earlier than set out in the 2051 planning period. Higher forecasts are required to ensure alignment with infrastructure investment and to achieve market based demand.

In both Lincoln and Welland, the areas identified for development (beyond the preliminary forecast) are within existing urban, built up areas with development and redevelopment potential. These locations are considered intensification opportunities and will support a broader, more affordable housing mix through this development/redevelopment.

As a result of the increased population forecasts in these municipalities, and the Region overall, these municipalities will achieve a higher intensification rate. In

other words, more development is proposed within the existing boundaries. There is no impact to Community Area (residential/mixed use) land need from this adjustment.

The Made-in-Niagara Forecast and increased intensification rates do not result in additional land through boundary expansions.

The proposed additional intensification for Lincoln and Welland is important to reflect the planned infrastructure to sustain the growth. The Region seeks to proactively plan to accommodate growth and to ensure communities are more sustainable, better connected, healthy and safe. The addition will also better address core housing needs identified by CANCEA.

Recently, at the May 20, 2021 Regional Council meeting, Council directed Staff to prepare policies and mapping for both Natural Environment System (NES) Option 3B and 3C, with a decision on the preferred NES Option to be made at a later time. The finalization of criteria and methodology has begun, and policies and mapping is under way, with reporting later this year. Consultation with the local municipalities on mapping and policy development is ongoing.

Since May 2021, the Region has refined the analysis of developable area based on the NES Options. The most current information for Options 3B and 3C identified a need to remove non-developable lands from the land needs assessment calculation.

In other words, more land should be protected than identified in the May 2021 Forecast; in turn, less land is available for development.

This results in a greater *overall need* for land (since less is available for development). This means a small increase of land is needed for the Community Area (i.e. residential and mixed use) and a modest increase in land needed for Employment Areas (i.e. mostly industrial areas).

Through consultation with the Province, the Region has also been advised that the LNA should result in a single number for land need; a blended number where Community Area land need and Employment Area land need are combined.

In the May 2021 LNA, the Region's net overall land need was 440 hectares. From the above-noted changes, the Region's current overall net land need is 705 hectares.

Additional context and information is provided throughout this document, with particular focus on those component that were revised from the May 2021 LNA.

Community Area Land Needs Assessment

Community Area is defined as the Urban Area, minus *Employment Areas*, and is made up of both the *Delineated Built-Up Area* (as defined and mapped by the Province in 2006) and the Designated Greenfield Area (DGA).

The *Community Area* part of the Land Needs Assessment seeks to quantify the amount (in hectares) of DGA lands that is needed to accommodate the required growth forecasts to 2051.

The *Community Area* Land Needs Assessment is comprised of six components. Below is a discussion of those components and the results.

Component 1: Population Forecasts

The starting point is the population projection by age group for the Region. This comes from *Growth Plan* Schedule 3, which provides a *minimum* forecast 2051 population of 674,000 for Niagara Region.

Through the work described above, the Region is advancing an alternative growth forecast, referred to as the “Made-in-Niagara Forecast”. This better reflects the growth potential in Niagara’s communities and current work on the NES.

For the reasons set out in this report, the Made-in-Niagara Forecast uses a population of 694,000.

Component 2: Housing Need

The Region has done significant forecasting work, over several years, and based on input from many stakeholders. Most recently, its forecasting work was set out in Report, PDS 17-2021 Appendix 3, Growth Allocation Update to 2051 prepared by Hemson (“*2051 Growth Update Memo*”, 2021).

The *Methodology* requires population to be converted into housing units based on household formation rates. Household formation rates are based on the likelihood or tendency of age groups to live in households.

Niagara’s household formation rates are anticipated to increase between 2016 (the base Census year) and 2051. A contributing factor is Niagara’s aging demographic,

which will continue to grow to 2051, with a significant increase in households maintained by people 75 years of age and older.

The 2051 housing forecast has been updated to reflect the Made-in-Niagara Forecast, based on the assumptions and age cohorts identified in the *2051 Growth Update Memo*.

Table 1 identifies a need for **296,750 households** based on the 2051 population forecast of 694,000.

Table 1: 2016 and 2051 Occupied Households by Age of Household Maintainer

Age	Headship Rate	Occupied Households		2016-2051 Growth	2016-2051 Growth %
		2016	2051		
15 - 19	1.7%	430	566	136	31.7%
20 - 24	14.5%	4,000	5,066	1,066	26.6%
25 - 29	35.2%	8,640	12,768	4,128	47.8%
30 - 34	48.7%	11,435	17,566	6,131	53.6%
35 - 39	52.9%	12,385	19,461	7,076	57.1%
40 - 44	54.1%	13,825	20,130	6,305	45.6%
45 - 49	57.4%	16,365	22,220	5,855	35.8%
50 - 54	57.7%	19,920	24,897	4,977	25.0%
55 - 59	58.6%	20,050	25,948	5,898	29.4%
60 - 64	58.9%	18,845	25,093	6,248	33.2%
65 - 69	61.2%	18,015	25,711	7,696	42.7%
70 - 74	61.7%	13,675	24,331	10,656	77.9%
75 - 79	65.3%	10,480	24,207	13,727	131.0%
80 - 84	66.5%	8,190	21,747	13,557	165.5%
84 - 89	60.7%	5,185	15,991	10,806	208.4%
90 +	46.3%	2,390	11,048	8,658	362.3%
Total	48.2% (2016)	183,830	296,750	112,920	61.4%
	50.8% (2051)				

The forecast population age structure and household formation information is further used to determine households by housing type. The *Methodology* requires housing forecast by four housing types; single/semi-detached, row houses, accessory dwelling and apartment.

As referenced in the *2051 Growth Update Memo*, the starting point for household forecast by housing type was a market-based demand. Market-based demand is a key consideration within the LNA process and, along with housing affordability, is one of the main drivers in establishing housing mix and land need requirements.

The Made-in-Niagara Forecast is driven by an increase of medium and high density housing within existing urban areas. The resulting housing mix, compared to the mix presented in *2051 Growth Update Memo*, is slightly lower for single and semi-detached homes and greater for other housing types. However, there is an overall increase in all housing unit types and is based predominantly on recent development application trends and inquires. Therefore, while the housing mix has changed slightly, it remains reflective of market demand, supports additional intensification, and better aligns with recommendations from CANCEA regarding affordability and core housing need.

Table 2 provides a summary of household forecast by housing type between 2021 and 2051.

Table 1: Household Forecast by Housing Type - 2021 to 2051

Household Forecast by Housing Type: 2021 to 2051					
Niagara Region	Single/Semi-Detached	Row House	Accessory Dwelling	Apartment Building	Total
Units	44,318	27,404	3,390	27,653	102,765
Share	43%	27%	3%	27%	100%

Component 3: Allocation of Housing Need to Local Municipalities

Allocation of Housing Need to local municipalities is based on input from local municipalities and public and private stakeholders.

Draft allocation covering the period between 2016 and 2041 was completed through Niagara 2041 (see PDS 37-2016) and formed the basis for completion of the pre-2017 Municipal Comprehensive Review (see PDS 21-2018).

Municipal allocations were revised and extended to the 2051 planning horizon through the *2051 Growth Update Memo*, based on the need to reflect market demand for housing and informed by associated Official Plan strategies, including Watershed, Housing and Employment Strategies.

After release of the May 2021 Forecasts, consultation and collaboration continued with local municipalities, internal Niagara 2051 working group and the public.. Through this work, it was identified that municipal allocations of population growth to the Town of Lincoln and City of Welland were not reflective of growth expectations and anticipated 2051 infrastructure demand.

On this basis, staff increased the population forecast to 694,000 people – an increase of 10,000 to each of Lincoln and Welland. The increase of 20,000 population results in an additional 9,000 housing units to 2051.

All housing units are located within the existing built boundary, support intensification and contribute to the mix of housing needed to improve housing affordability.

Housing Affordability

The Housing Report (CANCEA, 2021) provided in PDS 17-2021 (Appendix 5.2), sets out that the Region's core housing need (including, affordability) will get worse if we continue growth at the existing level. Achieving the minimum forecasts set out the *Growth Plan* will keep the core housing need level at about 13%. To reduce core housing need, even more housing is needed.

Importantly, core housing need can be addressed by providing a greater share of higher density housing types. Row/townhouse and apartment units have a lower average number of people per unit compared to single and semi-detached units. Therefore, increasing the supply of higher density units leads to more housing options and reduced core housing need.

The Made-in-Niagara Forecast supports higher population growth and an increased amount of medium and high density housing. Therefore, this forecast will better address core housing need.

The LNA considers a market-based housing mix and its relationship to the planned housing mix. This is a requirement of the *Methodology*. A market-based approach is useful to identify an appropriate variety of housing units to be built to meet the needs of Niagara's population.

The Greenbelt specialty crop designation, present in northern Niagara municipalities, prohibits expansion of Settlement Areas boundaries. In the communities of Grimsby, Lincoln, St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake, growth is proposed within existing Settlement Areas through intensification of the Built-Up Area – requiring a greater proportion of higher density housing types.

Municipalities outside of the *Greenbelt Plan* area have a relatively lower intensification rate and, therefore, a higher proportion of lower density housing types. The balance between these two geographies is important for supporting market-based demand for housing and protection of specialty crop lands within the Greenbelt Plan area.

Table 3 provides municipal-level housing allocations by housing type.

Table 3: Housing Unit Growth by Type and Municipality, 2021 to 2051

Housing Unit Growth by Type and Municipality, 2021 to 2051				
Municipality	Single/Semi	Row	Apartment	Total
Fort Erie	4,060	2,700	600	7,360
Grimsby	130	1,340	3,120	4,590
Lincoln	1,590	2,530	5,695	9,815
Niagara Falls	11,980	5,090	3,140	20,210
Niagara-on-the-Lake	3,060	915	630	4,600
Pelham	2,380	1,070	680	4,130
Port Colborne	1,690	430	180	2,300
St. Catharines	3,040	4,500	12,230	19,770
Thorold	3,900	2,390	160	6,450
Wainfleet	450	0	10	460
Welland	6,010	4,050	4,290	13,930
West Lincoln	6,030	2,390	310	8,730
Niagara Region	44,320	27,405	31,040	102,765

Component 4: Housing Supply Potential by Policy Area

The *Methodology* requires municipalities to plan for growth within three policy areas:

1. Delineated Built-Up Area
2. Designated Greenfield Area
3. Rural Area

Development within the *delineated built-up area* is referred to as Intensification. The *delineated built-up area* was established by the Province in 2008 and was further refined through Niagara 2031, the Region's Growth Management Strategy that implemented the policies of the 2006 Growth Plan.

The *Growth Plan* requires 50% of future household growth in Niagara to be directed to the *delineated built-up area*. This is an increase from 40% in the Region’s current Official Plan, which was the intensification target in the 2006 Growth Plan.

The Region seeks to exceed this requirement. The analysis conducted through the Regional Structure Strategy (PDS 17-2021 Appendix 4.2) identified a Regional Intensification Rate of 56%.

Recent work – based on public consultation and the Niagara 2051 servicing review – suggests Niagara can have an even higher intensification rate. As previously noted, the additional population for Lincoln and Welland is entirely planned within the delineated built-up area. No changes are needed to Strategic Growth Areas (SGA) or settlement boundaries from what was set out in the Regional Structure Strategy, as identified in PDS 17-2021, Appendix 4.2.

The outcome of this recent work reflects an intensification target of 60%.

This target is well above the minimum 50% target identified in the *Growth Plan*.

The *Designated Greenfield Area* (“DGA”) is the remainder of the designated urban area outside of the *delineated built-up area*.

The *Growth Plan* sets out that the Region must plan for a minimum density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare within the DGA. This target is incorporated in the LNA.

The Rural Area is considered all areas outside of Urban Settlement Areas, and includes the Agricultural System and Rural Settlements (Hamlets). Rural housing need will be addressed in the final Land Needs Assessment. The Rural Land Needs Assessment is discussed in detail later in this report.

Housing forecasts by municipality, within the three policy areas, is based on an assessment of intensification opportunities, including SGA’s, and development potential within the DGA. Intensification rates, established through the Regional Structure, are based on a combination of consultation with local municipalities and an assessment of the capacity for growth within the *delineated built-up area*.

Table 4 provides household forecast by policy area for each municipality and identifies the overall intensification rate of 60%.

Table 4: Housing Forecast by Policy Area and Municipality, 2021 to 2051

Shares of Household Growth by Policy Area Niagara Region by Local Municipality, 2021-2051				
Municipality	Built Up Area	DGA	Rural	Total
Fort Erie	50%	49.5%	0.5%	100%
Grimsby	98%	2.5%	0.5%	100%
Lincoln	90%	9.5%	0.5%	100%
Niagara Falls	50%	49.5%	0.5%	100%
Niagara-on-the-Lake	25%	74.5%	0.5%	100%
Pelham	25%	74.5%	0.5%	100%
Port Colborne	30%	69.6%	0.5%	100%
St. Catharines	95%	4.5%	0.5%	100%
Thorold	25%	74.5%	0.5%	100%
Wainfleet	0%	0%	100.0%	100%
Welland	75%	24.5%	0.5%	100%
West Lincoln	13%	86.5%	0.5%	100%
Niagara Region	60%	39%	1%	100.0%

As with Component 3, the *Methodology* requires housing forecasts within each of the policy areas to be broken out into housing type. The distribution of housing type within each policy area must be based on an achievable housing mix and consider market-demand.

Within the *delineated built-up area*, the housing mix is predominately higher density forms of housing including row and apartment housing. In contrast, the housing forecast within the DGA and Rural area is predominately ground-related, with 73% of units anticipated to be single or semi-detached.

Table 5 and **Table 6** provide housing unit forecasts by municipality within the *delineated built-up area* and DGA.

The Township of Wainfleet is excluded from both tables as Wainfleet does not have an Urban Settlement Area and all forecast housing growth will occur within the *Rural Area*, in Rural Settlements and on other agricultural lands. Additional detail is provided in the Rural Settlement Area Assessment section.

Table 2: Housing Forecast by Unit Type, Delineated Built-Up Area, 2021 to 2051

Delineated Built-Up Area Housing Unit Growth, 2021 to 2051				
Municipality	Single/Semi	Row	Apartment	Total
Fort Erie	1,520	1,620	540	3,680
Grimsby	110	1,330	3,060	4,500
Lincoln	1,430	1,920	5,545	8,895
Niagara Falls	4,220	3,050	2,830	10,100
Niagara-on-the-Lake	238	350	563	1,150
Pelham	350	500	180	1,030
Port Colborne	400	130	160	690
St. Catharines	2,480	4,370	11,930	18,780
Thorold	580	890	140	1,610
Welland	2,920	3,330	4,190	10,440
West Lincoln	760	120	250	1,130
Niagara Region	15,008	17,610	29,388	62,005

Table 3: Housing Forecast by Unit Type, DGA, 2021 to 2051

Designated Greenfield Area Housing Unit Growth, 2021 to 2051				
Municipality	Single/Semi	Row	Apartment	Total
Fort Erie	2,500	1,080	60	3,640
Grimsby	0	10	60	70
Lincoln	140	610	150	900
Niagara Falls	7,660	2,040	310	10,010
Niagara-on-the-Lake	2,800	564	66	3,430
Pelham	2,010	570	500	3,080
Port Colborne	1,280	300	20	1,600
St. Catharines	460	130	300	890
Thorold	3,290	1,500	20	4,810
Welland	2,630	720	100	3,450
West Lincoln	5,230	2,270	60	7,560
Niagara Region	28,000	9,794	1,646	39,440

Component 5: Community Area Jobs

The *Methodology* requires *Community Area* jobs be allocated within the DGA portion of the *Community Area* to calculate the total number of residents and jobs occurring within it.

Community Area jobs are predominately within the Major Office and Population-Related Employment categories. For the purposes of the *Community Area* assessment, *Community Area* jobs are further distinguished between the *delineated built-up area* and *designated greenfield area*.

Community Area jobs were calculated based on existing development proposals, land use permissions, and factoring in Work At Home employment.

Work At Home

Work at Home employment is incorporated into the Land Needs Assessment impacts *Community* and *Employment Area* Land needs.

Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic to the time of preparing this LNA Summary, many jobs have shifted to a Work at Home setting, although the Region does not have specific data quantifying such a shift.

At the time of writing, the Region and other experts are unsure the long-term impacts for Work at Home. For the preparation of the LNA, this is an important consideration for how Work at Home may impact the calculation of different Employment Types.

In Niagara, the majority of *Employment Areas* are considered Core and Dynamic (as defined in the Employment Strategy, **Appendix 10.2**). Jobs within these areas are largely categorized as Employment Land Employment and occur onsite. Therefore, moving Employment Land Employment jobs out of *Employment Areas* would result in an erroneous reduction in *Employment Area* land requirements.

Alternatively, Major Office and Population-Related Employment jobs are those that are most likely to be Work at Home. In other words, those are the types of jobs that may see long-term Work from Home changes. That type of job is predominantly located within the *Community Area*.

The approach taken in the LNA is to maintain similar Work at Home rates, generally consistent with pre-Covid-19 pandemic conditions. This ensures the greatest flexibility within *Employment Areas* and maintains a sufficient supply of lands in the event there is not a significant long-term shift to Work at Home.

In this way, the Region is being conservative in its LNA. Work from Home trends will be carefully monitored and, if warranted, future Official Plan changes will be advanced to address those trends.

Table 7 provides an estimated number of jobs within the DGA portion of the Community Area for each urban municipality.

Table 4: DGA Community Area Job Forecast, 2021 to 2051

DGA Community Area Job Forecast, 2021-2051	
Municipality	Total
Fort Erie	247
Grimsby	5
Lincoln	744
Niagara Falls	1,065
Niagara-on-the-Lake	1,091
Pelham	559
Port Colborne	362
St. Catharines	1,555
Thorold	532
Welland	266
West Lincoln	1,998
Niagara Region	8,424

Component 6: Need for Additional Land

The final component of the *Community Area* LNA brings together the forecast housing units and employment within the DGA to establish an overall land need based on achieving the minimum density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare.

To determine land need, the forecast housing units in **Table 6** are compared to the planned units (units that are within either a draft or registered Plan of Subdivision) within each municipality. The surplus, or shortfall, of units is converted into residents based on the Persons Per Unit rate¹ for each unit type.

¹ The Person Per Unit (PPU) rate is based on the 2017 Niagara Region Development Charges Background Study. This Study provides a PPU of 2.91 for single/semi-detached, 2.12 for row and 1.62 for apartment. PPU rates may be revised based on forthcoming Development Charges Study work undertaken later in 2021.

Finally, DGA Community Area job forecasts in **Table 7** are added to establish an overall people and jobs target for the DGA.

The overall population and employment target is converted to a land need in hectares based on the minimum density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare.²

Table 8 provides the *Community Area* Land Needs Assessment results.

Table 5: Overall Community Area Land Need, 2021 to 2051

DGA Community Area Land Need, 2021-2051				
Municipality	Population and Employment Growth within the Unplanned DGA	Area Required (ha)	Area Designated³ (ha)	Additional Land Need (ha)*
Fort Erie	8,170	165	60	105
Grimsby	120	5	0	5
Lincoln	2,410	25	25	0
Niagara Falls	23,470	470	195	270
Niagara-on-the-Lake	9,935	80	75	5
Pelham	3,215	65	25	40
Port Colborne	4,615	90	250	(160)
St. Catharines	3,655	75	60	15
Thorold	4,830	95	250	(155)
Welland	5,770	115	115	0
West Lincoln	20,545	410	40	370
Niagara Region	86,735	1,590	1,095	495

Note: Above numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5.

² The density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare excludes Lincoln, which has a vacant DGA target of 100 people and jobs per hectare due to the land use permissions within the Major Transit Station Area and Niagara-on-the-Lake, which has a target of 125 people and jobs per hectare relating to the Glendale District Plan.

³ The Area Designated is the gross developable land, within the Designated Greenfield Area, free of non-developable features identified within the *Growth Plan*. The Natural Environment System (NES) area removed is based on draft analysis associated with NES Option 3B/3C as of July 2021.

Community Area Land Needs Summary

Niagara's 12 local municipalities can be placed into two general categories as it pertains to the Made-in-Niagara Forecast results for Community Area:

1. Additional Community Area Land Required

The Town of Fort Erie, City of Niagara Falls and Township of West Lincoln needs more community area land to accommodate the 2051 forecast. The Town of Pelham has a small need for community area land.

2. No Additional Community Area Land Required

The Town of Grimsby, Town of Lincoln, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, City of St. Catharines, and City of Welland generally have a sufficient supply of designated lands to accommodate the 2051 forecast.

The City of Thorold and City of Port Colborne have a surplus of designated lands to 2051.

Additional Considerations and Revisions

The *Methodology* allows for final adjustments to be made to *Community Area* Land Needs, including a minor increase to land in the event of any expansions, to create a logical boundary.

The *Methodology* also allows for refinements based on constrained lands due to infrastructure and servicing. Determining servicing constraints will be important in assessing lands that may be considered constrained, rather than surplus.

Finally, revisions to associated strategies will require updates to the Land Needs Assessment. Work on the Natural Environmental System (NES) is ongoing and draft mapping and policies will be released in Fall 2021. Updates to the NES may require minor adjustments to the LNA.

If an *Employment Area* boundary is changed, it will directly impact the *Community Area* land need. If the *Employment Area* is within the BUA, the result may be an increase to Intensification Rate. If the *Employment Area* is within the DGA, the result would be a decrease in *Community Area* land needs.

The final Land Needs Assessment will be a combined overall number of community area and employment area. That requires endorsement by Council and will be provided to the Province for approval.

Employment Area Land Needs Assessment

Component 1: Employment Forecasts

Similar to the *Community Area* assessment, the starting point for determining the overall *Employment Area* land need is the employment forecast set out in *Growth Plan* Schedule 3. The *Growth Plan* requires Niagara Region to plan for a minimum employment base of **272,000 jobs** by 2051.

The *Methodology* requires the employment forecast to be allocated to local municipalities and be categorized by employment type, including Major Office, Population-Related Employment, Employment Land Employment and Rural based employment. These employment types are defined within the **Glossary of Terms** section at the end of this report.

2051 Growth Update Memo sets out the distribution of employment forecasts for Niagara Region.

Table 9 provides an overview of employment growth by municipality, by employment type, from 2021 to 2051.

Table 6: Niagara Region Employment Growth, 2021 to 2051, by Employment Type

Total Employment Growth by Employment Type, 2021-2051					
Municipality	Major Office	Population-Related Employment	Employment Land Employment	Rural Employment	Total Employment
Fort Erie	140	2,890	3,430	440	6,900
Grimsby	380	2,070	1,130	390	3,970
Lincoln	100	1,580	1,390	1,500	4,570
Niagara Falls	1,150	15,550	2,770	850	20,320
Niagara-on-the-Lake	350	3,040	290	1,480	5,160
Pelham	10	1,600	0	710	2,320
Port Colborne	0	750	350	540	1,640
St. Catharines	4,970	10,780	2,880	590	19,220
Thorold	250	2,540	580	170	3,540
Wainfleet	0	0	0	420	420
Welland	360	4,610	5,300	480	10,750
West Lincoln	160	3,580	1,760	520	6,020
Niagara Region	7,870	48,990	19,880	8,090	84,830

Source: Hemson Consulting, Niagara Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – Growth Allocation Update to 2051

Component 2: Employment Allocation

The *Methodology* requires municipalities to further refine forecasts by allocating employment to the *Community*, *Employment*, and *Rural Areas*.

Employment that is expected to occur outside of urban settlement area boundaries is allocated to the *rural area*. The *Methodology* sets out that a small share of employment land employment and population-related employment should be allocated to the *rural area*. This is particularly important in Niagara where certain local municipalities have existing industrial, manufacturing and greenhouse operations within the *rural area*.

The remaining, non-rural jobs are allocated to *Community Area* and *Employment Areas* within settlement areas. Within Niagara, the vast majority of population-

related employment is based within the *Community Area*; only about 5%⁴ occurring within *Employment Areas*.

Major office growth is also predominately within the *Community Area*, Urban Growth Centre and Major Transit Station Areas. However, some major office currently exists within some *Employment Areas* and some growth is expected to occur within those areas accordingly.

Finally, the vast majority of employment land employment job growth will occur within the remaining *Employment Areas*.

Table 10 provides a summary of employment forecasts by location.

Table 7: Employment Growth by Type and Municipality, 2021 to 2051

Employment Growth by Policy Area, 2021-2051			
Municipality	Community Area	Employment Area	Rural Area
Fort Erie	2,787	3,610	503
Grimsby	2,136	1,412	422
Lincoln	1,535	1,241	1,794
Niagara Falls	15,786	3,501	1,033
Niagara-on-the-Lake	2,250	1,397	1,513
Pelham	1,594	0	726
Port Colborne	705	384	551
St. Catharines	14,253	4,269	727
Thorold	2,005	1,311	230
Wainfleet	0	0	420
Welland	4,513	5,658	579
West Lincoln	3,445	2,001	573
Niagara Region	51,009	24,784	9,072

Component 3: Employment Area Capacity

The *Methodology* requires employment potential within existing Employment Areas be determined.

⁴ 5% is an average. This varies by municipality, particularly those with Knowledge and Innovation Employment Areas as they have a higher share of population-related employment compared to Core and Dynamic Employment Areas.

This is calculated based on the vacant *Employment Area* employment lands and densities identified within the Employment Strategy.

The Employment Policy Paper (PDS 17-2021, Appendix 10.2) provides a breakdown of occupied and vacant lands, as well as associated densities, for each of the 34 Employment Areas across the Region.

Table 11 provides a summary of existing capacity within Employment Areas, by municipality.

Table 8: Existing Employment Area Potential for Additional Employment

Existing Employment Area Potential	
Municipality	Additional Employment Potential
Fort Erie	1,264
Grimsby	1,679
Lincoln	500
Niagara Falls	3,079
Niagara-on-the-Lake	3,421
Pelham	0
Port Colborne	1,538
St. Catharines	2,663
Thorold	2,128
Wainfleet	0
Welland	4,552
West Lincoln	885
Niagara Region	21,709

Component 4: Need for Additional Employment Area Land

The final step in determining the *Employment Area* land need is to compare the forecast growth (**Table 10**) with the job growth potential within existing *Employment Areas* (**Table 11**). The difference between the forecast and the potential is divided by the municipal level vacant *Employment Area* land density target.

The vacant density target is based on the sub-grouping of employment type determined through the Employment Policy Paper. Generally, Core Employment Areas, with traditional/heavier employment type uses, have the lowest vacant land density target. Knowledge and Innovation Employment Areas, with more major office type uses, have the highest density target. Dynamic Employment Areas can have a mix of traditional and lighter employment type uses and have densities that fall in between Core and Knowledge and Innovation.

Employment Area Densities

Changes to any Employment Area density target within the Employment Strategy will directly impact the Existing Employment Area Potential in **Table 11** and Vacant Employment Area Density Target in **Table 12**. This will either increase or decrease the associated amount of Employment Area land required to meet 2051 forecasts.

Table 12 provides a summary of the Employment Area Land Needs.

Table 9: Employment Area Land Need, by Municipality, 2021 to 2051

Employment Area Land Need by Municipality, 2021-2051			
Municipality	Unaccommodated Employment Growth	Vacant Employment Area Density Target (Jobs/ha)	Employment Area Land Need (ha)*
Fort Erie	2,345	15	155
Grimsby	(265)	50	(5)
Lincoln	740	45	15
Niagara Falls	420	35	10
Niagara-on-the-Lake	(2,025)	95	(20)
Pelham	0	0	0
Port Colborne	(1,155)	30	(40)
St. Catharines	1,605	50	30
Thorold	(815)	25	(35)
Wainfleet	0	0	0
Welland	1,105	25	45
West Lincoln	1,115	25	45
Niagara Region	3,075	32	210

Note: Above numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Employment Area Land Needs Summary

The result of the *Employment Area* component of the LNA suggests the Town of Fort Erie, City of Welland and Township of West Lincoln do not have sufficient supply of *Employment Area* to accommodate the forecast growth to 2051.

As noted earlier in this Summary, since May 2021, NES work identified that additional vacant lands need to be removed from the developable area calculated in the land needs assessment. This removal of land was most predominant for employment areas in certain municipalities with a greater vacant employment area land surplus. Specifically, this had the largest impact in Port Colborne and Thorold.

In the current LNA, the surplus has been reduced significantly for these municipalities.

Overall the Region has a need for 210 Hectares of Employment Area.

Rural Land Needs Assessment

As directed by the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology, an additional assessment was undertaken for Rural Settlement Areas.

Niagara has a modest population and employment base outside of urban settlement areas. Limited growth is anticipated to continue within rural areas and rural settlement areas. Between 2021 and 2051, the *2051 Growth Update Memo* forecast an additional 900 housing units and 8,090 jobs will occur within the rural area.

The Rural Settlement Area assessment determines where the forecast growth will occur within the rural areas and if additional land is required within rural settlement area boundaries (also known as Hamlets).

The Rural Land Needs Assessment has been restricted to municipalities where Rural Settlement Areas currently exist and are outside of the Greenbelt Plan Area. In other words, the analysis only considers the potential for additional Rural Settlement Area lands where supported by Provincial policies.

Table 13 provides a summary of housing and employment forecasts within both the Rural Area and the proportion to be directed to Rural Settlement Areas. Distribution of units and employment to Rural Settlement Areas is based on historic trends and policy direction within associated Local Official Plans.

Table 13: Rural Area and Rural Settlement Area Forecasts

Rural Area and Rural Settlement Area Forecasts: 2021 to 2051				
Municipality	Rural Area Housing Forecast	Rural Area Employment Forecast	% Rural Employment to Rural Settlement Areas	% Units to Rural Settlement Areas
Fort Erie	40	500	0%	10%
Port Colborne	10	550	100%	100%
Wainfleet	420	460	50%	60%
West Lincoln	40	570	100%	50%

Consultation is ongoing with local municipalities to determine the capacity of existing Rural Settlement Areas, vacant lands and NES mapping. The above Rural Land Needs Assessment may be refined as part of that consultation and included

with the new Niagara Official Plan. It will include a summary of need within Rural Settlement Areas.

Land Needs Assessment Results

This Land Needs Assessment provides a total amount of land required to support the Made-in-Niagara 2051 forecasts.

The Province requires the Region provide a cumulative need of Community Area and Employment Area assessments. **Niagara Region requires a cumulative need of 705 hectares of additional developable urban lands to support a minimum of 694,000 people and 274,000 jobs by 2051.**

Conclusion

This LNA Summary provides a revised draft assessment of how *Community Area* and *Employment Area* land need is calculated.

The *Growth Plan* requires that the Province approve the Region's final LNA. The Region has been consulting with the Province on the draft LNA and will continue to communicate until a final assessment is presented to Council as part of the Niagara Official Plan in 2022.

In preparing this document, careful consideration was given to input from the public, agency and local area municipalities, as outlined above. The Region will continue to consult and make minor refinements in preparing the final LNA as part of the new Official Plan. The next round of public consultation is planned for fall 2021.

Regional staff will seek endorsement in principle of these Forecasts. After that, substantive changes are not planned. However, refinements to the overall need, or distribution between municipalities, may be required. The overall land need should generally remain. This is to ensure consistent recommendations can be advanced for settlement boundaries changes and the Niagara 2051 servicing strategies.

Glossary of Terms

Community Area: Areas where most of the housing required to accommodate the forecasted population will be located, as well as most population-related jobs, most office jobs and some employment land employment jobs. Community areas include delineated built-up areas and designated greenfield areas (Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology).

Delineated Built-Up Area: The limits of the developed urban area as defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of measuring the minimum intensification target in the Growth Plan (Growth Plan).

Designated Greenfield Area: Lands within *settlement areas* (not including *rural settlements*) but outside of *delineated built-up areas* that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. *Designated greenfield areas* do not include *excess lands* (Growth Plan).

Employment Area: Areas where most of the employment land employment jobs are (i.e. employment in industrial-type buildings), as well as some office jobs and some population-related jobs, particularly those providing services to the employment area. Employment areas may be located in both delineated built-up areas and designated greenfield areas (Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology).

Employment Land Employment: all employment in urban industrial-type employment areas, excluding major office. As well, large retail concentrations and major institutions that lie within employment areas are excluded from the Employment Land Employment category (2020 Growth Plan).

Excess lands: Vacant, unbuilt but developable lands within settlement areas but outside of delineated built-up areas that have been designated in an official plan for development but are in excess of what is needed to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan (Growth Plan).

Headship Rate: The headship rate is defined as the ratio of the number of household heads or household maintainers to the population 15 years of age and older (Government of Canada).

Intensification: The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a. *redevelopment*, including the reuse of *brownfield sites*;
- b. the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c. infill development; and
- d. the expansion or conversion of existing buildings (PPS, 2020).

Major Office: Freestanding office buildings of approximately 4,000 square metres of floor space or greater, or with approximately 200 jobs or more (Growth Plan).

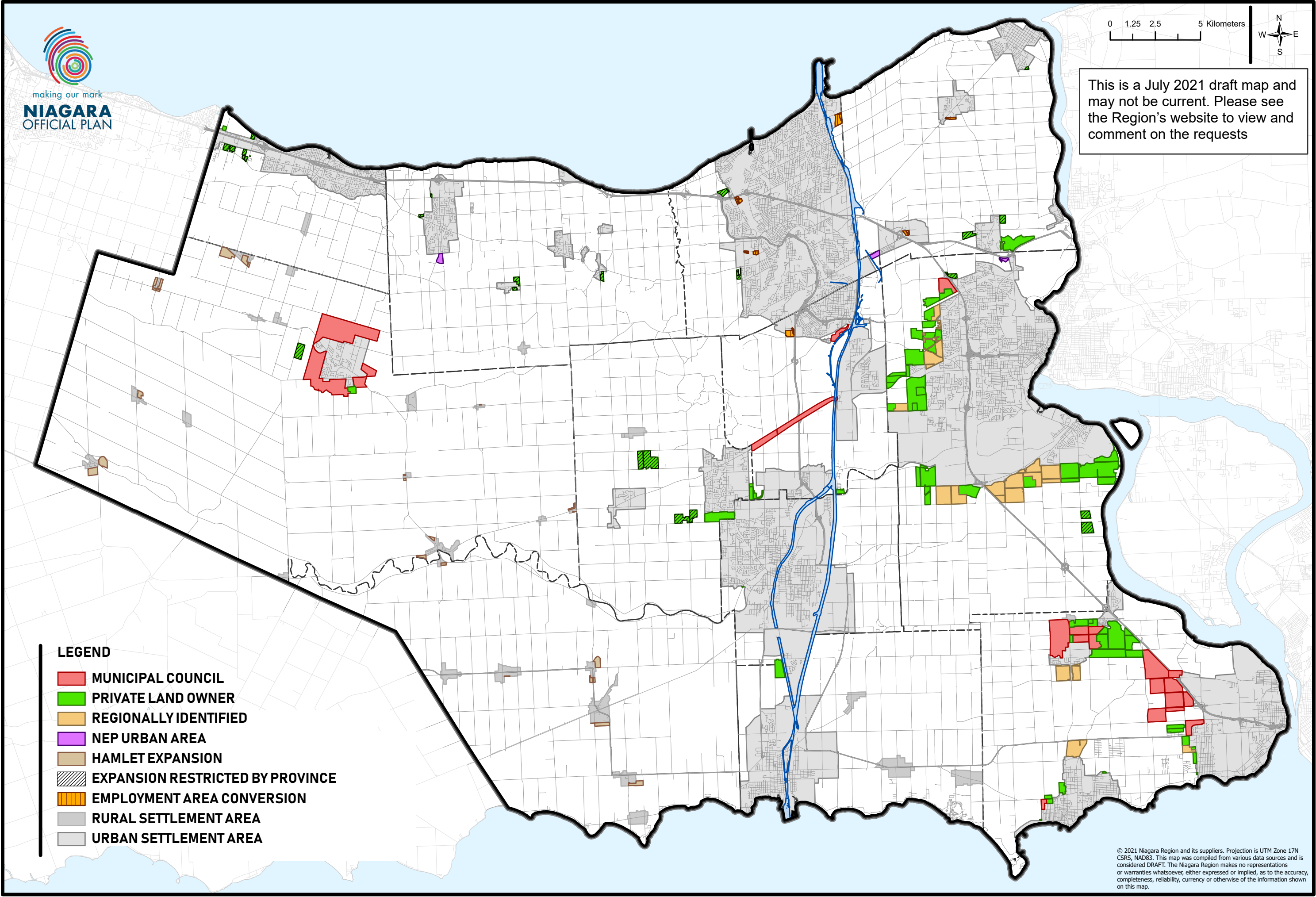
Population-Related Employment: Population-Related Employment is all employment within urban community areas, except major office, and is mainly commercial retail, institutional and urban work at home employment. Major concentrations of retail or large institutions excluded from Employment Land Employment are also part of Population-Related Employment (2051 Growth Update).

Rural Area: Rural Area, for the purposes of the Land Needs Assessment, refers to all lands outside of urban Settlement Area Boundaries. The Rural Area includes Rural Settlements, Prime Agricultural Lands and Rural Lands.

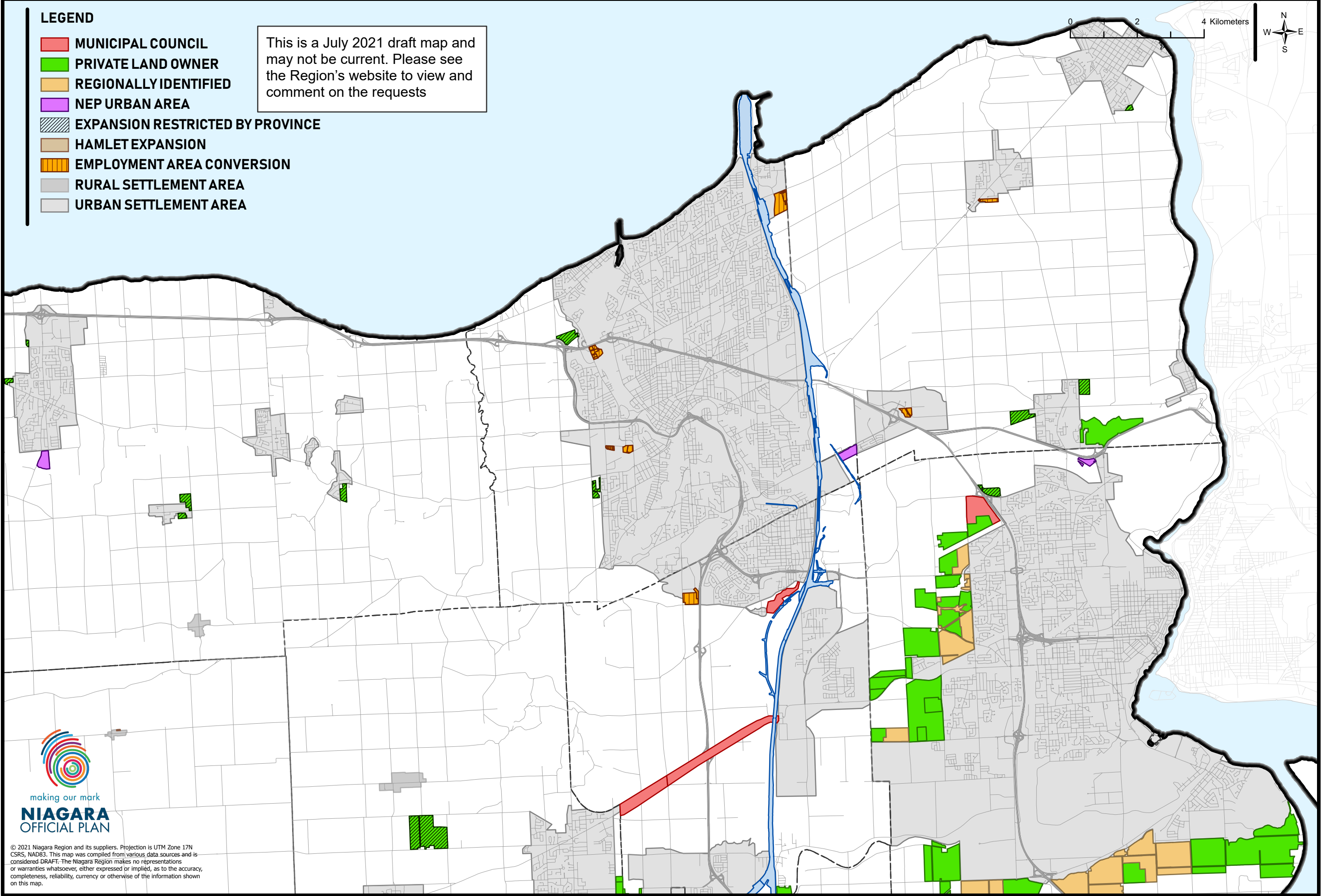
Rural Employment: all employment occurring within the rural geography with the few exceptions for major industrial uses or larger rural industrial areas. Work at home employment is typically a substantial proportion of the rural employment base (Hemson Consulting, Niagara Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – Growth Allocation Update to 2051).

SETTLEMENT AREA BOUDNARY REVIEW REQUESTS

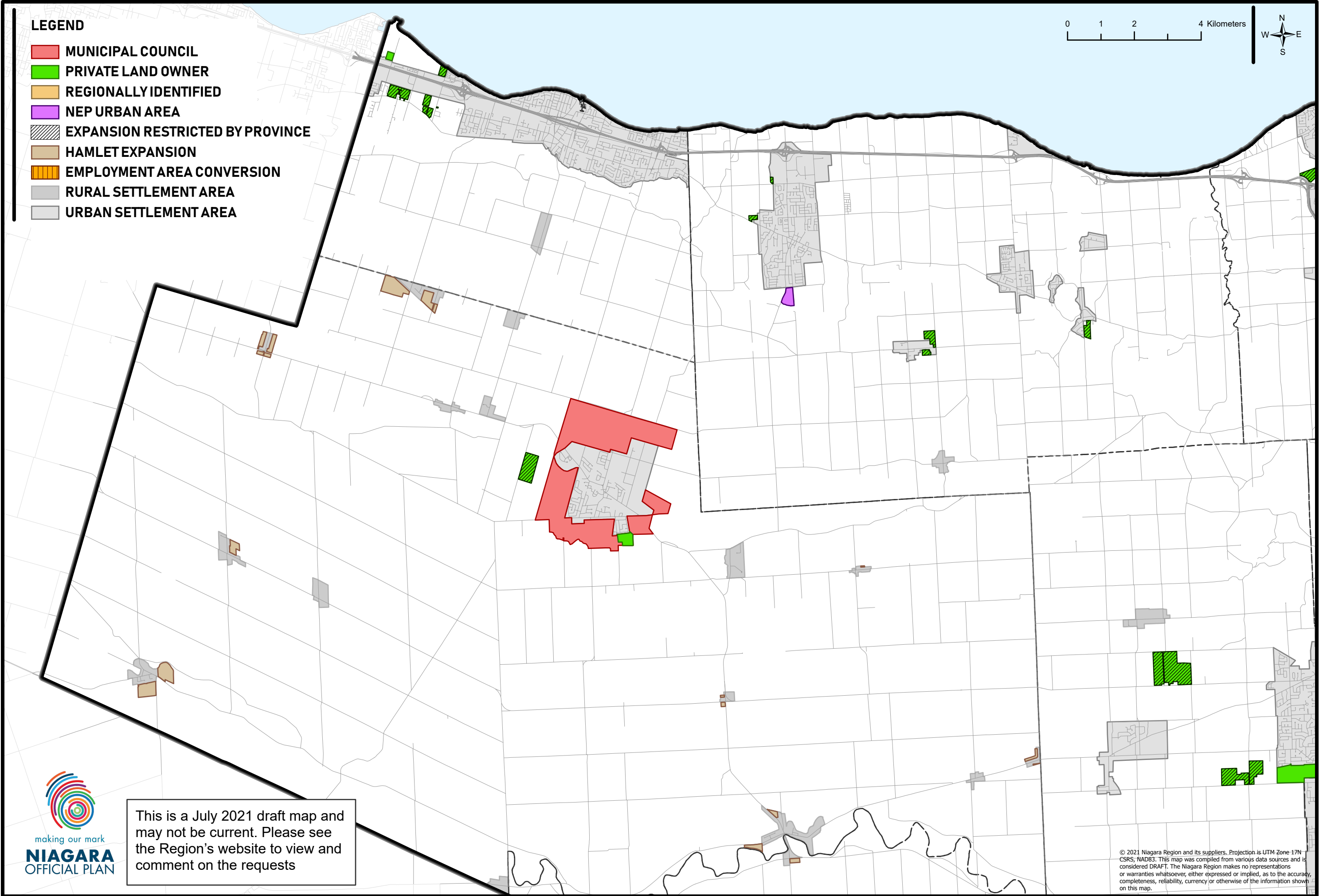
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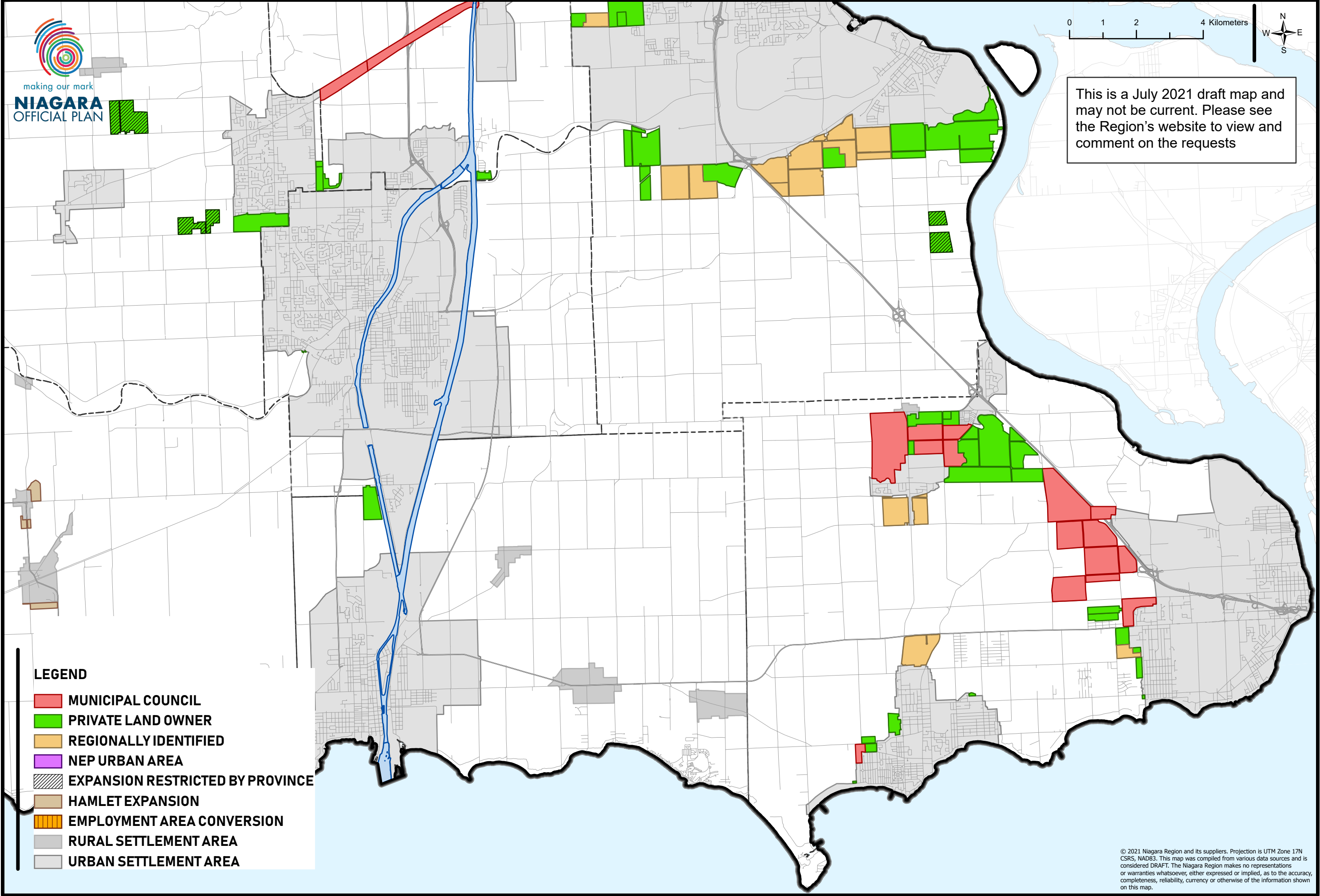
SETTLEMENT AREA BOUDNARY REVIEW REQUESTS



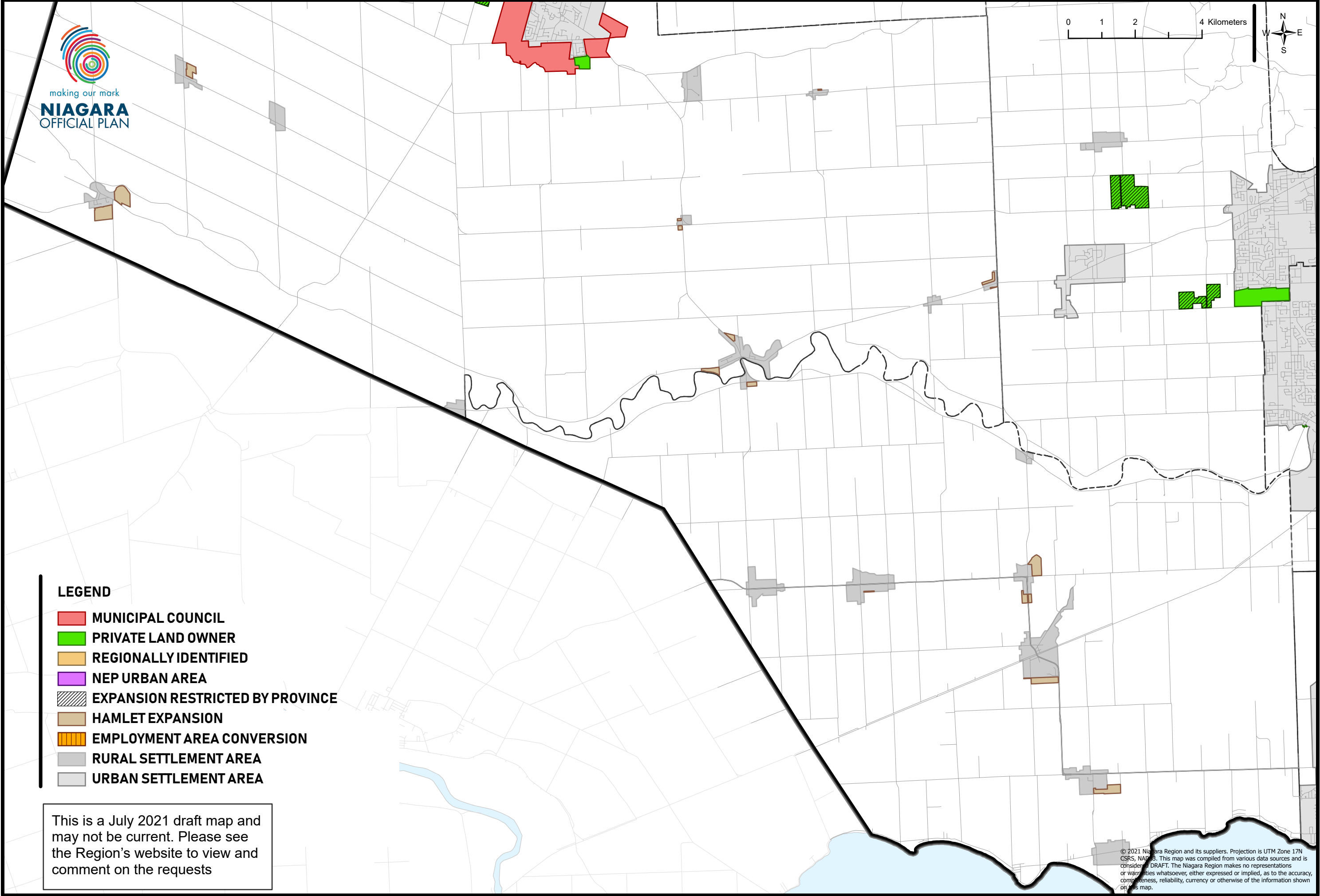
SETTLEMENT AREA BOUDNARY REVIEW REQUESTS



SETTLEMENT AREA BOUDNARY REVIEW REQUESTS



SETTLEMENT AREA BOUDNARY REVIEW REQUESTS



Appendix 3: Summary of Comments Received Relating to Land Needs Assessment and Settlement Area Boundary Review

Below is a summary of written comments received on PDS 17-2021 between May 2021 and July 15, 2021, related specifically to the Land Needs Assessment, Settlement Area Boundary Review, and employment conversions. Comments received verbally through municipal meetings and Public Information Centres are not summarized below.

Detailed comments are available at the Region’s website: [Niagara Official Plan](https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/) https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Town of Pelham	Town staff support 2051 population and Employment forecasts, as well as Town’s intensification rate. This was endorsed by Pelham Council (Report #2021-0108).	Staff acknowledge the Town’s support of the Region’s work to date on the forecasts.	Region Planning staff will continue to consult with Pelham staff on the LNA and related processes.
Town of Pelham	Town staff support draft Community Area land need of 40 ha. This was endorsed by Pelham Council (Report #2021-0108).	Staff agree with Pelham comments on minor expansion need.	Region Planning staff will continue to consult with Pelham staff on minor expansion need through its SABR process.
Town of Pelham	Town staff have identified locations for potential expansion through property owner requests and have provided their assessment of those which are practical for consideration and those which are not, having regard for provincial policies relating to expansion.	Comments received.	Region Planning staff will continue to consult with Pelham staff on minor expansion need through its SABR process.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
City of Niagara Falls	City staff support the 2051 population target of 141,560 people and housing growth of 20,220 units for the 2021 to 2051 period.	Staff acknowledge the City's support of the Region's the work to date on the forecasts.	Region Planning staff will continue to consult with City staff on the LNA and related processes.
City of Niagara Falls	Niagara Falls staff request that the City intensification rate be changed from 50% to 60%, to reflect work undertaken on the City's Housing Needs and Supply Report. Corresponding changes are requested to the Region's Land Needs assessment materials.	Niagara Region staff support the City's Housing work. The Region's Intensification Rates are based on the Land Needs Assessment Methodology released by the Province. The City's Housing work suggested increased intensification to address Housing needs, but did not include analysis of land needs, including market demand.	The Region will continue to work with the City to support the City's Housing work. The City is encouraged to apply a greater intensification rate, above the minimum identified in the Niagara Official Plan, through the City's future Official Plan conformity exercise. At this time, in the Region's Official Plan, we do not intend to change the City's intensification rate from 50% to 60%.
City of Thorold	Identified excess lands through the Regions' LNA need to be addressed through tools and policies in the Region's Official Plan. At this time, those policies and tools have not yet been prepared. Development of these policies and tools should be done in conjunction with local Planning staff.	Work is ongoing on policies and tools to manage lands that are currently designated beyond the 2051 planning horizon.	Additional policies are forthcoming in Fall 2021 to address this comment. Region and Thorold staff will meet to collaboratively work on policies.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Town of Lincoln	Staff opine that Lincoln's population forecasts are low considering current development proposals and the planned higher densities in the Beamsville GO Station Area and Prudhommes area.	Based on a detailed review of the development proposals and servicing to 2051, more population is needed in Lincoln's built-up area.	Lincoln is assigned an additional 10,000 people to 2051, exclusively in the delineated built-up area. This results in an intensification rate of 90% and no additional need for Community Area lands to 2051.
Town of Lincoln	The Region allocated an additional 900 households to Lincoln's Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) over the next 30 years. Lincoln staff opine this figure is low, given the location of DGA in the Beamsville GO Station area planned for higher transit-oriented densities.	The DGA lands in the Beamsville GO Transit Station Area Secondary Plan Land Use Schedule are predominately Office Commercial and Transit Station Area. Thus, only 900 residential units are forecast. However, this unit forecast is a minimum target.	No action taken at this time. Minor refinements may be made to the housing unit mix prior to the completion of the Niagara Official Plan.
Town of Lincoln	Lincoln supports the Region's allocation of 0.5% growth to the Rural Area.	Staff acknowledge the Town's support of the Region's work.	None.
Town of Lincoln	Staff opine that a larger proportion of growth should be allocated to apartment unit types. This reflects recent applications, planned densities and land supply.	On further data review, Regional staff have adjusted the unit mix and included a greater share of apartment units. This is assigned exclusively within the built-up area.	Lincoln is assigned an additional 4,225 apartment units through the Made-in-Niagara Forecast.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Town of Lincoln	Town staff previously requested a number of technical amendments as part of the Provincial Plans Review and Municipal Comprehensive Review. The Town's suggested boundary amendments that were included in staff report PL 16-13 continue to be carried forward to the Region for consideration. Town staff request to be provided with draft mapping from the Region when it becomes available for comment.	Region staff acknowledge receipt of technical boundary adjustments, and will comment at a later time. Technical adjustments are not the same as boundary expansions – these are minor and intended to fix a technical matter.	Staff are working on technical boundary adjustments for reporting in Fall 2021.
Town of Fort Erie	Town Staff reviewed the Draft LNA and Draft Forecasting Polices and are generally satisfied with the proposed intensification rates, growth allocation numbers and land needs assessment. However the Town felt although close, more employment area was needed based on its consultant findings (Report PDS-54-2021).	Staff acknowledge Town's support of Region's work on the LNA and allocations. The revised Made-in-Niagara Forecast and updated LNA has more employment area in Fort Erie than the May Forecast and LNA.	Region Planning staff will continue to consult with Fort Erie staff on the LNA and related processes.
Town of Fort Erie	The Town, through the approved Urban Area Boundary Expansion Study, has forwarded expansion candidate sites to the Region for consideration.	Staff received the Town's reports on preferred expansions. These will be reviewed as part of the Region's SABR process.	Region Planning staff will continue to work with Fort Erie staff on the SABR expansion process.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Town of Fort Erie	The Town has the ability to legislatively advance 40 ha expansions outside of the MCR process. Addendum 2 of the Urban Area Boundary Expansion Study, identified sites and priorities for these expansions, should candidate sites not be considered by the Region.	Only the Region can expand boundaries. The Growth Plan has a policy that allow expansions for up to 40 Ha in advance of a municipal comprehensive review (i.e. new Official Plan), subject to specific requirements. The Region is not processing 40 Ha expansion requests at this time since it is not in advance of a municipal comprehensive review.	Comment received. No action taken.
City of Welland	Welland staff seek clarification on draft Regional Structure policy 2.2.5.6 as it relates to criteria development by the Region for expansions and local involvement.	This policy relates to criteria developed for the SABR review, which has been discussed at several meetings with local staff.	Regional staff are considering revisions to this policy to better reflect the draft SABR criteria.
City of Welland	City Staff inquired on the relationship between established neighbourhoods and declining population growth over the 30 year planning horizon.	Established neighbourhoods generally have an older demographic than new neighbourhoods; as a result, the average number of people per unit is expected to decline slightly from 2021- 2051.	No action taken.
City of Welland	City Staff inquired how additional dwelling units (sometimes called Secondary Suites) are captured in the forecast and suggested a higher forecast be provided for the City of Welland.	Through consultation with Welland staff after receipt of this comment, the Region and City agreed that 50 additional units per year for Secondary Suites was an achievable target.	Welland is assigned an additional 1,600 apartment units in the Made-in-Niagara Forecast. The majority of additional apartment units are anticipated to be Secondary Units.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
City of Welland	City Staff note the population and housing forecast seems low for Welland. Planning applications and pre-consultations surpass some draft figures, especially for apartment units. These projects will commence within the next half decade or less.	Based on a detailed review of development proposals and servicing to 2051, more population is needed in Welland's built-up area.	In the updated Made-in-Niagara Forecast, Welland is assigned an additional 10,000 people to 2051, exclusively in the built-up area. This results in an intensification rate of 75% and no additional need for Community Area lands to 2051.
City of Welland	City Staff noted that Employment Area needs increased as Natural Heritage mapping is updated.	Refinements to the Natural Environment System (NES) have been on going since the May report. Since that time, the Region has protected more environmental lands in Employment Areas, including in Welland. This results in less developable Employment Area in Welland.	The revised LNA has a small need for additional Employment Area land in Welland. NES work, including consultation on it, is ongoing. Thus, the final land need may have minor adjustments prior to completion in the Official Plan.
City of Welland	Based on the methodology for determining developable land, including the removal or discount of Natural Heritage features, City Staff ask if the amount of developable land within existing Employment Areas will be impacted.	The Employment Area calculations for the LNA are based on developable land supply and remove natural heritage features and encumbered lands.	No action taken.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
City of Welland	The City is currently having its own forecasts being created as part of our own Official Plan review. These forecasts will be included in the updated Official Plan document. The City will consider policies in its Zoning and OP where necessary that are in adherence to the requirements of Provincial Policy.	The Growth Plan identifies that the Region is responsible for allocating forecasts. Until the Region allocates forecasts, the forecasts that existed on August 28, 2020 remain in effect. Future forecasts established by Welland must conform to the Niagara Official Plan and Growth Plan.	None at this time.
Township of West Lincoln	West Lincoln supports the Regional growth allocations as provided to West Lincoln.	Staff acknowledge the Township's support of the Region's work to date on the forecasts.	None at this time.
Township of West Lincoln	Township staff provided report PD-077-21 which identifies a rural hamlet review work program to be completed in accordance with the Region's SABR Appendix 18.3.	Regional planning staff acknowledge the Township's work plan and are available to consult as needed.	Region will work with Town and consultant as needed during their study.
Niagara Escarpment Commission	NEC requests that it be consulted if any of the proposed urban designations in the Region's Official Plan are for properties within the NEP Area. The Region cannot approve urban amendments, unless the change in designation has first been approved by the Province.	Any boundaries changes related to the NEP area, including technical adjustments, will be discussed with the NEC and local planning staff.	Region has ongoing meetings with the NEC and will address this topic at future meetings.
Niagara Escarpment Commission	NEC would like to assist with mapping discrepancies; it has new digital maps for the NEC Area of Development Control starting July 1, 2021.	Comment received.	None at this time.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Public	Question about potential redevelopment and land use designation changes to the lands west of Garner Road, north of McLeod Road, and south of Lundy's Lane in Niagara Falls. Concerned about urban expansion areas in the vicinity of their rural residence.	This is to be considered as part of the Region's SABR process.	Planning staff communicated with commenter to outline SABR and reasons why the process is needed.
Public	Question about whether the Region has changed the land use designation of lands on the east side of Rice Road, in Pelham, from agricultural land to rural or urban? Contends that it should be re-designated due to Pelham's zoning, extension of services, and dormant agricultural fields.	This area is under consideration for possible expansion.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Public	Will 1538 RR20 will be brought into Bismark Hamlet in West Lincoln? Region should review hamlet boundaries to capture all of the R1A zone.	Staff are reviewing request to determine if request is an expansion or technical adjustment. The change requested will not add building lots in hamlet.	Staff communicated with requestor to outline process and provide location for materials.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Preservation of Agricultural Land Society (PALS)	PALS regards the use of a higher population projection by Niagara than that provided by the province as subversive of good land use planning across Ontario. Comments with respect to rejecting provincial population projections.	The Region must plan for the population forecasted in the Growth Plan, as a minimum. Decision of Regional Council must conform to the Growth Plan. In developing forecasts, Staff consider all planning matters, including climate change, the natural environment system, and core housing needs/affordability. The Made-in-Niagara Forecasts best address these matters.	Staff recommend proceeding with the Made-in-Niagara Forecasts for the reasons identified here and in the covering report.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Preservation of Agricultural Land Society (PALS)	Understands that a 460 hectare urban expansion for residential needs has been determined. Comments that this figure hasn't been defended and logically explained. Inquires about how this can be subject to change and why there is need for expansion of employment lands, with no precise figure provided. This does appear to eliminate the notion that residential needs can be accommodated through re-designating employment lands.	A detailed May 2021 Draft Land Needs Assessment (LNA) is provided in Appendix 3.2 of PDS 17-2021. An updated version of the LNA is attached to this report as Appendix 1. This LNA was developed in conformity to the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology, which identifies the specific components, inputs and assumptions required. Employment Areas are a component of the LNA. The additional Community Area land cannot be supported through re-designating employment lands. A reduction in existing Employment Areas to support Community Area development would create a greater need for Employment Area.	Staff recommend proceeding with the Made-in-Niagara Forecasts for the reasons identified here and in the covering report.
Preservation of Agricultural Land Society (PALS)	Supportive of urban boundary expansion in Welland as it has been carefully planned for 10 years, has a linked natural heritage system, and can be logically serviced by transit. PALS not supportive of urban boundary expansions in Fort Erie and West Lincoln, for reasons of lack of transit support and loss of agricultural land, natural heritage and water resource features.	Comment received.	Expansions remain under consideration as part of SABR process.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Timberlee Glen Development Ltd. (IBI Group)	IBI Group representing Timberlee Glen Development Ltd., respecting lands in the Port Weller East area of St. Catharines, south of Lakeshore Road, between Read Rd and the Welland Canal, outlines reasons for making these lands a mixed-use area. These lands are currently employment and comprise approximately 18.4ha.	This matter is the subject of an OLT appeal relating to St. Catharines OPA 26. At this time, the Region does not agree to change the designation on these lands from employment area.	Employment Area conversions remain under consideration as part of the SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Marco Marchionda (Marcasa Homes Inc.)	Submission made in respect of lands on the north side of Regional Road No. 81 in the area of Cline Rd. comprised of approximately 2.4 ha. in Grimsby. How does the ROP identify the lands between Casablanca and Kelson Ave? Question about the potential for a MCR in Grimsby rather than NOTL given available infrastructure for development.	Area identified is within Greenbelt and currently prohibited from being considered for expansion. Lands would need to be removed from the Greenbelt through Provincial process prior to consideration for expansion.	Regional staff have advised commenter of Provincial prohibition for expansion.
Owner (Antrix Architects Inc.)	Request to include south side Forkes Street (25 acres south-west of Forks Rd and Elm St) that spans both Welland and Port Colborne municipal boundaries, be brought into Urban Area. Total lands comprise approximately 45.2 ha.	This area is under consideration for possible expansion.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Hummel Properties (urbanMetrics inc.)	Submitted in respect of lands located at 1287, 1301 and 1313 Niagara Stone Road (6.7 ha.) on the southern boundary of Virgil, and 308 Four Mile Creek Road (0.2 ha.) in St. Davids. Commented on the share of household growth allocated to Niagara-on-the-Lake and suggested a higher rate of 6.8% be used rather than 5%.	Allocations of household growth have been evolving since initial scenarios were established in 2016. In 2019, Town staff suggested, and the Region agreed, the housing share be lowered to 5% as the developments in Old Town, Virgil and St. David's were being built-out.	No action at this time.
Hummel Properties (urbanMetrics inc.)	Submitted in respect of lands located at 1287, 1301 and 1313 Niagara Stone Road (6.7 ha.) on the southern boundary of Virgil, and 308 Four Mile Creek Road (0.2 ha.) in St. Davids. urbanMetrics suggests consideration be given to seasonal dwellings and how they will impact the LNA.	Niagara has a considerable supply of housing units that are not occupied by a usual resident – this includes both seasonal dwellings and student housing. Additional consideration could be considered for how these units drive housing need.	Consideration for units not occupied by usual residents (seasonal and student dwellings) are under further consideration for possible minor adjustment in final LNA included with Official Plan.
Hummel Properties (urbanMetrics inc.)	Submitted in respect of lands located at 1287, 1301 and 1313 Niagara Stone Road (6.7 ha.) on the southern boundary of Virgil, and 308 Four Mile Creek Road (0.2 ha.) in St. Davids. urbanMetrics requests conversion of lands from employment to non-employment use in Niagara-on-the-Lake, based on specific comments included in their submission.	Comments received.	Employment Area conversions remain under consideration as part of the SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
502 Winston Road Inc. (IBI Group)	Request for consideration of an urban boundary expansion - Lands at 502 Winston Rd. in Grimsby comprised of approximately 5.8 ha.	Area identified is within Greenbelt. Provincial policy prohibits the Region from expansion in the Greenbelt, unless lands are removed from it.	Regional Planning staff have advised agent of the Provincial Plan prohibition.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Iron Horse Stables (Niagara) Inc. (JV Consulting)	Request for consideration of an urban boundary expansion - Iron Horse Stables (Niagara) Inc. adjacent to existing settlement area boundary in Chippawa. 95 ha in size and bound by Sodom Road (west) and Willoughby Drive (east)- Niagara Falls	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
(1) Niagara Falls Park Inc. (2) Niagara Estates of Chippawa (3) Lyons Creek Niagara Falls (Trans Global Partners Canada)	Request for urban boundary expansion in 3 separate locations in Niagara Falls – (1) 5021 Gardner Rd (81.2 ha.), (2) east side Sodom Rd between Willick Rd and Weaver Rd (36.9 ha.) and (3) northeast corner of Stanley and Logan Rd (36.6 ha.)	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Owners (Weston Consulting)	Request for urban boundary expansion at 9941 Lundy's Lane in Niagara Falls being approximately 24.5 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Rankin Engineering Inc. (MHBC Planning)	Request for Employment Area Conversion for lands in the STC-2 Hannover Employment Area for non-employment use. Lands are identified as 218, 222, 250 Martindale Road; 20, 25, 75 Corporate Park Drive and comprise approximately 10 ha. in St. Catharines.	This site was recently addressed through St. Catharines OPA 26. At this time, the Region does not agree to change the designation on these lands from employment area.	Employment Area conversions remain under consideration as part of the SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Grand Niagara (The Planning Partnership)	Grand Niagara request for urban boundary expansion in Niagara Falls being approximately 138 ha. west of the existing Grand Niagara golf course lands.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
River Realty, Club Italia, Redeemer Bible Church (Niagara Planning Group)	Request for urban boundary expansion of approximately 40 ha. in Northwest Niagara Falls between the QEW and Montrose, south of Niagara Sports Centre Limited lands (Regency Motel).	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Anthony Romano, Andrew Zhongan, and Young Hong (Niagara Planning Group)	Request for urban boundary expansion – northeast Corner of Lundy's Lane and Beechwood in Niagara Falls and comprising approximately 12.9 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Niagara Sports Centre Limited (Douglas, Morningstar & Bonin LLP)	Letter of support for Niagara Sports Centre Limited and Ralph Biamonte for expansion of the northwest quadrant in Niagara Falls to include lands of approximately 64.8 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Grand Niagara Legends Estate Inc. (MHBC Planning)	Grand Niagara Legends Estate Inc. request for urban boundary expansion of lands on the north side of Weaver Rd, east of Willoughby Drive, and south of Legend's way in Niagara Falls. Total area requested expansion is approximately 206 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Owner G. Douglas Vallee Limited	Request for urban boundary expansion at 949 Clare Ave in Pelham are comprised of approximately 4.1 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Owner G. Douglas Vallee Limited	Water and waste water calculations for 949 Clare Ave potential expansion in Pelham.	Comments received.	None at this time.
Kaneff Properties Limited (MHBC Planning)	Request for urban boundary expansion at 590 Glendale Avenue in St. Catharines being a portion of the site and totaling approximately 17 ha.	Lands currently awaiting decision from NEC on designation.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Prca Global Enterprises Inc. (The Planning Partnership)	Request for both an employment area conversion and settlement area expansion involving lands totaling approximately 16.3 ha. - Price Global Enterprises Inc. at 38 Merritville Inc. and Schmon Parkway.	Comments received.	Expansion and employment conversions are under consideration as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
P. Coletto & Mr. D. Bartels (T. Johns Consulting Group)	Rural settlement area boundary expansion request - 8250 Mud Street West and 3498 Grassie Rd, West Lincoln totaling approximately 31 ha.	Comments received.	Rural expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Owner	Consultant for 5415 Hwy 20 West Lincoln inquiring about the property and potential expansion of the Bismark Hamlet Boundary. Inquires about studies/reports required and the overall process for the expansion.	Planning staff responded to inquiry to provide information relating to rural settlement area expansion criteria.	Rural expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
P. Coletto & Mr. D. Bartels T. Johns Consulting Group	Preliminary letter expressing rural settlement area boundary expansion request - 8250 Mud Street West and 3498 Grassie Rd, being totaling approximately 31 ha. in West Lincoln	Comments received.	Rural expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Andre Leblanc (IBI Group)	Rural Settlement area boundary expansion request in the Caistorville Hamlet - Part Lot 20, Concession 1, West Lincoln. Request area is approximately 7.1 ha.	Comments received.	Rural expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Stuart Wright (Quartek)	Request for urban boundary expansion- 1555 Nigh Road- Lands West of Buffalo Rd to Rosehill Rd- Town of Fort Erie. Site totals approximately 10.7 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Marz Homes (A.J. Clarke and Associates Ltd.)	Engineering Feasibility Report for expansion at Schooley Rd and Michener Rd in Fort Erie totaling approximately 8.3 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Marz Homes (A.J. Clarke and Associates Ltd.)	Planning Rationale Report for expansion at Schooley Rd and Michener Rd in Fort Erie totaling approximately 8.3 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Marina (Green Acres) Developments Inc. (Niagara Planning Group)	Request for settlement area boundary expansion for lands on the south side of Bertie Street, east of the Fort Erie Golf club and comprised of approximately 10.2 ha. in Fort Erie.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.

Commenter	Comment Summary	Regional Response	Action Taken
Jukic Group Inc. (Bousfields Inc.)	Request for urban boundary expansion for 'Black Creek Commons' by Jukic Group Inc. in Fort Erie. Materials provided include planning rationale, concept master plan, and responses to MCR criteria. Total of lands is approximately 371 ha. between Stevensville and Douglastown.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.
Owners (LANDx Developments Ltd.)	Request of for technical mapping adjustment for 100 Dock Road in Thorold.	Comments received.	Staff are working on technical boundary adjustments, for reporting in Fall 2021.
LJM Developments (Niagara Planning Group)	Request for urban boundary expansion for Pt Lot 154 Garner Rd on the west side of Garner between Lundy's Lane and McLeod Road in Niagara Falls, comprised of approximately 24.1 ha.	Comments received.	Expansion consideration is under review as part of SABR process, for reporting in Fall 2021.