



making our mark

**NIAGARA**  
OFFICIAL PLAN

# Natural Environment Work Program

## New Regional Official Plan

February 22, 2019 – Presentation to  
Agricultural Policy and Action Committee



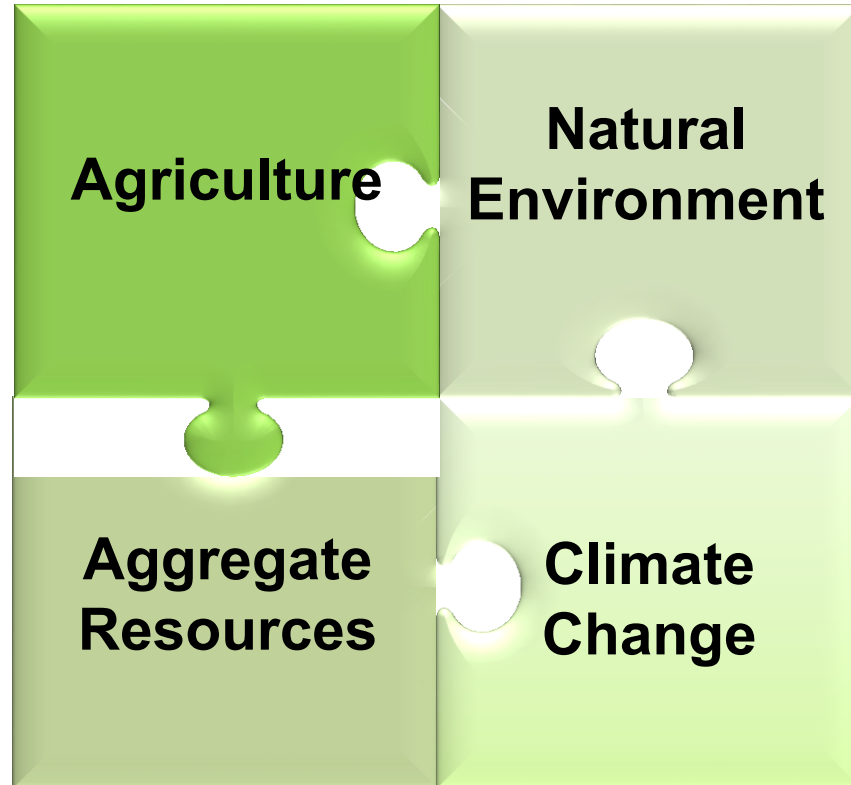
# New Regional Official Plan

- Niagara Region is in the process of preparing a new Regional Official Plan (ROP)
- The ROP is a series of objectives and policies that guide the short-term and long-term physical development of all lands within the Region.
- The *Planning Act* requires municipalities to undertake regular reviews of their Official Plans to align with Provincial requirements.
- In 2016 Council endorsed the approach of the preparation of a new Regional Official Plan from start to finish rather than a series of site specific topic amendments. The new Regional Official Plan will be processed under Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, and is proposed to be finalized by the end of 2021.



# Priority Background Studies

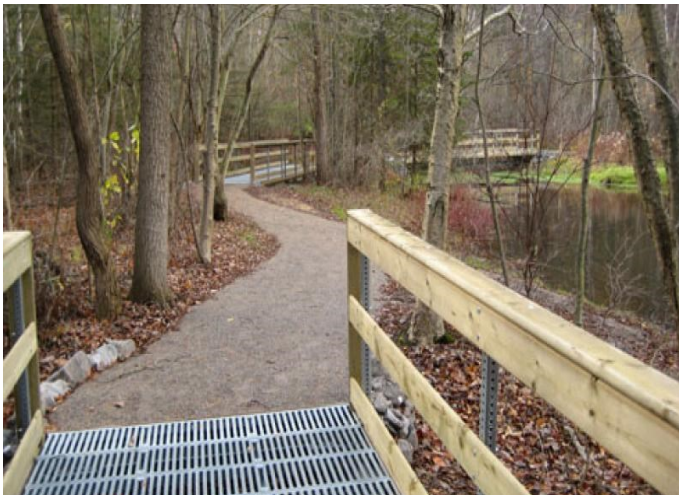
## Natural Systems and Resources



## Growth Management



# Natural Environment Planning



An important component of the new Regional Official Plan to:

- Support the identification of areas for growth and development
- Meet Provincial requirements
- Supports a range of industries that benefit from a healthy natural environment
- Support public health, recreation, and overall well-being of residents
- Plan for climate change





# Background

- **PDS 41-2017** outlined the 8 major background studies required to support the New Regional Official Plan
- **PDS 6-2018** was the project initiation report and sought direction for preliminary consultation
- **PDS 18-2018** was the project framework report



# Scope for Natural Environment Work Program

In-Scope	Out-of-Scope*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Natural Heritage Features</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Woodlands, wetlands, habitat, habitat of endangered and threatened species, fish habitat, etc.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Hydrologic Features</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Streams, seepage areas, wetlands, etc.</li><li>• Region's watercourse identification and mapping project</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Water Resource Systems</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Groundwater systems</li><li>• Surface water systems</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Natural Hazards</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flooding hazards, erosion hazards, and dynamic beach hazards, etc.</li><li>• Wildland fires as per Section 3.1.8 of the PPS</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Provincial Natural Heritage Systems</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greenbelt Natural Heritage System and Urban River Valley designation</li><li>• Growth Plan Natural Heritage System</li><li>• Niagara Escarpment Plan as it relates to the municipal planning process</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Watershed Planning &amp; Stormwater Management</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aggregates &amp; Petroleum Resources</li><li>• Source Water Protection</li></ul>

\*Official Plan policy development for out-of-scope items to be addressed separately





# Key Issues to be Addressed

- The implementation/interaction of the new Provincial Natural Heritage and Agriculture Systems
- A framework for watershed planning in the Region
- Setbacks, buffers, and vegetation protection zones
- Woodlands, invasive species, and climate change





# Official Plan Policies

- The Official Plan is a “land-use” document. Policies are triggered by *Planning Act* application (i.e. change of use, severance of land). Policies do not apply to existing uses or normal farm practices.
- There are already some existing Provincial policies that recognize the unique agriculture in Niagara. For example policy 3.2.5.8 of the greenbelt plan allows for reduced setbacks from certain watercourses in the specialty crop area.



# Upcoming Consultation and Engagement

- 1<sup>st</sup> major point of engagement - focusing on education and sharing information:
  - Planning Advisory Committee (PAC)
  - Public
  - Local Councils
  - Planning and Economic Development Committee
  - APAC
  - Agricultural community and other key stakeholders

