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**Subject:** Niagara Official Plan: Settlement Area Boundary Review – Urban Recommendations

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

**Report date:** Wednesday, December 8, 2021

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## Recommendations

1. That Report PDS 41-2021, **BE RECEIVED** for information regarding the Settlement Area Boundary Review – Urban Recommendations.

## Key Facts

- This report identifies and provides information on proposed changes to urban settlement area boundaries. No decisions are sought from Council at this time.
- Changes to settlement boundaries can only be made by the Region at the time of a “Municipal Comprehensive Review” (“MCR”). The Region’s MCR is taking place as part of the development of the new Niagara Official Plan (“NOP”).
- The amount of expansion area was determined through the Land Needs Assessment that was endorsed-in-principle by Council in August 2021 as part of PDS 33-2021 (“August 2021 Report”). A need for land was identified in Niagara Falls, West Lincoln, Pelham and Fort Erie.
- Potential expansion locations were provided for public review in summer 2021. Comments were received and reviewed in making recommendations.
- All potential expansion areas were reviewed using evaluation criteria based on Provincial policies and direction.
- Expansions are proposed for Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, West Lincoln and Pelham with a portion of the Pelham’s expansion located on adjacent lands in Thorold.
- The total expansion areas are 785 hectares of community area (generally, residential and commercial) and 245 hectares of employment area (generally, industrial) as set out in the urban land needs included with this report as Appendix 3.

- In addition to boundary expansions, technical adjustments and rationalizations are being proposed to correct mapping errors, recognize existing conditions, or to conform with or be consistent with Provincial Plans.
- Comments on the proposed changes to the settlement area boundaries are requested by February 18, 2022, to provide sufficient time for review and input in to the next draft.

### **Financial Considerations**

There are no financial considerations directly related to this report. Council approved the resources to complete the Niagara Official Plan (“NOP”) over a five year period as part of the 2017 Budget Process.

The growth forecasts associated with settlement area expansions inform the Niagara 2051 initiatives, guiding updates to the Water and Wastewater Master Servicing Plan (“MSP”), Transportation Master Plan (“TMP”) and Development Charges Study (“DCS”). These key master plans and studies identify growth related projects to be undertaken and identify related capital costs to ensure financial responsibility and accountability are appropriately placed and maintained.

### **Analysis**

The Region can adopt changes urban boundaries at the time it passes the NOP. The final decision on boundaries will be made by the Province, after the Region passes the NOP and sends it to the Province for approval.

### **Basis for Boundary Expansions: the Land Needs Assessment**

Expansions can only happen if there is a “need” for the expansion. The need is determined through a land needs assessment (“LNA”), a process set out in Provincial documents. In August 2021, Council endorsed the draft LNA in principle as contained in PDS 33-2021 (“August 2021 Report”). This set out the population and employment forecasts and land need for the Region and 12 local municipalities.

The August 2021 Report also outlined the Settlement Area Boundary Review (“SABR”) process. The Region was able to move forward with the SABR program knowing that the land need had been determined in principle.

Through the August 2021 Report, urban expansion need was identified for Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Welland (employment area land only), West Lincoln and Pelham. Northern municipalities – Grimsby, Lincoln, St. Catharines, Niagara-on-the-Lake – have very limited or no area to expand because of Provincial prohibitions on expansions in to the Greenbelt Plan area. Thorold, Port Colborne, and Welland have an adequate amount of land. Welland was approved for an urban boundary expansion for community area in January 2021. Welland’s employment area land need and potential for expansion remains under review.

The August 2021 Report anticipated further refinements to the LNA would be required as contemplated by the Growth Plan. The changes anticipated in August have now occurred. As a result, small updates are proposed that relate to land need calculations; no changes are proposed to the municipalities requiring and not requiring expansions.

The current LNA identifies a land need requirement of 785 hectares of community area and 245 hectares of employment area. A final adjustment of -315 hectares of community area is included. The expansion areas as proposed would satisfy the Region’s land need.

The LNA is reported in more detail later in this report and included in Appendix 3.

### **Expansion Request Overview, Criteria and Review Process**

The Region prepared expansion review criteria to assess areas that could be expanded. This criteria was released for review and comment as part of PDS 17-2021 in May 2021 (“May 2021 Report”). The assessment criteria was developed to be consistent with and conform to Provincial policy. Feedback on the criteria was positive. As a result, no changes to the criteria were made.

The May 2021 Report asked that all requests for expansion be submitted by July 2, 2021. This was to allow the Region to review those requests in preparation of this Report.

A total of 134 areas have been considered for expansion in all settlement areas. These include the requested areas and those identified by the Region. A map showing all requests is found as Appendix 1.

Importantly, some areas proposed for expansion are located in Greenbelt Plan area or Niagara Escarpment Plan area designations that prohibit expansions. As described below, these expansions requests could not proceed to detailed evaluation.

In addition to establishing the assessment criteria, in early 2021, the Region established a comprehensive, cross-disciplinary team to, first, offer comment on criteria development and, later, to assess expansion sites and provide response as it relates to the criteria in their respective field of expertise. Local municipal planning staff participated in the review process with the Regional Review Team members.

The Review Team was guided by their understanding of the various master plans, related capital projects and used the best information with their professional knowledge when undertaking their respective assessment. Collectively, they prepared just over 2000 responses to the urban settlement criteria as part of the evaluation. A document with the responses is available on the Region's new Niagara Official Plan website, as is noted below as Appendix 9 (available on NOP website only).

The Assessment Criteria had two steps.

The first was a test of whether the request was prohibited by Provincial policy. Specifically, a request could not advance if it was:

1. Within the Greenbelt Plan area
2. Within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area
3. Would have the effect of creating a new settlement area
4. Were in areas where there was no land need for expansions

Step 1 removed 33 sites from consideration. The remaining requests moved to Step 2.

Step 2 comprises seven (7) topic areas for assessment. These included Municipal Sanitary Servicing, Municipal Water Supply, Transportation, Environment, Agriculture, Aggregates and Growth Management.

In this step, 101 sites were assessed (79 urban and 22 rural). Details the Rural Settlement Area Boundary Expansion review of 22 rural sites is contained in Report PDS 42-2021.

## **Consultation**

Regional staff routinely meet with local staff to discuss NOP matters. A significant number of meetings were held on expansions this year, starting in winter 2021. At that time, Staff consulted on the expansion criteria noted above.

Since May 2021, Regional and local staff have met frequently to discuss expansion review process and updating each other on requests received.

In August through October 2021, the Review Team met, individually, with local staff to conduct initial assessments of expansion requests using the Assessment Criteria. Follow up meetings with local planning staff were also held as Regional staff worked to refine areas of higher interest for further consideration. Discussion on these areas and their assessments were reviewed for any additional or contextual information that could further inform Regional staff as they worked towards recommendations contained in this Report.

In addition, public commenting on potential expansion areas was available on the Region's website from August 1 to October 1, 2021. This online SABR Mapping Tool allowed direct commenting on specific request areas to be made through the website. Since the deadline, additional submissions have been made, and continue to be received by Planning staff. Public comments are addressed in Appendix 8.

Planning staff have and will continue to meet with those who have made requests and expressed interest in meeting to discuss the Region's recommendations. In addition, comments on this Report and expansion areas are invited through to February 18, 2022.

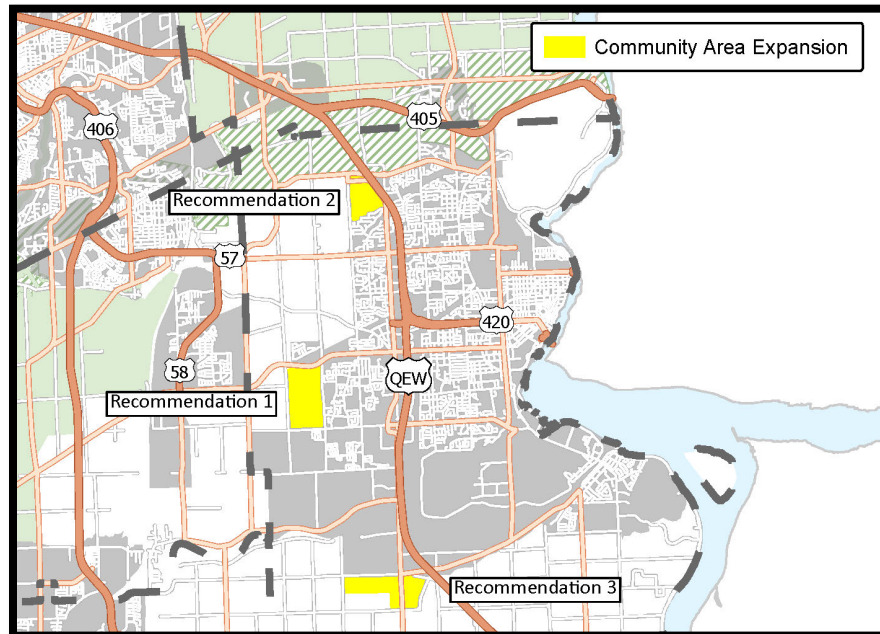
## **Urban Settlement Area Boundary Review**

Regional staff's recommendations for expansion to urban settlement areas for those municipalities with an identified land need, free of Provincial Plan boundary constraint are identified below. Appendix 2 provides a series of larger maps and specific boundary details. A contextual summary of the Areas under consideration in Niagara Falls and Fort Erie is provided in Appendix 4. Commentary on all 79 urban settlement area locations assessed is provided in Appendix 9

## Niagara Falls

A total of 45 sites were reviewed under the Step 2 assessment criteria. The revised LNA sets out a need for 310 hectares of developable area for community area expansion.

Three (3) locations are recommended by Regional staff.



### Recommendation No. 1 - Community Lands

Expansion Area = 160 ha.

This location provides for sizeable development area and includes large parcels for comprehensive community planning. Sanitary services will be provided by the new South Niagara Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant (“WWTP”) and water supplied via integrated Niagara Falls / DeCew water treatment plants (“WTP”). Transportation access is good from concession boundary roads and is in close proximity to the QEW at McLeod Road.

There is very little impact from natural features and no underlying aggregates. Agricultural fields almost all in cash/feed crop production with no Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) impacts on this location.

The addition of these lands forms a logical boundary to the western edge of the settlement.

### **Recommendation No. 2 - Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 65 ha.

This location provides development potential in a municipal gateway location. Larger parcel availability will assist in comprehensively planning this neighbourhood area. Servicing is available at the Stanley Avenue WWTP and water supplied via integrated Niagara Falls/DeCew WTPs. Connection to the QEW is immediate and the concession boundary roads are accessible on three sides (hydro corridor forms south limit).

Impacts on natural environment are limited and active licensed aggregate operations are approximately 1000 metres west of this location. Open agricultural fields are primarily in cash/feed crop production with no MDS setbacks impacting this location.

The addition of these lands is logical boundary addition to the northwest urban settlement area of Niagara Falls.

### **Recommendation No. 3 - Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 85 ha.

Expanding the area adjacent to the future South Niagara Hospital will support this area as a future economic driver. There are some sizable parcels with development potential at this key location. The site will be serviced by the new South Niagara Falls WWTP and water supplied via integrated Niagara Falls / DeCew WTPs. Transportation network from perimeter concession roads and access to the QEW is immediate.

The area does have some environmental features that require further review and protection. Agricultural activity is cash/feed crop with few fallow fields. The location is not impacted by livestock operations located south of Carl Road.

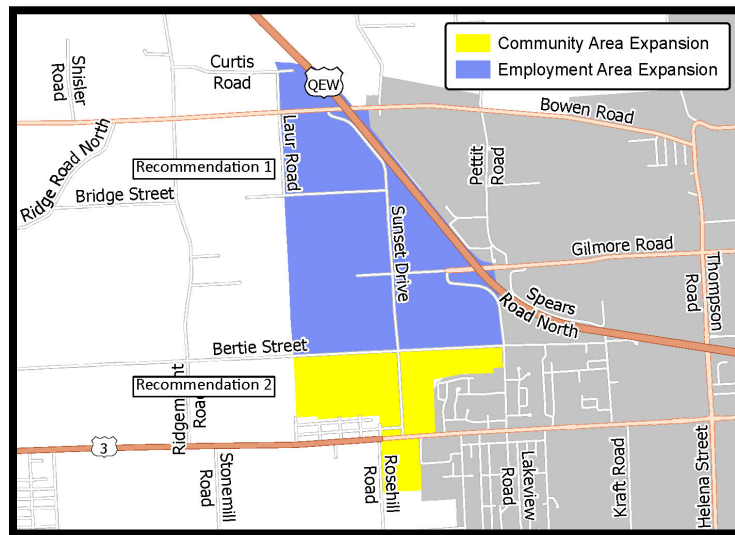
This area can be appropriately planned for a mix of uses, including those that offer appropriate space for ancillary business that support the hospital.

## **Fort Erie**

A total of 26 sites were reviewed under the Step 2 assessment criteria.

The revised LNA sets out a 280 hectares expansion need; 105 hectares of Community Area and 175 hectares of Employment Area.

Four (4) locations are recommended by Regional staff.



### **Recommendation No. 1 - Employment Lands**

Expansion Area = 175 ha.

Fort Erie has the geographic advantage of being a border municipality hosting one of Canada's busiest international crossings with the USA. The QEW is the primary corridor for moving goods and is identified as a Gateway Economic Zone. The Region and Town have significant interest in employment growth along this key corridor. This location has excellent highway access with two interchange locations and addresses the need for large employment parcels in the municipality. Servicing will need to be coordinated with the adjacent community expansion to the south. These lands will ultimately be serviced by the Anger Avenue WWTP and water from the Rosehill WTP.

Areas of natural features are present predominately at the southern edge; forming an appropriate separation between the community area lands (see recommendation 2) and the employment area.



Aggregate resource and existing operations are present in the area. Development in this expansion area should be studied with consideration for the nearby licensed lands as part of future planning exercises.

### **Recommendation No. 2 - Community Lands**

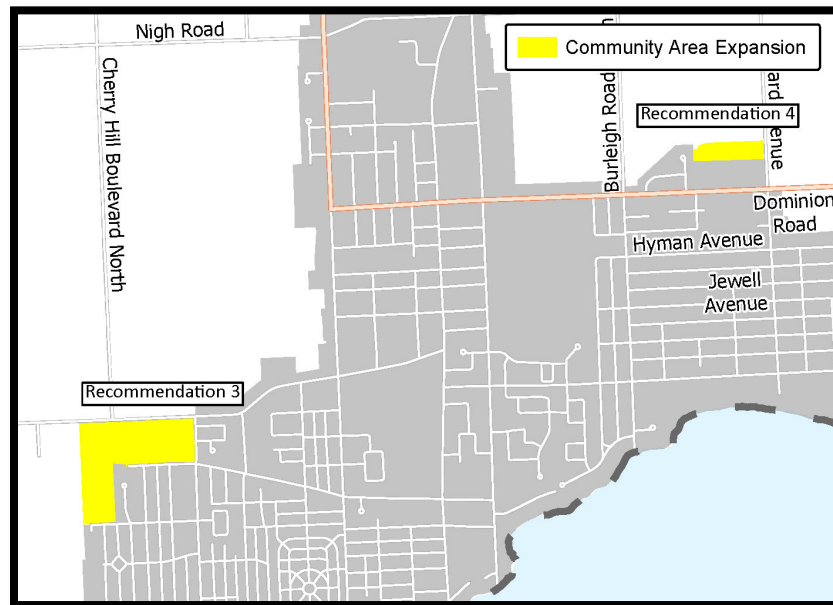
Expansion Area = 93 ha.

Main Fort Erie is the municipality's largest urban area. The proposed expansion for community lands is located at the westerly limits in close proximity to the new high school, Town Hall, LeisurePlex, the Boys & Girls Club (former YMCA) and existing commercial along the Garrison Road corridor. This recommended expansion area leverages those facilities and services to further support growth. The lands can be serviced with capacity at Anger Avenue WWTP. Water will be supplied from the Rosehill WTP. Existing transportation networks are available and location is close to the QEW and Highway 3.

There are natural features present in some locations that will require additional review. Mitigation of water resource systems can be appropriately addressed as part of secondary planning and development phases.

Agricultural activity is mostly cash/feed crop in areas not presently used for other non-agricultural purposes and there are no MDS impacts. Aggregate resources underlay a portion of lands and the nearest active operation is over 1000 metres away.

The expansion is contiguous with the proposed employment expansion lands. Together, a comprehensive strategic planning exercise including sub-watershed, servicing and transportation can all be undertaken to coordinate future development.



### **Recommendation No. 3 - Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 12 ha.

The northwesterly edge of the Crystal Beach neighbourhood is made up of large parcels of land and will assist in planning more comprehensively. Traditionally a seasonal/cottage area, Crystal Beach is transforming to a year-round waterfront community. The area will be serviced by the existing Crystal Beach WWTP and will receive water supply from Rosehill WTP. Existing local road networks provide appropriate points of access for development.

This location is free of natural features. Future planning will need to address water resource systems. Agricultural activity in the area is mostly cash/feed crop and MDS does not impact the expansion area.

In terms of aggregates, a very small band of sand and gravel is underlying; however, these lands are not feasible for extraction because of proximity to the existing settlement area. The closest aggregate operations are more than 6 km away.

This expansion is modest and represents a logical addition to the existing settlement for continued growth planning in this market area.

#### **Recommendation No. 4 - Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 1 ha.

The northern edge of the Ridgeway neighbourhood is recommended for a small addition to provide for an improved development scenario with adjacent urban lands. The limit will extend the northerly boundary of the settlement area to create a clean urban edge at this location. The Crystal Beach WWTP and Rosehill WTP have available servicing capacity. The existing road network provides access to this location.

Environmental features are present on portions of the lands. Future detailed study will confirm development limits. Agricultural activity in the area is limited to some crop but mostly fallow or re-generational fields. No MDS setback impacts by adding these lands.

The area is shown as having aggregate resource underlying; however, is not feasible considering the size of this expansion and the presence of existing sensitive land use.

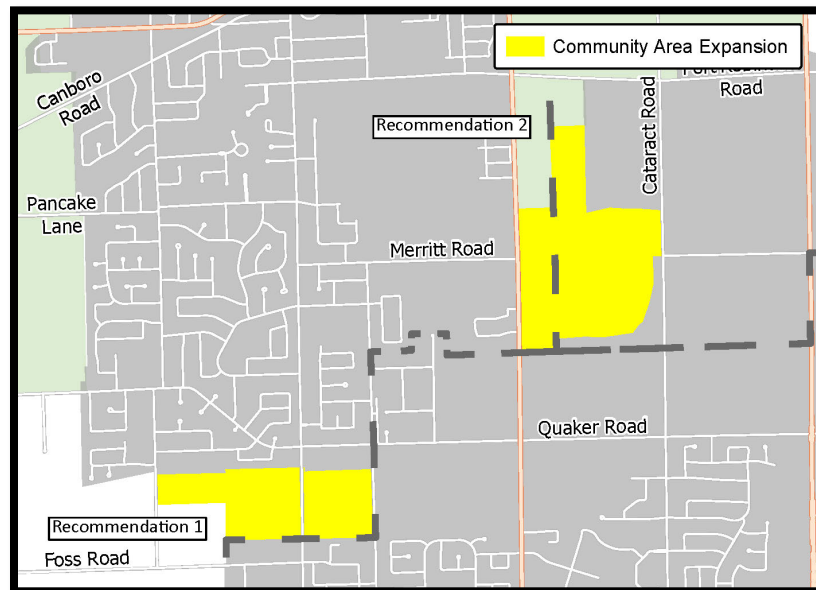
#### **Pelham<sup>1</sup>**

A total of four (4) sites were reviewed in Pelham. The LNA set out a land need of 40 hectares of Community Area lands. Pelham has limited options for expansion since Fonthill is mostly bordered by Greenbelt Plan area. Expansions are only available at the southern and eastern edges for the Fonthill settlement area, adjacent to Welland and Thorold boundary, respectively.

Two (2) locations are recommended by Regional Staff.

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<sup>1</sup> A small portion of Pelham's land need is addressed through an expansion on lands in the Town of Thorold that border Pelham. This is discussed in Pelham Recommendation 2.



### **Recommendation No. 1 for Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 17 ha.

The lands along the southerly boundary between Welland and Fonthill are recommended for inclusion to align with the westerly Welland settlement area boundary. This area also includes Harry Black Park and an existing nursing home. The lands can be serviced at the Welland WWTP via Towpath Sanitary Pumping Station (“SPS”) and the water supply available from Welland WTP. Access to the area can be gained from the main roads passing north-south through the expansion area.

Natural features are present on portions of the landscape that will require study for protection and water resource systems will also require mitigation. Agricultural fields are generally in production of cash/feed crops.

Equestrian activities in proximity to this area do not impact MDS requirements. No aggregate resources are present, and active operations are well outside any influence on the lands.

The expansion is logical infilling between these two existing serviced settlement areas.

## **Recommendation No. 2 for Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 24 ha (includes 13 ha in Pelham and 11 ha in Thorold)

This expansion area will add the remaining lands outside the Greenbelt Plan and not currently in the existing Pelham and Thorold urban areas. These lands are adjacent to the East Fonthill Secondary Plan and the Port Robinson West Secondary Plan, as well as the recently expanded Northwest Welland area and Secondary Plan.

The lands within Pelham are generally unconstrained by environmental, agricultural and aggregate resources. Access is available along Rice Road.

Staff recommend including this small portion of Thorold. A cross-border expansion makes sense at this location as this location serves the same market. Doing so allows lands in Pelham and Thorold to be planned comprehensively. A site-specific policy will be included with the Official Plan to specifically address this matter.

Thorold's expansion is discounted from Pelham's total land need of 40 hectares. In other words, the total expansion for lands in Pelham and Thorold combined is approximately 40 hectares.

Servicing these lands would be through the same facilities noted in the first recommendation. Access is available from Rice Road and the future Merritt Road extension, providing a direct link to Highway 406.

Natural features are limited for Pelham and more significant on Thorold's lands. Studies will be coordinated to identify features for protection.

Limited agricultural activity is occurring on open fields with large lot rural residential in use. No impacts have been identified requiring MDS setbacks. No aggregate resources underlay this location and active operations are 4 km away.

## **West Lincoln**

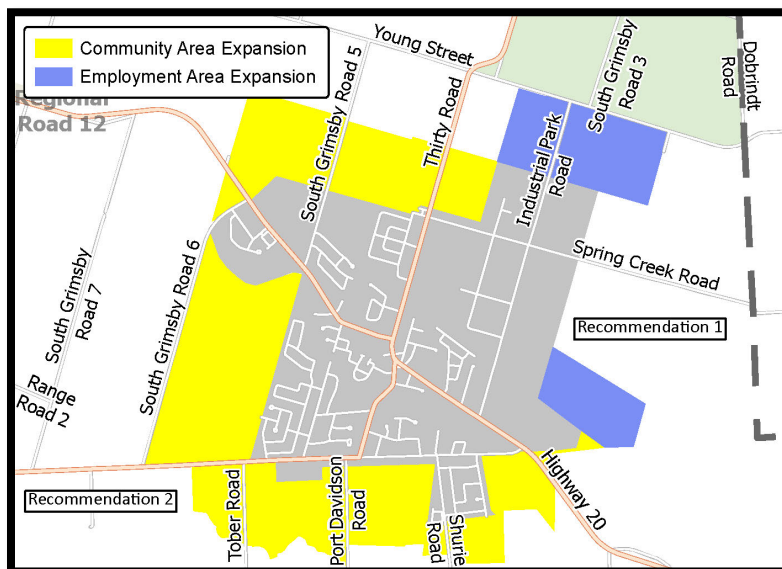
A total of two (2) sites were reviewed surrounding the Smithville settlement area. The LNA set out a land need of 400 hectares.

In addition to the Region's Settlement Area Boundary Review process, the Region is engaged in West Lincoln's Master Community Plan ("MCP"), including participation on

the Technical Advisory and Steering Committees. The MCP has undertaken a substantial review of the expansion area lands and provided detailed information to the Region to inform the SABR assessment. Through this collective work, the most appropriate boundary recommendation for Smithville was determined.

The preferred locations were endorsed by West Lincoln Council in October 2021.

Recommendations for Employment and Community Areas are discussed below.



### Recommendation No. 1 - Employment Area Lands

Expansion Area = 70 ha.

Through its significant involvement, the Region has reviewed the MCP information throughout the process to support the boundary expansion for employment area lands. Consultation occurred on the draft employment areas.

The Baker Road WWTP will accommodate West Lincoln's employment forecast and the Grimsby Water Plant planned upgrade will accommodate the growth. The northerly expansion has immediate access to the transportation network. The southerly portion will gain primary access as part of the ongoing by-pass planning.

Very limited natural features are present in the northerly employment expansion area. The southerly portion will require additional environmental study work to confirm protection or mitigation.

Agricultural operations include feed/cash crop activity and pasture. Two livestock operations will be brought into the settlement area with this expansion and a remaining livestock operation has minimal MDS encroachment.

Aggregate resources underlay most of the northerly expansion site while mostly absent on the south lands. Existing licensed operations are over 1km away to the east.

## **Recommendation No. 2 - Community Lands**

Expansion Area = 330 ha.

The MCP includes a conceptual development option and land use structure. The Region's community area lands recommendation is consistent with the local endorsement.

The Baker Road WWTP will accommodate West Lincoln's Community area forecast and the Grimsby Water Plant planned upgrade will accommodate the future growth. The existing road network will connect to new local roads at appropriate access points.

Considering the size of the expansion area there are limited natural features present. Appropriate protection and mitigation measures will be part of detailed planning at the local level. A sub-watershed study is underway locally. Additionally, several karst locations have also been identified to be locally protected. The Twenty Mile Creek and North Creek are the main water courses transecting the community. A range of opportunities to implement water quality mitigation measures can reviewed through future secondary planning for the expansion areas.

Many different types of agricultural activity are occurring around the expansion lands. The expansion area includes several hobby horse farms and some poultry operations. Remaining MDS impacts from livestock operations (retired or active) are generally minimal and appropriate phasing of growth will address any impacts remaining. Open fields are generally feed/cash crop or providing pasture for dairy operations.

Aggregate resources underlay approximately half of the expansion lands, mostly in the north and some in the very southerly portions. Expansion lands are well beyond areas of active or licensed operations.

Overall, community and employment expansion lands are strategically situated to avoid or minimize potential land use conflicts. The Region's involvement in the MCP program has informed the SABR assessment and conceptual community design provides practical and supportive land use.

### **Revised Land Needs Assessment**

A revised December 2021 Land Needs Assessment is included in Appendix 3.

The revised Land Needs Assessment identifies a total expansion area of 830 hectares to achieve the minimum forecasts associated with the Made-in-Niagara Forecast endorsed-in-principle in August 2021 and includes the rural component discussed in Report PDS 42-2021.

As noted earlier in this Report, the revised LNA contains updates. The changes are from progress made since August, as well as consultation with municipalities, Province, stakeholders and public.

One area that is new to the revised LNA is the "Final Adjustments." The Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology ("the Methodology") allows for final adjustments as a last step, based on criteria identified within the Methodology.

Specifically, the Methodology provides that adjustments may be made to account for:

- Constrained land within the settlement area that requires additional infrastructure (e.g. servicing, transit, highways);
- Lands that may not develop within the horizon of the Plan due to other factors such as landowner choice to not develop for the purposes they are designated for;
- The length of the planning process to make lands ready for development; and,
- Other economic (e.g., provision for major businesses) and demographic (e.g., increases in immigration and emigration) considerations not anticipated in growth scenarios used in the initial municipal analysis.



The revised LNA identifies 315 hectares of existing Community Area land that meets this Final Adjustment criteria.

Specifically, 210 hectares of existing Community Area lands are immediately adjacent to active or planned aggregate operations. These lands may not be available for development within the planning horizon, depending on the life span of the aggregate operation and studies associated with development applications.

Another 105 hectares have infrastructure limitations in the planning horizon. These lands are not serviced at this time and would require extensive expansion of infrastructure and comprehensive land use planning.

The location of these adjustment lands are in Port Colborne and Thorold. These lands are not removed from the urban area, nor are any special land use designations proposed. Rather, the revised LNA identifies an adjustment needed to discount the land supply available to accommodate forecasted growth.

**Table 1** provides a summary of each Land Need category and overall Regional Land Need.

**Table 1**

<b>Land Need Category</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>
Community Area Expansion	785
Employment Area Expansion	245
Rural Settlement Expansion	115
Final Adjustments	-315
<b>Regional Land Need</b>	<b>830</b>

**Table 2** summarizes how the Land Needs will be accommodated across Niagara, and reflects the areas recommended for expansion.

**Table 2**

<b>Land Need Category</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>
Community Area Expansion	Fort Erie	105
	Niagara Falls	310
	Pelham (Thorold)	40
	West Lincoln	330
Employment Area Expansion	Fort Erie	175
	West Lincoln	70
Rural Settlement Expansion	Wainfleet	75
	West Lincoln	40
Final Adjustment	Port Colborne	-160
	Thorold	-155

The expansion recommendations establish Settlement Area Boundaries that can accommodate the Made-in-Niagara Forecast.

The Settlement Area Boundary Expansions set out in this report would fulfill all land needed. In other words, the Region would require no additional land.

### **Settlement Area Boundary Technical Adjustment and Rationalization Review**

The above discussion relates to boundary changes that result from a land need. Other boundary matters which do not relate to land need are also addressed as part of SABR. These are referred to as technical adjustments and rationalizations.

Most of the local boundaries are accurately reflected in Regional mapping. However, as part of the SABR program, some minor mapping discrepancies between Regional and Local urban area boundaries, as well as the Niagara Escarpment Plan, were identified. The Region seeks to correct these errors to ensure alignment of mapping moving forward. Appendix 5 provides information on the process of review and locations where technical adjustments were made to urban settlement boundaries.

A Region-wide map is available to identify the areas proposed for technical adjustments made to urban settlement boundaries. Detailed mapping is available upon request for

specific areas or properties. Requests can be made by [email](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca) to the Region. (makingourmark@niagararegion.ca).

Outside of the growth-related land needs, the Region revised boundaries that should be rationalized. Rationalizations are not driven by growth needs, rather they bring in larger built-up areas. Rationalizations align with changes made through the Provincial Coordinated Plan Review or will add lands that are already developed in an urban context.

Five boundary rationalizations are proposed. These are located in Grimsby, Thorold South, Port Robinson, Beamsville, and Niagara Falls. Details on rationalization locations are found in Appendix 6.

### **Provincial 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. The recommendations in this report conform to, are consistent with, and do not conflict with applicable Provincial policy and plans. The policy review is included in Appendix 7.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

This Report is prepared for information only; therefore, no alternatives are provided.

This Report includes Staff's expansion recommendations and a revised LNA for further review and comment. Consultation on these recommendations is planned for late 2021 and early 2022. The Region seeks comments by February 18, 2022.

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

Settlement Area Boundary Expansion, as part of the Region's MCR and NOP are supported by the following Council Strategic Priorities:

- **Supporting Business and Economic Growth:** Through long range planning for the supply and retention of a broad range of community and employment lands that offer community related employment and industrial employment opportunities to attract and support economic wellbeing;

- **Healthy and Vibrant Community:** Through planning for safe, healthy neighbourhoods that are attractive, inclusive and connected, based on complete community principles and design;
- **Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning:** Through coordinated, efficient use of existing infrastructure and optimizing planned infrastructure that will service the communities of Niagara and facilitate movement of people and goods; and
- **Sustainable and Engaging Government:** Through planned growth that is fiscally sustainable and fosters strong, successful relationships between all levels of government in the supply of services and infrastructure.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

PDS 4-2021 - Niagara Official Plan—Steps and Directions Moving Forward (information)

PDS 17-2021 - Niagara Official Plan Consolidated Policy Report (endorsement)

PDS 33-2021 - Niagara Official Plan: Land Needs Assessment and Settlement Area Boundary Review Update (endorsement)

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## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1            Map of All Requests Received as part of SABR
- Appendix 2            Map of Recommended Urban Settlement Area Expansions
- Appendix 3            2051 Land Needs Assessment (December 2021)
- Appendix 4            Niagara Falls and Fort Erie Expansion Area-wide Context review
- Appendix 5            Boundary Changes from Technical Adjustments to Urban Settlement Areas
- Appendix 6            Boundary Changes from Rationalizations
- Appendix 7            Provincial Policy Review

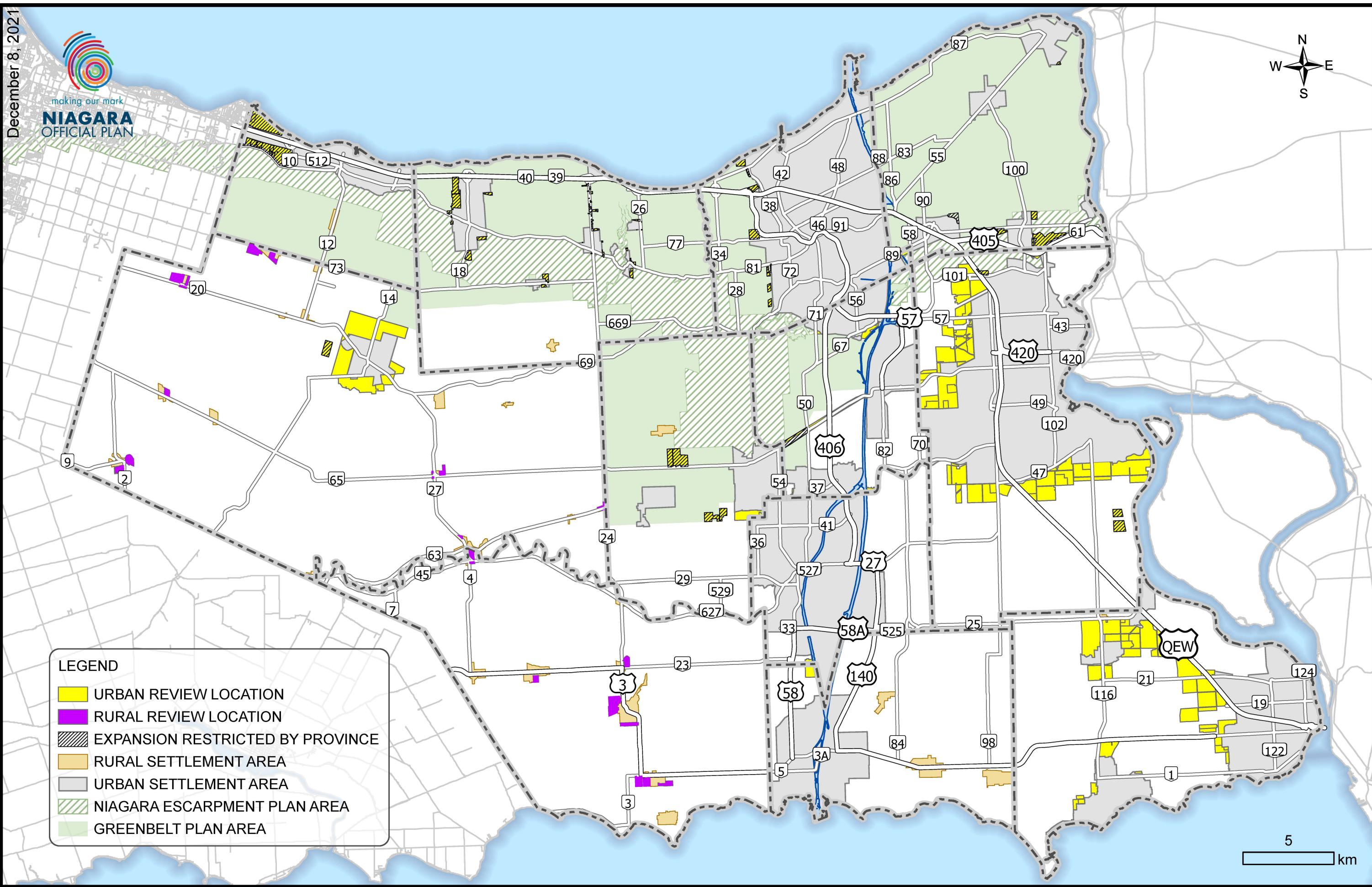
The following [appendices](#) are available on the NOP website only due to size. (<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/>)

- Appendix 8            Public Comments
- Appendix 9            Urban Settlement Area Assessment Review

# SETTLEMENT AREA BOUDNARY REVIEW LOCATIONS

Appendix 1  
PDS 41-2021

DECEMBER 2021

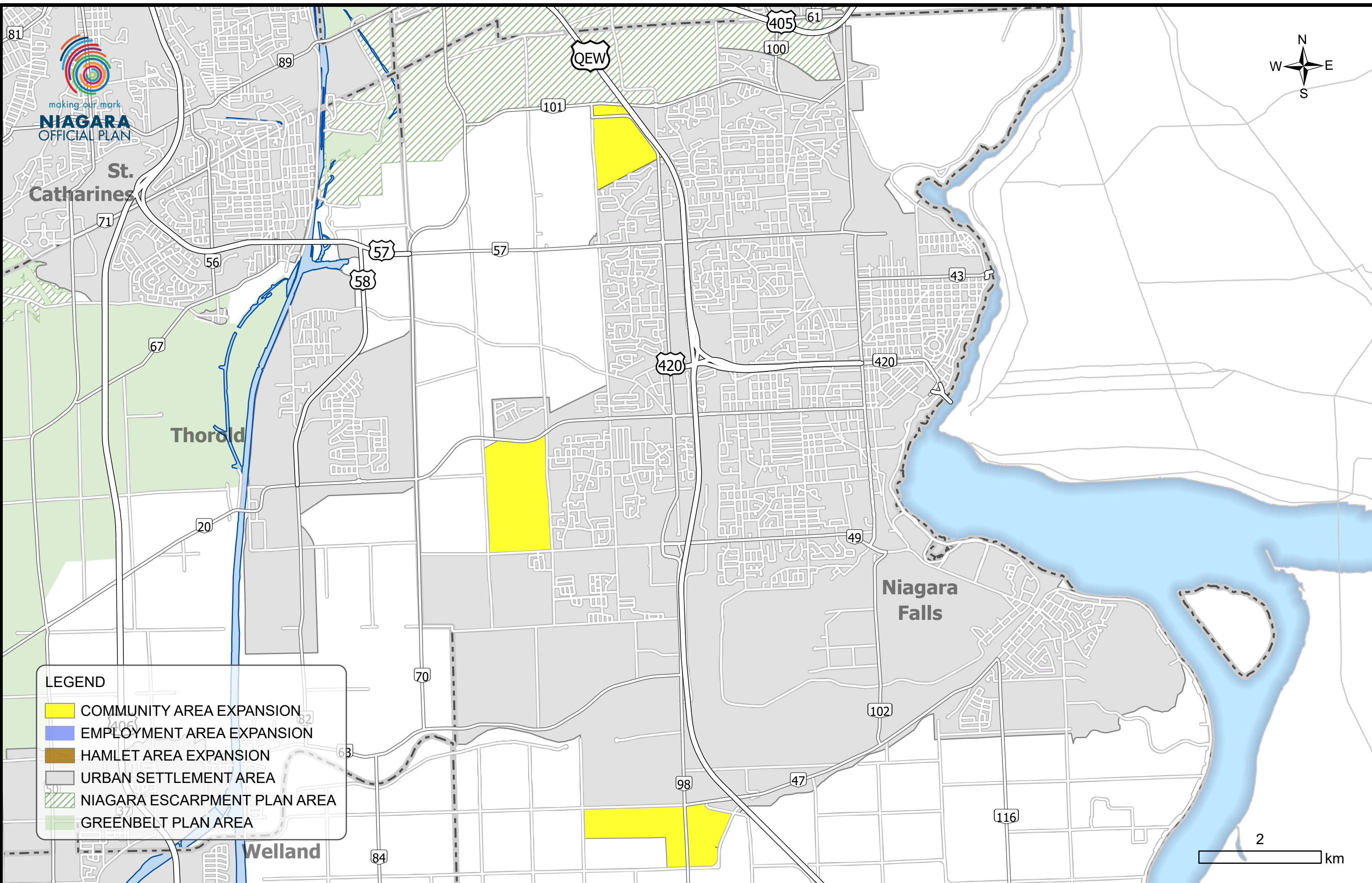


**LEGEND**

- URBAN REVIEW LOCATION
- RURAL REVIEW LOCATION
- EXPANSION RESTRICTED BY PROVINCE
- RURAL SETTLEMENT AREA
- URBAN SETTLEMENT AREA
- NIAGARA ESCARPMENT PLAN AREA
- GREENBELT PLAN AREA

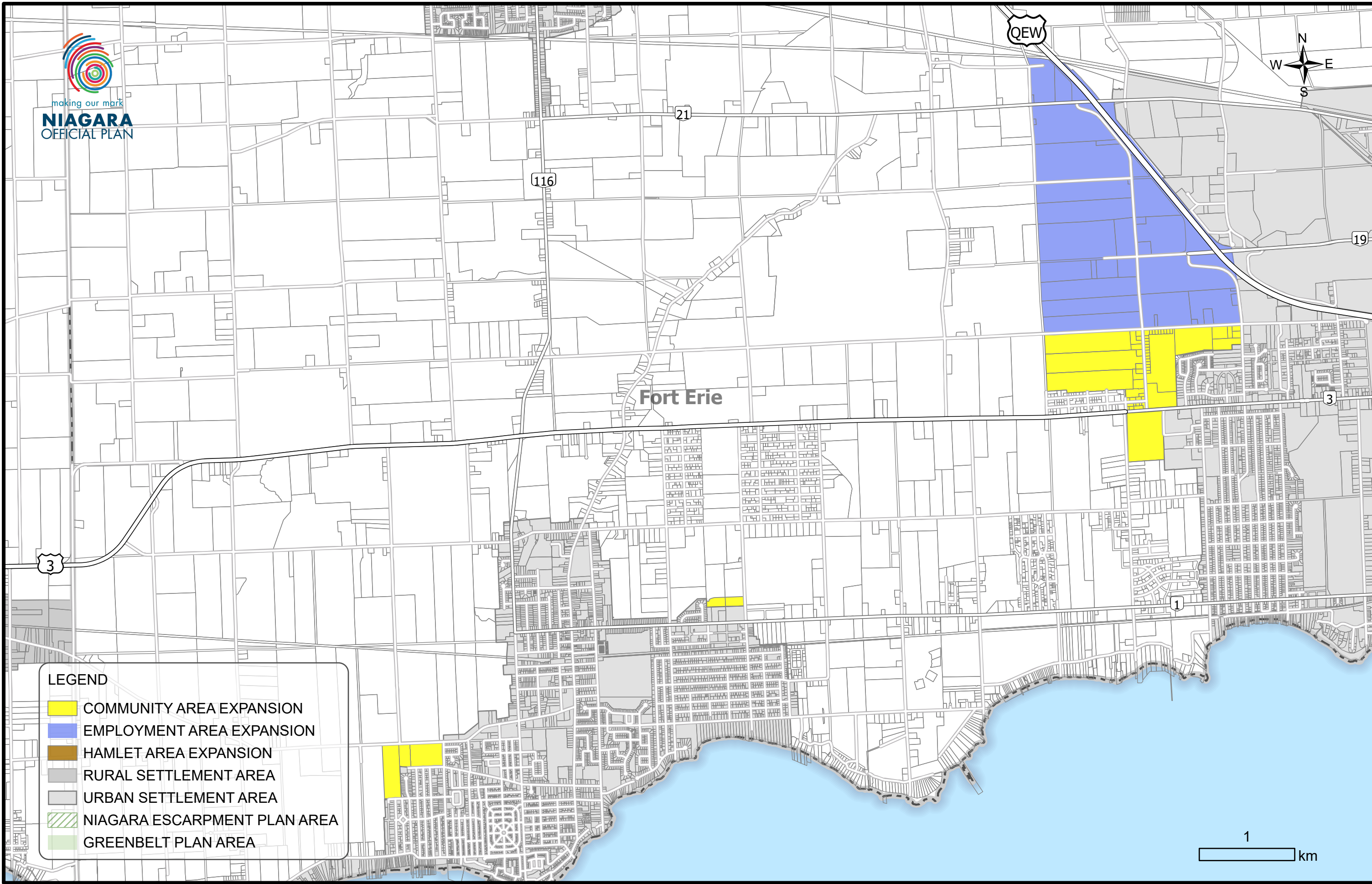
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**URBAN EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION  
DECEMBER 2021**



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# URBAN EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION DECEMBER 2021



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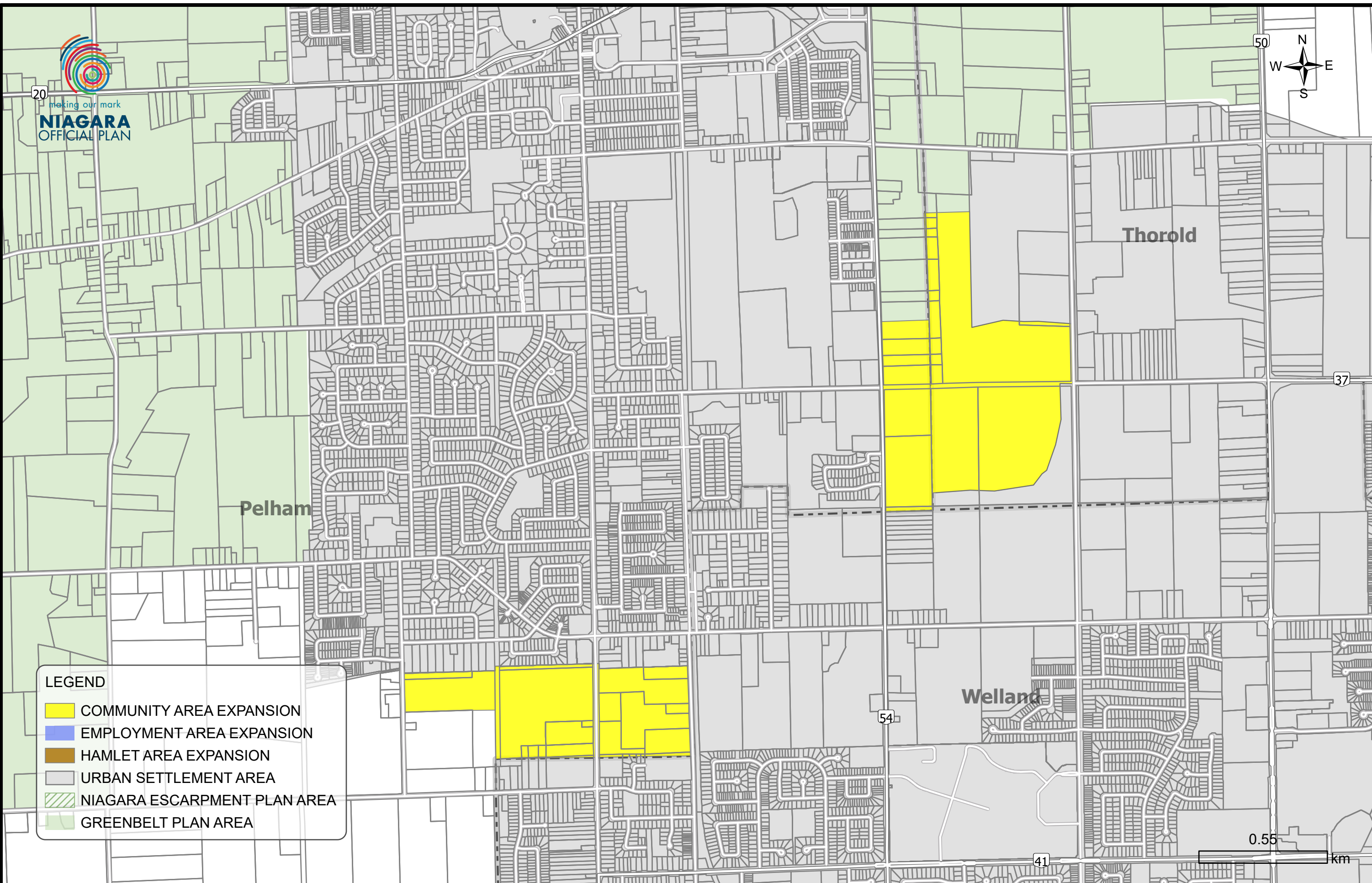


**URBAN EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION  
DECEMBER 2021**



**LEGEND**

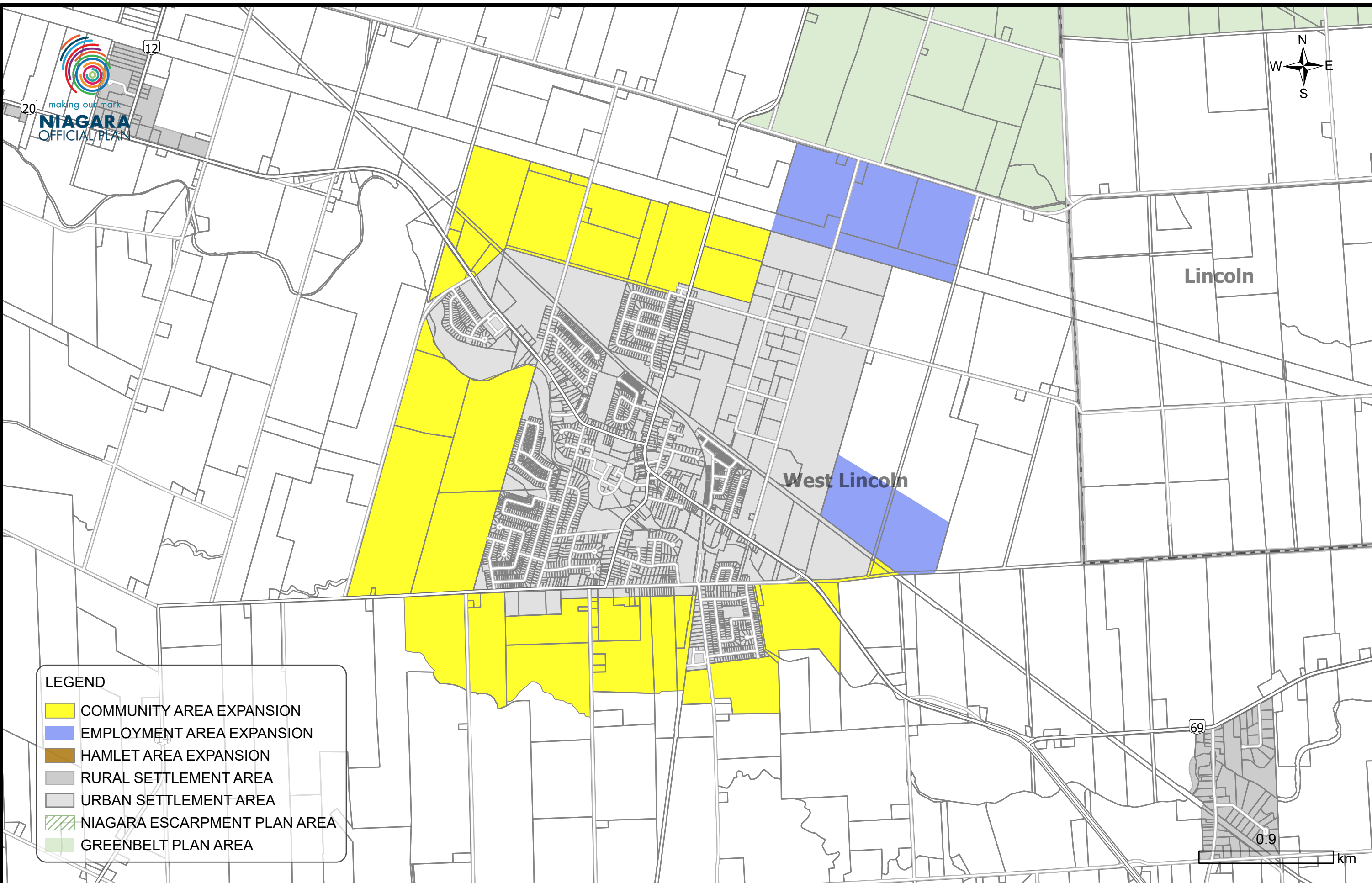
- COMMUNITY AREA EXPANSION
- EMPLOYMENT AREA EXPANSION
- HAMLET AREA EXPANSION
- URBAN SETTLEMENT AREA
- NIAGARA ESCARPMENT PLAN AREA
- GREENBELT PLAN AREA



0.55 km

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**URBAN EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION  
DECEMBER 2021**



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## Appendix 3 - PDS 41-2021 2051 Land Needs Assessment

Niagara Region  
December 2021

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**GROWING REGION**



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## Land Needs Assessment Overview

The Land Needs Assessment (“LNA”) is a technical, Region-led process that determines the amount of land required to accommodate 2051 forecasts.

Specifically, the Region must calculate the amount of designated land each area 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, area municipalities and Province.

Two earlier Draft LNA Summaries were released in May and August 2021 for the purpose of consultation and refinement. Feedback was received from area municipalities, stakeholders and the public. Commentary was generally supportive and refinements have been made to allocations and methodology assumptions to better align with municipal planning strategies.

A Made-in-Niagara Forecast was established in August 2021 that identified a 2051 population forecast of 694,000 people and 272,000 jobs. The Made-in-Niagara Forecast and associated draft LNA were endorsed-in-principle.

Since endorsement-in-principle in August 2021, some further changes are proposed to the LNA. These are detailed throughout the remainder of this document.

One area of change is the identification of 315 hectares of current urban lands that are constrained as a result of infrastructure and economic factors.

These lands are not removed from the urban area, rather, the revised LNA identifies an adjustment needed to discount the land supply available to accommodate forecasted growth.

The Regional Land Needs Assessment has determined that 830 hectares of additional developable land is required to achieve the minimum forecasts associated with the Made-in-Niagara forecast.

**The Settlement Area Boundary Expansions set out in report PDS 41-2021 would fulfill all land needed. In other words, the Region would require no additional land.**

### **How to Read this Report**

This report follows the Provincial *Methodology* process and provides a summary for each component outlined within it. The report represents the final land needs assessment associated with the Niagara Official Plan.

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

The LNA results presented here are based on staff recommendations for Settlement Area Boundary Expansions. Adjustments to the LNA will be required if Regional Council endorses alternative boundaries related to Urban Settlement Areas, Rural Settlement Areas and/or Employment Areas.

The Province is the approval authority on the LNA and requires consultation be done prior to submitting the final LNA. The Province provided feedback on the May and August 2021 Draft LNA. This version will be provided to the Province for comment.

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

## Consultation

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
<b>Niagara 2041: Growth Options</b>	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
<b>Council approved MCR Phase 1 and 2 Report (PDS 15-2016)</b>		
<b>Niagara 2041: Preferred Growth Option</b>	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

Project Phase	Date	Description
	December 8, 2016	Public Information Centre: Town of Lincoln
<b>Preferred Growth Option Forecast approved for Development Charges Study (PDS 37-2016)</b>		
<b>2017 Provincial Plan Review and Release of Growth Plan (2018)</b>		
<b>Regional Council deem Pre-2017 Growth Plan MCR complete and Growth Management work transitioned into new Niagara Official Plan (PDS 21-2018)</b>		
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Employment Strategy</b>	October 10, 2019	Industry Stakeholder Session: Town of Niagara- on-the-Lake
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Growth Strategy</b>	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
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Employment Strategy</b>	February 25, 2020	Industry Stakeholder Session: Town of Niagara- on-the-Lake
<b>Release of Growth Plan (2020) and Revised Land Needs Assessment Methodology</b>		
<b>Settlement Area Boundary Review Program: Growth Plan Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment Update presented to Council (PDS 29-2020)</b>		
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Growth Management and Employment Surveys</b>	September – October, 2020	Online surveys related to Growth Management and



Project Phase	Date	Description
		Employment directions and options
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Land Needs, Growth Allocations and Settlement Area Boundary Adjustment</b>	October 7, 2020	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Employment Strategy</b>	October 8, 2020	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>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.</b>		
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Growing Region</b>	June 9, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Vibrant Region</b>	June 10, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Competitive Region</b>	June 16, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Connected Region</b>	June 17, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>Niagara Official Plan: Sustainable Region</b>	June 23, 2021	Virtual Public Information Centre
<b>Land Needs Assessment Feedback and Settlement Area Boundary Request Deadline</b>	July 2, 2021	Online Submissions
<b>Made-in-Niagara Forecast and August draft LNA was endorsed-in-principle (PDS 33-2021)</b>		

Project Phase	Date	Description
Niagara Official Plan: Settlement Area Boundary Review Mapping Tool	August – October, 2021	Online Mapping Tool
<b>Employment Conversions, within Employment Areas, were not supported by Council (PDS 39-2021)</b>		

## Evolution of the Land Needs Assessment

The first draft of the LNA, released in May 2021, was based on the Growth Plan 2051 forecast of 674,000 people and 272,000 jobs for Niagara Region.

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 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”).

Initial 2051 forecasts were consulted on with area municipalities, stakeholders and the public. Additional analysis was conducted by the Niagara 2051 working group, a Regional interdepartmental group supporting the Water and Wastewater Master Servicing Plan, Transportation Master Plan and Development Charges Bylaw.

Based on the consultation and Niagara 2051 review, it was determined that an alternative 2051 growth forecast was needed for Niagara. The Growth Plan (2020) allows Niagara to use an alternative growth forecast beyond those identified in Growth Plan Schedule 3.

It was determined that, in both Lincoln and Welland, population forecasts needed to increase by 10,000 people to reflect planned development and support infrastructure improvement. The additional growth was identified within existing urban, built up areas with development and redevelopment potential.

The Made-in-Niagara Forecast was endorsed, in principle, in August 2021 and establishes an alternative growth target of 694,000 people and 272,000 jobs for 2051.

PDS 33-2021 noted adjustments to the forecasts were likely, prior to finalizing, to reflect any recommended employment conversions and other matters, included adjustments that are identified within the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology.

The following section discusses refinements to the Made-in-Niagara forecasts and draft LNA.

### **Refinement of Allocations Resulting from Greenbelt Restrictions**

The August 2021 LNA identified the need for additional Community and Employment Area lands in several Greenbelt Plan municipalities, where expansion is prohibited.

As a result, employment forecasts have been reallocated, in a minor way, to remove the need for new settlement area lands in the Greenbelt Plan Area. Employment has been shifted to municipalities where employment growth can be supported through existing infrastructure or part of larger expansion areas.

Employment has been shifted from St. Catharines and Lincoln and redistributed to Fort Erie, Grimsby, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Thorold. The overall Regional mix of employment growth by type (Office/Major Office, Employment Land Employment, Population Related Employment and Rural Employment) remains unchanged.

Both St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake had an identified need of minor Community Area expansions in the draft assessment. This growth, however, can be accommodated within existing Designated Greenfield Areas without the need for reallocation of population and housing forecasts.

**Table 1** provides a summary of revised 2051 population, housing and employment forecasts.

Table 1: 2051 Municipal Population, Housing and Employment Forecasts

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2051 Population Forecast</b>	<b>2051 Households Forecast</b>	<b>2051 Employment Forecast</b>
Fort Erie	48,050	21,510	18,430
Grimsby	37,000	16,070	14,960
Lincoln	45,660	19,405	15,220
Niagara Falls	141,650	58,740	58,110
Niagara-on-the-Lake	28,900	12,500	17,610
Pelham	28,830	11,280	7,140
Port Colborne	23,230	10,500	7,550
St. Catharines	171,890	78,320	79,350
Thorold	39,690	15,660	12,510
Wainfleet	7,730	3,040	1,830
Welland	83,000	37,540	28,790
West Lincoln	38,370	14,060	10,480
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>694,000</b>	<b>298,645</b>	<b>272,000</b>

### Community and Employment Area Density Assumptions

Based on consultation with municipalities and stakeholders, minor refinements have been made to density assumptions within both the Community and Employment Area calculations of the LNA.

Regarding Community Area, the Region has an existing policy for Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) to be planned at a density of 50 people and jobs per hectare. This target is measured across the entirety of the Region's DGA. The Regional Structure Strategy has determined 50 people and jobs per hectare remains an appropriate target in the Niagara Official Plan.

While the overall target remains 50 people and jobs per hectare across Niagara, the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology requires an analysis of planned DGA lands be considered through the Community Area analysis.

As a result, the Community Area assessment has been refined to reflect the planned density of vacant and future DGA lands within each municipality.

**Table 2** provides an overview of municipal DGA density assumptions for the purpose of the LNA.

Table 2: Municipal Designated Greenfield Density Targets to 2051

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Municipal DGA Density Target (People and Jobs Per Hectare)</b>	<b>Planned DGA Density on Vacant Lands (People and Jobs Per Hectare)</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	50	50
<b>Grimsby</b>	50	50
<b>Lincoln</b>	50	100
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	50	50
<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	50	125
<b>Pelham</b>	50	50
<b>Port Colborne</b>	50	50
<b>St. Catharines</b>	50	60
<b>Thorold</b>	50	50
<b>Welland</b>	50	50
<b>West Lincoln</b>	50	55
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

The Town of Fort Erie had an increase in Employment Area density relating to the increase in Employment Land Employment jobs that could not be supported within Greenbelt Plan Municipalities.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Employment Area density target was lowered to account for additional Employment Land Employment jobs within the Glendale Employment Area, which had previously been targeted for a higher share of office-style employment.

The Employment Area density in the City of Niagara Falls and Township of West Lincoln was lowered after consultation with those municipalities and based on work related to the Niagara Falls Employment Strategy and the Smithville Master Community Plan, respectively.

**Table 3** provides an overview of Employment Area density target revisions between the draft and final LNA.

Table 3: Employment Area Density Targets to 2051

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>August Draft Vacant Employment Area Density (Jobs Per Hectare)</b>	<b>Revised Vacant Employment Area Density (Jobs Per Hectare)</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	15	20
<b>Grimsby</b>	50	50
<b>Lincoln</b>	45	45
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	35	25
<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	95	80
<b>Pelham</b>	0	0
<b>Port Colborne</b>	30	30
<b>St. Catharines</b>	50	50
<b>Thorold</b>	25	25
<b>Welland</b>	25	25
<b>West Lincoln</b>	25	20
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>

### Employment Area Boundaries

Similar to Employment Area densities, Employment Areas in the City of Niagara Falls and Township of West Lincoln have been refined based on input from municipal planning strategies.

The Niagara Falls Employment Strategy identified a larger Employment Area boundary for the Montrose Road Industrial Area. The updated boundary is based on the re-designation of adjacent lands to the previously identified Employment Area (PDS 17-2021, Appendix 10.2, page 106). The adjacent lands are to be re-designated from Tourist Commercial to Employment and brought into the Employment Area. The additional area is 40 hectares of developable lands.

As a result, there is no longer a land need for additional Employment Area lands in Niagara Falls, as previously identified in the August 2021 draft LNA before the above-noted employment area was adjusted.

By adding additional Employment Area in Niagara Falls, Community Area lands have been reduced by 40 hectares. Thus, an additional 40 ha of Community Area are needed. This is added to the previously-identified need of 270 Ha, for a total of 310 Ha.

In West Lincoln, the Smithville Community Master Plan identified a preferred Employment Area boundary.

The recommended boundary includes the removal of a 5 ha parcel that was previously included in error.

## 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* 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, as identified in the following section of the report.

### 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.

The Growth Plan (2020) allows Niagara to use alternative growth forecasts beyond those identified in *Growth Plan* Schedule 3. An alternative growth forecast can only be advanced by a Region or single-tier government.

The Region has identified an alternative growth forecast, referred to as the “Made-in-Niagara Forecast”, of **694,000** people. The Made-in-Niagara Forecast was endorsed, in principle, by Regional Council in August 2021.

The Made-in-Niagara forecast is based on collaboration with area municipalities and Niagara 2051 working group. Through detailed evaluation of growth opportunities within Niagara, it was determined that the Growth Plan Schedule 3 forecast was below what is likely to occur in Niagara and an alternative forecast is required to ensure infrastructure (roads and pipes) are sized properly for development to 2051.

## Component 2: Housing Need

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 increase through 2051, with a significant shift 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* (Appendix 1).

Formation rates identified in the *2051 Growth Update Memo* were extrapolated from the *Growth Plan* Schedule 3 forecast for the Made-in-Niagara forecast.

**Table 4** identifies a need for **296,750 households** based on the 2051 population forecast of 694,000.



Table 4: 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	565	135	31.7%
20 - 24	14.5%	4,000	5,065	1,065	26.6%
25 - 29	35.2%	8,640	12,770	4,130	47.8%
30 - 34	48.7%	11,435	17,565	6,130	53.6%
35 - 39	52.9%	12,385	19,460	7,075	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	24,895	4,975	25.0%
55 - 59	58.6%	20,050	25,950	5,900	29.4%
60 - 64	58.9%	18,845	25,095	6,250	33.2%
65 - 69	61.2%	18,015	25,710	7,695	42.7%
70 - 74	61.7%	13,675	24,330	10,655	77.9%
75 - 79	65.3%	10,480	24,205	13,725	131.0%
80 - 84	66.5%	8,190	21,745	13,555	165.5%
84 - 89	60.7%	5,185	15,990	10,805	208.4%
90 +	46.3%	2,390	11,050	8,660	362.3%
Total	50.8% (2051)	183,830	296,750	112,920	61.4%

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 5** provides a summary of household forecast by housing type between 2021 and 2051.

Table 5: Household Forecast by Housing Type - 2021 to 2051

<b>Household Forecast by Housing Type: 2021 to 2051</b>					
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>Single/Semi-Detached</b>	<b>Row House</b>	<b>Accessory Dwelling</b>	<b>Apartment Building</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Units</b>	44,318	27,405	3,390	27,655	102,765
<b>Share</b>	43%	27%	3%	27%	100%

### **Component 3: Allocation of Housing Need to Area Municipalities**

Allocation of Housing Need to area municipalities is based on input from area 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 area 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, the alternative Made-in-Niagara forecast was identified. The forecast represents an increase of 20,000 people and 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 6** provides municipal-level housing allocations by housing type.

Table 6: 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	3,058	914	628	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	14,350
West Lincoln	6,030	2,390	310	8,730
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>44,318</b>	<b>27,404</b>	<b>31,043</b>	<b>102,765</b>

#### 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 and has set an intensification rate of 60% based on the Regional Structure Strategy.**

Within the DGA, the Growth Plan requires a density of 50 people and jobs per hectare. The Region has confirmed this is an appropriate target within Niagara.

To accommodate the 60% intensification rate and DGA density target, the Regional Structure has identified a series of Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs).

SGAs are lands within Urban Areas that are the focus for more significant intensification and higher-density uses. Introduced as part of the recent updates to the Growth Plan, SGAs identified by Provincial policy include:

- Urban Growth Centres;
- Major Transit Station Areas; and
- Other Strategic Growth Areas, which in Niagara, include Regional Growth Centres and District Plan Areas.

The Region will plan for growth and development in SGAs through the preparation of Secondary Plans and will work with municipalities with SGAs to ensure minimum targets are being achieved in local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws.

### **Urban Growth Centre: Downtown St. Catharines**

The *Growth Plan* maps one Urban Growth Centres in Niagara: Downtown St. Catharines. This designation is for areas of existing or emerging downtown that are to be the focus of a substantial amount of growth and development, as well as focal area for investment in regional public service facilities, commercial uses, recreational uses, and major employment centres.

The *Growth Plan* requires that Downtown St. Catharines be planned to achieve a minimum density target of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare by the year 2031. The existing density in the Downtown St. Catharines Urban Growth Centre is approximately 100 residents and jobs per hectare.

As described further in the next section, the Region also considers the Downtown St. Catharines Bus Station as a Major Transit Station Area. The bus terminal is located within the Urban Growth Centre, supports the Downtown as a civic, commercial, and recreational destination, and will play a role in future planning within the Urban Growth Centre.

## Major Transit Station Areas

Major Transit Station Areas are defined by the *Growth Plan* as the area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit* station or stop within a *settlement area*; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. *Major transit station areas* generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.

Major Transit Station Areas encompass the lands around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop within an Urban Area. For Niagara, these include the planned GO Transit Stations in the Town of Grimsby, City of St. Catharines, and City of Niagara Falls, and the future proposed GO Transit Station in the Town of Lincoln. Also included is the Downtown St. Catharines Bus Station, as noted above.

*Growth Plan* policies for Major Transit Station Areas only apply to areas located along an identified “priority transit corridor”. Currently, the Region’s GO Transit Stations are not identified along this corridor. As such, the *Growth Plan* has limited policy direction for Niagara’s MTSAs.

The Region, in partnership with its area municipalities, proactively approved Secondary Plans for each station area to position and plan for higher densities similar to those identified as being on a priority transit corridor.

MTSAs in Niagara include a mix of *delineated built-up area*, DGA and Employment Area.

## Regional Growth Centres

The *Growth Plan* allows municipalities to determine the location and extent of other SGAs. Unlike the Urban Growth Centre and MTSAs, other SGAs do not have specific *Growth Plan* policy sections that guide the form, density, and land use types permitted. These are referred to as “Other SGAs” or “Regional Growth Centres” interchangeably.

Other SGAs will be proactively planned to evolve in manner that shares the same principles of other areas that anticipate more robust growth. The Region will direct a significant amount of Niagara’s population and employment forecast to these areas even where those SGAs do not have the highest order transit the same density thresholds as others.

Currently identified is the Regional Growth Centre of Downtown Welland. A minimum density target of 125 people and jobs per hectare is assigned.

Further to the discussion on the MTSAs, the same consideration is needed for connection to the Downtown Welland Regional Growth Centre. The Regional Growth Centre needs to strengthen its public transit connections by extending or offering new transit services. This will be a critical link in providing access throughout the communities and the Region in general. Enhanced access to transit can improve opportunities for housing choice and access to employment opportunities, as well as Regional destinations of broader interest and reliance.

Secondary Plans will provide a vision to guide growth within these areas. The process can proactively support infill, growth and intensification opportunities, urban design to support compatibility and technical studies prepared in support of infrastructure and transportation capacity. This proactive process will ensure that the lands within the SGA are development-ready.

In addition to Downtown Welland, Other Strategic Growth Areas include the District Plan Areas of Brock and Glendale. Both these areas have been identified and planned through the District Plan process to provide specific direction for growth and development to transition into complete communities. Both areas will offer frequent transit service in the form of transit hubs to connect different routes and modes of transit. They will play an important role in connecting local, inter-municipal and inter-regional transit level services.

The Glendale District Plan is a blend of DGA and Employment Area.

The Regional Structure policies also contemplate Future Strategic Growth Areas for the Niagara Official Plan. South Niagara Falls around the proposed South Niagara Hospital is one of these areas. This future SGA will follow a comprehensive process to determine the boundary and identify a density target.

**Table 7** identifies the density related to each SGA category:

Table 7: Strategic Growth Area Planned Density

Municipality	Minimum Density Target
Downtown St. Catharines Urban Growth Centre	150 people & jobs per hectare to <b>2031</b>
GO Transit Station Areas in St. Catharines, Lincoln, Niagara Falls, and Grimsby	125 people & jobs per hectare to <b>2051</b>
Downtown Welland Regional Growth Centre	125 people & jobs per hectare to <b>2051</b>
Brock and Glendale Niagara District Plans	100 people & jobs per hectare to <b>2051</b>

**Table 8** provides household forecast by policy area for each municipality and identifies the overall intensification rate of 60%.



Table 8: Housing Forecast by Policy Area and Municipality, 2021 to 2051

Shares of Household Growth by Policy Area Niagara Region by Area 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%
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>

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 9** and **Table 10** 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 9: Housing Forecast by Unit Type, Delineated Built-Up Area, 2021 to 2051

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

Table 10: Housing Forecast by Unit Type, DGA, 2021 to 2051

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

## 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 office/*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*. *Major office* is focused with the St. Catharines *Urban Growth Centre*, with some growth allocated to *Major Transit Station Areas*.

*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, PDS 17-2021: 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 11** provides an estimated number of jobs to be added within the DGA portion of the Community Area for each urban municipality between 2021 and 2051.

Table 11: DGA Community Area Job Forecast, 2021 to 2051

<b>DGA Community Area Job Forecast, 2021-2051</b>	
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	245
<b>Grimsby</b>	5
<b>Lincoln</b>	745
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	1,065
<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	1,090
<b>Pelham</b>	560
<b>Port Colborne</b>	360
<b>St. Catharines</b>	1,555
<b>Thorold</b>	530
<b>Welland</b>	265
<b>West Lincoln</b>	2,000
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>8,425</b>

### **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.

To determine land need, the forecast housing units in **Table 10** 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 rate<sup>1</sup> for each unit type.

The DGA Community Area job forecasts from **Table 11** 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 planned density target for each municipality, identified in **Table 2**.

The Community Area land need based on the difference between area required and area designated.

**Table 12** provides the *Community Area* population and employment forecasts to 2051.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 2022.

Table 12: Overall Community Area Land Need, 2021 to 2051 (before Final Adjustment)

<b>DGA Community Area Land Need, 2021-2051</b>				
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Population and Employment Growth within the Unplanned DGA</b>	<b>Area Required (ha)</b>	<b>Area Designated<sup>2</sup> (ha)</b>	<b>Additional Land Need Before Final Adjustment (ha)*</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	8,170	165	60	105
<b>Grimsby</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Lincoln</b>	2,410	25	25	0
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	23,470	470	160	310
<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	9,870	80	75	0
<b>Pelham</b>	3,215	65	25	40
<b>Port Colborne</b>	4,615	90	250	-160
<b>St. Catharines</b>	3,655	60	60	0
<b>Thorold</b>	4,830	95	250	-155
<b>Welland</b>	5,770	115	115	0
<b>West Lincoln</b>	20,545	375	40	330
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>86,550</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>1,095</b>	<b>470</b>

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

### **Community Area Land Needs Summary**

Niagara’s 12 area municipalities can be placed into two general categories related to the Community Area assessment:

1. Additional Community Area Land Required

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<sup>2</sup> 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 area removed is based on Option 3B as recommended by the Natural Environment Strategy.

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

## 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<sup>3</sup> 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. These lands are discussed further in the following section.

### **Additional Considerations and Revisions**

The *Methodology* includes a specific final step for “Adjustments” that are supported through the assessment.

The following is considered an Adjustment:

- The area for settlement area boundary expansion is adjusted upwards in a minor way, if necessary, to ensure logical boundaries of settlement areas. This will generally be an arterial or concession road or other man-made or natural definable feature. The intent is to establish logical settlement area boundaries and avoid partial neighbourhoods or irregular servicing boundary. Such adjustments would require slight increases to the forecast assumed in implementing the assessment, and;
- Adjustments to land need may be made in order to account for:
  - a. Constrained land within the settlement area that requires additional infrastructure (e.g. servicing, transit, highways);

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<sup>3</sup> The City of Welland undertook a pre-MCR urban boundary expansion. The forecasts and lands need assessment are reflective of the updated Welland urban boundary. No additional Community Area land is needed within the City of Welland for development to 2051.

- b. Lands that may not develop within the horizon of the Plan due to other factors such as landowner choice to not develop for the purposes they are designated for;
- c. The length of the planning process to make lands ready for development; and,
- d. Other economic (e.g. provision for major businesses) and demographic (e.g. increases in immigration and emigration) considerations not anticipated in growth scenarios used in the initial municipal analysis.

The revised LNA identifies 315 hectares of existing Community Area land that meets this Final Adjustment criteria.

Specifically, 210 hectares of existing Community Area lands are immediately adjacent to active or planned aggregate operations. These lands may not be available for development within the planning horizon, depending on the life span of the aggregate operation and studies associated with development applications.

Another 105 hectares have infrastructure limitations in the planning horizon. These lands are not serviced at this time and would require extensive expansion of infrastructure and comprehensive land use planning.

The location of these adjustment lands are in Port Colborne and Thorold. These lands are not removed from the urban area, nor are any special land use designations proposed. Rather, the revised LNA identifies an adjustment needed to discount the land supply available to accommodate forecasted growth.

**Table 13** provides a summary of Community Area land needs and Final Adjustments.

Table 13: Community Area Land Need and Final Adjustments.

Land Need Category	Municipality	Area (ha)
Community Area Expansion	Fort Erie	105
	Niagara Falls	310
	Pelham/Thorold	40
	West Lincoln	330
Land Need Adjustment	Port Colborne	-160
	Thorold	-155



## 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 area 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 14** provides an overview of employment growth by municipality, by employment type, from 2021 to 2051.

Table 14: Niagara Region Employment Growth, 2021 to 2051, by Employment Type

<b>Total Employment Growth by Employment Type, 2021-2051</b>					
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Office/ Major Office</b>	<b>Population- Related Employment</b>	<b>Employment Land Employment</b>	<b>Rural Employ- ment</b>	<b>Total Employ- ment</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	140	2,890	4,430	440	7,900
<b>Grimsby</b>	380	2,070	1,430	390	4,270
<b>Lincoln</b>	100	1,580	650	1,500	3,830
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	1,150	15,550	2,770	850	20,320
<b>Niagara-on-the- Lake</b>	1,000	3,040	290	1,480	5,810
<b>Pelham</b>	10	1,600	0	710	2,320
<b>Port Colborne</b>	0	750	350	540	1,640
<b>St. Catharines</b>	4,320	10,780	1,880	590	17,570
<b>Thorold</b>	250	2,540	1,020	170	3,980
<b>Wainfleet</b>	0	0	0	420	420
<b>Welland</b>	360	4,610	5,300	480	10,750
<b>West Lincoln</b>	160	3,580	1,760	520	6,020
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>7,870</b>	<b>48,990</b>	<b>19,880</b>	<b>8,090</b>	<b>84,830</b>

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 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%<sup>4</sup> occurring within *Employment Areas*.

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

**Table 15** provides an overview of employment allocations by municipality, employment type and geography. Forecasts are provided as proportions.

Table 15: Employment Growth by Category and Location, 2021 to 2051

Office Growth by Geography, 2021-2051			
Municipality	Community Area	Employment Area	Rural Area
Fort Erie	0.50	0.50	0.00
Grimsby	0.50	0.50	0.00
Lincoln	0.50	0.50	0.00
Niagara Falls	0.80	0.20	0.00
Niagara-on-the-Lake	0.00	1.00	0.00
Pelham	1.00	0.00	0.00
Port Colborne	0.50	0.50	0.00
St. Catharines	0.90	0.10	0.00
Thorold	0.50	0.50	0.00
Wainfleet	0.00	0.00	1.00
Welland	0.50	0.50	0.00
West Lincoln	0.50	0.50	0.00
Population-Related Employment Growth by Policy Area, 2021-2051			
Municipality	Community Area	Employment Area	Rural Area
Fort Erie	0.94	0.05	0.01
Grimsby	0.94	0.05	0.01

<sup>4</sup> 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.

Lincoln	0.94	0.05	0.01
Niagara Falls	0.94	0.05	0.01
Niagara-on-the-Lake	0.74	0.25	0.01
Pelham	0.99	0.00	0.01
Port Colborne	0.94	0.05	0.01
St. Catharines	0.94	0.05	0.01
Thorold	0.74	0.25	0.01
Wainfleet	0.00	0.00	1.00
Welland	0.94	0.05	0.01
West Lincoln	0.94	0.05	0.01
Employment Land Employment Growth by Policy Area, 2021-2051			
Municipality	Community Area	Employment Area	Rural Area
Fort Erie	0.00	0.99	0.01
Grimsby	0.00	0.99	0.01
Lincoln	0.00	0.80	0.20
Niagara Falls	0.09	0.90	0.01
Niagara-on-the-Lake	0.00	0.99	0.01
Pelham	0.50	0.00	0.50
Port Colborne	0.00	0.99	0.01
St. Catharines	0.05	0.95	0.01
Thorold	0.00	0.95	0.05
Wainfleet	0.00	0.00	1.00
Welland	0.00	0.99	0.01
West Lincoln	0.00	0.99	0.01
Rural Employment Growth by Policy Area, 2021-2051			
Municipality	Community Area	Employment Area	Rural Area
Fort Erie	0.00	0.00	1.00
Grimsby	0.00	0.00	1.00
Lincoln	0.00	0.00	1.00
Niagara Falls	0.00	0.00	1.00
Niagara-on-the-Lake	0.00	0.00	1.00
Pelham	0.00	0.00	1.00
Port Colborne	0.00	0.00	1.00
St. Catharines	0.00	0.00	1.00
Thorold	0.00	0.00	1.00
Wainfleet	0.00	0.00	1.00

<b>Welland</b>	0.00	0.00	1.00
<b>West Lincoln</b>	0.00	0.00	1.00

**Table 16** provides a summary of employment forecasts by location.

Table 16: Employment Growth by Type and Municipality, 2021 to 2051

<b>Employment Growth by Policy Area, 2021-2051</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Community Area</b>	<b>Employment Area</b>	<b>Rural Area</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	2,785	4,600	515
<b>Grimsby</b>	2,135	1,710	425
<b>Lincoln</b>	1,535	650	1,645
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	15,785	3,500	1,035
<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	2,250	2,045	1,515
<b>Pelham</b>	1,595	0	725
<b>Port Colborne</b>	705	385	550
<b>St. Catharines</b>	14,115	2,755	715
<b>Thorold</b>	2,005	1,730	245
<b>Wainfleet</b>	0	0	420
<b>Welland</b>	4,515	5,660	580
<b>West Lincoln</b>	3,445	2,000	575
<b>Niagara Region</b>	50,870	25,035	8,945

### **Component 3: Employment Area Capacity**

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

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

**Table 17** provides a summary of existing capacity within each municipal Employment Area.

<b>Employment Growth Potential by Municipality and Employment Area, 2021-2051</b>				
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Area ID</b>	<b>Vacant Land Supply (ha)</b>	<b>Vacant Land Density Target (jobs/ha)</b>	<b>Existing Employment Area Capacity</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	FE-1 Stevensville Industrial Cell	9	15	135
	FE-2 International Peace Bridge Trade Hub	46	20	915
	FE-3 Bridgeburg Rail Zone	11	20	215
<b>Grimsby</b>	GRM-1 West Niagara QEW Corridor	17	60	1,035
	GRM-2 Casablanca-East QEW Corridor	10	55	535
	GRM-3 Main Street East Employment District	3	40	110
<b>Lincoln</b>	LIN-1 Beamsville GO Precinct	12	45	535
	LIN-2 King Street at Bartlett Junction	0	0	0
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	NF-1 Highway 405 Employment Area	8	20	150

<b>Employment Growth Potential by Municipality and Employment Area, 2021-2051</b>				
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Area ID</b>	<b>Vacant Land Supply (ha)</b>	<b>Vacant Land Density Target (jobs/ha)</b>	<b>Existing Employment Area Capacity</b>
	NF-2 North Niagara Falls Secure Storage Employment Area	22	30	660
	NF-3 QEW / 420 Employment Area	1	50	25
	NF-4 QEW Centre Employment Area	2	65	140
	NF-5 Montrose Road Industrial Area	108	20	2,160
	NF-6 Dorchester Road Employment Area	0	0	0
	NF-7 Stanley Avenue Business Park	10	25	260
	<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	NOTL-1 Virgil Business Park	5	45
NOTL-2 Glendale Momentum District		34	80	2,685

<b>Employment Growth Potential by Municipality and Employment Area, 2021-2051</b>				
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Area ID</b>	<b>Vacant Land Supply (ha)</b>	<b>Vacant Land Density Target (jobs/ha)</b>	<b>Existing Employment Area Capacity</b>
<b>Port Colborne</b>	PC-1 Port Colborne West Transshipment Terminal	15	25	380
	PC-2 Port Colborne East Transshipment Terminal	39	30	1,160
<b>St. Catharines</b>	STC-1 Port Weller Employment Area	25	40	1,020
	STC-2 Hannover Employment Area	3	100	250
	STC-3 Hiscott Employment Area	0	0	0
	STC-4 Bunting / Welland / Eastchester / Cushman Road Employment Area	14	45	640
	STC-5 West End Employment Area	8	80	645
	STC-6 Glendale Avenue East	2	45	105



<b>Employment Growth Potential by Municipality and Employment Area, 2021-2051</b>				
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Area ID</b>	<b>Vacant Land Supply (ha)</b>	<b>Vacant Land Density Target (jobs/ha)</b>	<b>Existing Employment Area Capacity</b>
	Employment Area			
<b>Thorold</b>	THO-1 Brock District University Innovation Park	6	95	610
	THO-2 McCleary Highway 58 Industrial Park	11	25	275
	THO-3 Thorold Tunnel Crossing	1	25	30
	THO-4 Thorold South Allanburg Industrial Park	48	25	1,210
<b>Welland</b>	WEL-1 North Woodlawn Hospitality Node	21	45	930
	WEL-2 South Woodlawn Industrial Niche	37	15	550
	WEL-3 Highway 140 Canalside Artery	122	25	3,045
	WEL-4 Flatwater Rally	1	25	30

Employment Growth Potential by Municipality and Employment Area, 2021-2051				
Municipality	Employment Area ID	Vacant Land Supply (ha)	Vacant Land Density Target (jobs/ha)	Existing Employment Area Capacity
	Employment Area			
West Lincoln	WL-1 Smithville Industrial District	30	20	600

**Table 18** provides an aggregated assessment of municipal Employment Area capacity.

Table 18: Existing Employment Area Potential for Additional Employment

Employment Area Potential Within Existing Areas	
Municipality	Additional Employment Potential
Fort Erie	1,265
Grimsby	1,680
Lincoln	500
Niagara Falls	3,395
Niagara-on-the-Lake	2,915
Pelham	0
Port Colborne	1,540
St. Catharines	2,665
Thorold	2,130
Wainfleet	0
Welland	4,550
West Lincoln	600
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>21,235</b>

#### 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 16**) with the job growth potential within existing *Employment Areas* (**Table 18**). 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 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.

**Table 19** provides a summary of the Employment Area Land Needs.

Table 19: Employment Area Land Need, by Municipality, 2021 to 2051

<b>Employment Area Land Need by Municipality, 2021-2051</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Unaccommodated Employment Growth</b>	<b>Vacant Employment Area Density Target (Jobs/ha)</b>	<b>Employment Area Land Need (ha)*</b>
<b>Fort Erie</b>	3,335	20	175
<b>Grimsby</b>	30	50	0
<b>Lincoln</b>	150	45	0
<b>Niagara Falls</b>	105	25	0
<b>Niagara-on-the-Lake</b>	-870	80	-10
<b>Pelham</b>	0	0	0
<b>Port Colborne</b>	-1,155	30	-40
<b>St. Catharines</b>	95	50	0
<b>Thorold</b>	-400	25	-15
<b>Wainfleet</b>	0	0	0
<b>Welland</b>	1,105	25	45
<b>West Lincoln</b>	1,400	20	70
<b>Niagara Region</b>	<b>3,800</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>225</b>

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 and Township of West Lincoln do not have sufficient supply of *Employment Area* to accommodate the forecast growth to 2051. There was a small need identified in Welland and a small oversupply in Port Colborne.

The Region has a need for an additional 245 hectares of developable Employment Area lands. **Table 20** provides a summary of where additional Employment Area lands will be distributed in Niagara.

Table 20: Employment Area needs by municipality to 2051

Land Need Category	Municipality	Area (ha)
Employment Area Expansion	Fort Erie	175
	West Lincoln	70

## 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 21** 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 21: Rural Area and Rural Settlement Area Forecasts

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

Residential land need within Rural Settlement Areas was determined by converting the housing growth to area (hectares).

In Niagara, residential lots within Rural Settlement Areas must be a minimum of 1 hectare in size. However, lots may be reduced to 1 acre based on studies. To determine the developable lot size for the Rural Settlement Area assessment, staff analyzed the vacant land supply within hamlets and the surrounding lot fabric of existing development.

It was determined that new residential lots within Rural Settlement Areas will have an average lot size of 0.6 hectares or 1.5 acres.

**Table 22** provides an overview of residential land needs within Rural Settlement Areas.

Table 22: Rural Settlement Area Forecasts (Housing), 2021 to 2051

<b>Rural Settlement Area Forecasts: Housing 2021 to 2051</b>		
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Housing Forecast</b>	<b>Residential Need (ha)</b>
Fort Erie	0	0
Port Colborne	10	6
Wainfleet	210	140
West Lincoln	40	25

Rural Employment land need within Rural Settlement Areas was determined by converting employment growth to area (hectares).

Employment densities were calculated based on existing businesses identified through the Niagara Employment Inventory.

**Table 23** provides an overview of employment land needs within Rural Settlement Areas.

Table 23: Rural Settlement Area Forecasts (Employment), 2021 to 2051

<b>Rural Settlement Area Forecasts: Employment 2021 to 2051</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Forecast</b>	<b>Employment Density (jobs per hectare)</b>	<b>Employment Need (ha)</b>
Fort Erie	50	35	0
Port Colborne	550	10	55
Wainfleet	275	15	20
West Lincoln	335	10	35

Finally, the overall land need for Rural Settlement Areas was determined by adding the residential and employment land needs, and subtracting existing supply.

**Table 24** provides an overview of Rural Settlement Area land needs.

Table 24: Rural Settlement Area Land Needs to 2051

<b>Rural Settlement Area Land Needs</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Residential and Employment Land Need (ha)</b>	<b>Existing Supply (ha)</b>	<b>Land Need (ha)</b>
Fort Erie	0	0	0
Port Colborne	60	80	-20
Wainfleet	160	85	75
West Lincoln	60	20	40

Based on the Rural Settlement Area assessment, an additional 75 hectares is needed within Wainfleet and 40 hectares within West Lincoln.

### **Land Needs Assessment Results**

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

The Land Needs Assessment has determined that **830 hectares** of additional developable land is required to achieve the minimum forecasts associated with the Made-in-Niagara forecast.

**Table 25** provides a summary of each Land Need category and overall Regional Land Need.

Table 25: Niagara 2051 Land Needs Requirement by Category

Land Need Category	Expansion Land Need (ha)
Community Area	785
Employment Area	245
Rural Settlement Area	110
Land Need Adjustment	-315
<b>Regional Land Need</b>	<b>830</b>

**Table 26** summarizes how the Land Needs will be accommodated across Niagara, and reflects the areas recommended within the Settlement Area Boundary Review.

Table 26: Land Need by Category and Municipality

Land Need Category	Municipality	Area (ha)
Community Area Expansion	Fort Erie	105
	Niagara Falls	310
	Pelham/Thorold	40
	West Lincoln	330
Employment Area Expansion	Fort Erie	175
	West Lincoln	70
Rural Settlement Expansion	Wainfleet	75
	West Lincoln	40
Land Need Adjustment	Port Colborne	-160
	Thorold	-155

The Settlement Area Boundary Review and associated expansions recommendations establish Settlement Area Boundaries that can accommodate the Made-in-Niagara Forecast.

**Approval of the recommended Settlement Area Boundary Expansions would result in a Niagara 2051 land need of zero hectares of additional land.**

## **Conclusion**

This LNA Summary represents the land needs requirements for 2051.

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 the final assessment is approved.

In preparing this document, careful consideration was given to input from the public, agency and area municipalities.



## Appendix 1.1 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).



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# NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

## Appendix 4 - PDS 41-2021

### Niagara Falls and Fort Erie Expansion Area-wide Context Review

### Settlement Area Boundary Review

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Niagara Region  
December 2021

**GROWING REGION**



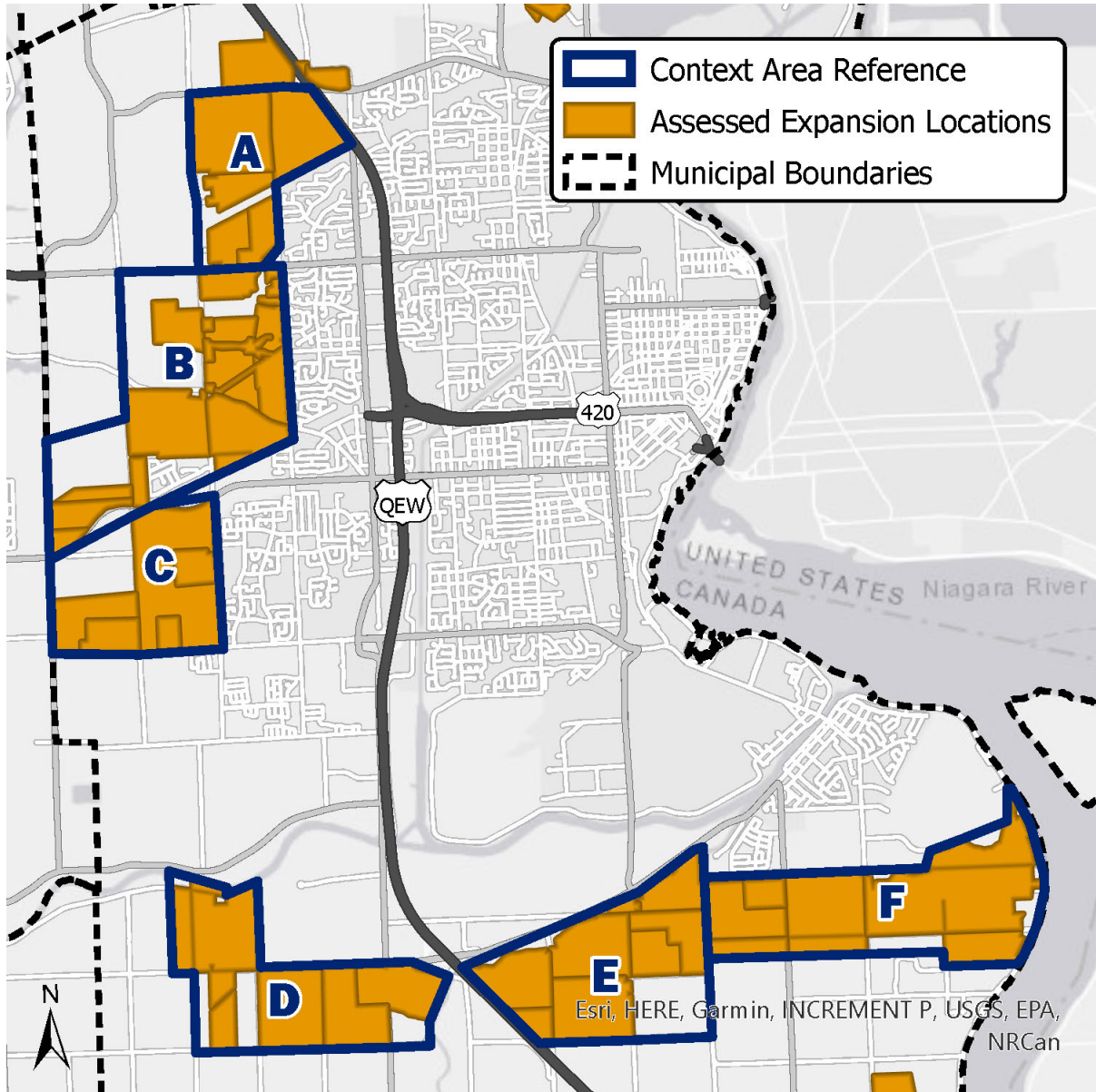
## **Contextual Commentary**

The following offers planning commentary for areas around the Niagara Falls and Fort Erie urban settlement areas at a larger scale. This is intended to provide contextual insight for the broader areas and the challenges or opportunities that were reflected during the course of the SABR review conducted by Regional staff.

Context is offered that may otherwise help provide an understanding of areas chosen for expansion recommendation and is not intended to detract or promote other areas in a supplemental manner towards future considerations, having not been recommended.

The Growth Plan directs that expansions seek “the most appropriate location”. To this end, a number of considerations must be taken into account while planning for growth. The following characterizes the lands and location from an objective perspective of professional planning staff, informed by input from other disciplines as part of the Review Team work.

Area reference maps are included at the beginning of each municipal section to identify general areas being described.



### Niagara Falls – Context for Area A

This area is bounded by Mountain Road to the north; Garner Road to the west; Thorold Stone Road to the south and returning east to the existing urban settlement area boundary.

The broader area described above is generally free of significant NES feature constraint, however does have some limited natural features present in the way of woodland and wetlands. Lands slope to the northwest away from the existing settlement area. There are no significant groundwater recharge areas and minimal identification of being within a highly vulnerability aquifer zone. The Greenbelt /

Niagara Escarpment Plans form a hard limit to expansion consideration on the north side of Mountain Road.

Soils are predominantly Class 2 and 3 which are the class soils on the north and west sides of the existing Niagara Falls settlement area. There are a couple small pockets of Class 1 (on hydro lands) and also Class 5 associated with the watercourse that transects the area. Open fields are generally in production of cash/feed cropping activity with very little lands in a fallow state.

The area is generally made up of larger parcels of land which has benefit during secondary planning and development phases in terms of landowner/developer cooperation. There are a series of rural residences clustered along Garner road close to the Hydro corridor. Commercial, institutional residential uses are present in the northwest close to the QEW, otherwise remaining lands are free of development.

Transportation connections are good with concession roads actively traveled. Access to the QEW is immediate. Integration with existing community lands would be by boundary / concession roads due to the physical assets (Highway and Hydro Corridor) in place.

Aggregate resources are mapped as being present for approximately half of this area and the active operations just west of this location are part of a larger extraction operation. Licensed lands abut in the northwest of this larger area impacting potential consideration for community expansion for a large portion.

Servicing the broader area is feasible and appropriate strategies and upgrades would be required.

For the portion of this larger area adjacent to the QEW, approximately 65 ha is recommended for inclusion into the settlement boundary. Influence of aggregates and operations on the broader area was a consideration for remainder of lands when other options are present elsewhere around the settlement boundary.

Additional commentary on the portion of lands recommended for inclusion can be found in Report PDS 41-2021.

## Niagara Falls – Context for Area B

This area is generally bounded by Thorold Stone Road to the north; Beechwood Road to the west; south to Upper's Lane over to Townline Road; south to Lundy's Lane; easterly to Kalar Road; and returning north to Thorold Stone Road.

This broader area has more NES features than Area A, primarily associated with the Shriner's Creek and Beaverdams Creek watercourse tributaries that branch out within the larger area. Two areas of ownership are identified as NPCA Conservation Areas extending across the Kalar-Garner concession and limiting any potential for north-south community connection within.

There are a limited number of wetlands and woodlands dispersed throughout; some significant, some not. The entire area is free of any significant groundwater recharge identification and does have limited identification of being on a highly vulnerable aquifer zone. Topographically the general drainage is heading west towards the Welland Canal.

Soils are predominantly Class 2 and 3 which are the predominant class soils on the north and west sides of the existing Niagara Falls settlement area. Some Class 4 and 5 soils are present and associated along the watercourses mentioned. Most open fields are in production of cash/feed cropping activity with little lands in a fallow state. Some agricultural infrastructure is identifiable with one displaying active livestock activity while others show signs of being idle or in use of feed/hay or equipment storage.

Parcels in this area range in size with many being larger concession lot farms in the west and smaller when in proximity to the existing settlement area. Two hydro corridors and a rail corridor are present and transect the larger area at north, central and south.

Transportation in the area is generally good with concession roads being well traveled and linking some of the more heavily travelled east-west roads (Lundy's Lane RR20 and Thorold Stone Road RR57). Beaverdams Road acts to bisecting the larger area in a diagonal direction as well.

Aggregate resources are present in the westerly side of this area with a proposed quarry inside the westerly municipal boundary.

Servicing for the broader area is feasible and appropriate strategies and upgrades would be required.

From a community planning perspective, and although there are lands that would be suitable for development, none of the lands within this area have been recommended for expansion. One of the considerations is the contiguous requirement of expansion occurring off the existing settlement boundary.

A number of these properties are dependent on other lands being included before consideration can be extended. The location of the natural features and limits of the Conservation Areas lands fragment the area next to the settlement area. This combined with generally smaller parcels along the settlement boundary and the implications of a large quarry operation in the southern reach have been considered.

### **Niagara Falls – Context for Area C**

This area is generally bounded by Lundy's Lane to the north; Townline Road to the west; McLeod Road along the south and Kalar along the east.

This area is one of the least constrained from a NES perspective with very limited natural features present. Channel drainage through the existing golf course and another tributary of Beaverdams Creek have some associated floodplain. The lands are not shown to have any significant groundwater recharge areas or falling within a high vulnerability aquifer. Topographically the lands are generally flat with a height of land located centrally, splitting the surface drainage direction into north and south directions.

Soils for the area are predominantly Class 2 and 3, with some Class 5 associated with the tributary drainage at the north end. This is not unlike all areas around the Niagara Falls settlement area where Class 2 and 3 are the predominant. There are no active livestock farming operations observed within the area with a single small hobby farm on the north side of Nichol's Lane.

Parcel fabric in this area are large in size, much of which is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary at east, south and portions north with limited number of small lots likely created from farm lot severances.

From a transportation perspective, concession roads are well travelled and provide plenty of access opportunities for local road networks. Lundy's Lane (RR20) at the north limit provides major east-west movement as does McLeod to the south. McLeod provides access to the QEW a short distance away to the east.



This area does not have aggregate resources identified as underlying with a small portion of lands at northwest potentially falling within an area of influence to the planned quarry northwest of this area.

Servicing this area is feasible with flows travelling to the new (planned) South Niagara Falls wastewater treatment plant on the east side of the QEW at the Welland River.

From a community planning perspective, this is a larger, rectangular area that can accommodate a comprehensive secondary plan. Approximately 160 ha of this area are recommended for inclusion. Additional commentary on the portion of lands recommended for inclusion can be found in Report PDS 41-2021.

## **Niagara Falls – Context for Area D**

This area is generally described as being lands south of the Welland River; east of Morris Road; north of Carl Road; over to the QEW.

This area has more NES presence than some of the other areas reviewed and sees some larger natural feature identified in the way of significant woodland and provincially significant wetlands. The Provincial Natural Heritage System (“PNHS”) identification is shown around the outer perimeter of this area being described with some identification shown along the Welland River and Lyons Creek within.

There are other woodlands and other wetlands noted as present as well. A small portion of the area is identified as falling within a significant groundwater recharge area, however the area does not show any mapped zones of high vulnerability aquifer presence. Topographically, the area is very gently sloped to the tributaries that transect the broader area that ultimately flow east before joining the Welland River and Lyons Creek respectively. The height of land is located south of the existing settlement area along Biggar Road.

Soils for the area are almost entirely Class 3 with small amounts of Class 4 and 5 associated with watercourses. There are no active livestock farming operations observed within the area described and calculation for those are not impacting the area. All open fields within the area appear to be actively cash/feed cropping where accessible.

Parcel fabric includes a number of large concession lot sized properties with some smaller rural residential lots focused in one location west of Montrose Road at Carl Road.

Transportation connection is good with the QEW immediately adjacent and accessible to this area. North-south crossings of the Welland River will rely on Montrose and the QEW with alternate crossing being Stanley Avenue farther east and Moyer Road just inside the Welland boundary. Primary access into and out of the area will be via QEW as the new Hospital is completed and the destination traffic associated with this major institutional use will draw inter-municipally and even from out of Region.

There are no aggregate resources identified along the southern limits of the Niagara Falls settlement area and the closest active operation is located in the northern end of the municipality.

This area will be serviced by the new South Niagara Falls wastewater treatment plant planned for Grassy Brook, just on the east side of the QEW and very close in terms of proximity. It could be anticipated that servicing to this location would be made available together with the hospital construction, so not too long from present day.

From a community planning perspective this area is of higher interest as it will host a major destination (hospital), providing opportunities for additional growth and development to support the hospital and increase residential, mixed use and community employment. Not all lands described in this area are suitable for inclusion. The natural features present primarily in the westerly and southerly portions are more constrained than areas in the north and east. It can also be noted that much of the westerly portion south of the Welland River, are within an area of influence from Cytex Industries, which has challenged and constrained development within proximity to their operations.

While some of these constraints exist in the area and present potential challenges, the PNHS is used for guidance on where more consideration is being given. In this instance there remains a considerable portion of lands directly south of the new hospital site that are outside of the PNHS and can be supported for inclusion into the urban area. More detailed study will be required to ensure features and function of any natural features are appropriately mitigated or protected. Approximately 85 ha are recommended for inclusion in this location.

Additional commentary on the portion of lands being recommended can be found in Report PDS 41-2021.

## **Niagara Falls – Context for Area E**

This area is generally bounded by the QEW on the west; Lyons Creek to the North; Ort Rd on the east and Marshall Road to the south.

For this area on the south side of Lyons Creek the NES identifies a number of significant features in terms of wetlands and woodlots. The PNHS is present within the area and captures some of the larger significant features with some of these same features appearing in more isolated instances outside of the PNHS. To a lesser degree features classified as other wetland and woodlots are present but not to the same extent as significant.

There are a couple tributaries traversing the area that ultimately flow into Lyons Creek. The easterly edge of the area being described identifies a broad swath of PNHS and serves as the only direct PNHS system link to Lyons Creek between the Niagara River and the QEW with system linkage to PNHS further south and along Ushers Creek and the Niagara River.

Soils for the area are almost entirely Class 3 with small amounts of Class 5 associated closely with watercourses. There are two locations in the southern part close to Marshall Road hosting poultry operations but there are no other livestock farming operations observed within this rather large area. Almost all open fields are in production for cash/feed cropping but there are some fields in a fallow or idle state.

Much of the parcel fabric is comprised of large agricultural properties with few farm lot severances. Rural residential clusters are present just south of Lyons Creek where the crossings (Beck and Stanley Roads) are located to access the area.

Transportation networks exist in the area by way of concession roads. While exposure to the QEW is good and would be of interest for employment, the practical nature of gaining appropriate crossing of Lyons Creek for industrial traffic would present challenges to remain close to the interchange. Existing bridge improvement or additional/relocated bridge crossings may be needed to improve conditions. The bridge crossings may require improvement or reconstruction to accommodate growth.

There are no aggregate resources identified along the southern limits of the Niagara Falls settlement area and the closest active operation is located in the northern end of the municipality.

This area could be serviced by the new South Niagara Falls wastewater treatment plant planned for Grassy Brook, however strategies and studies for having flow reach the plant would be required. There are no truck services presently existing or planned for the area and should any consideration be given, a much broader area should be studied and include the Chippawa community downstream for redirect to the new plant.

From a community planning perspective, accessing this area for any major development will require transportation network upgrade in terms of crossings for Lyons Creek. Locations for bridge crossings should also be a consideration if lands along the QEW were to be a consideration for employment use.

With no sanitary trunk services in this area, strategies for collection that would include Chippawa downstream and then return upstream on the north side of Lyons Creek to the new wastewater treatment plant would need to be studied and while feasible, has not been a consideration in prior MSP work of the Region.

## **Niagara Falls – Context for Area F**

This area is generally bounded at the north by the existing settlement area of Niagara Falls between the Niagara River and Ort Road with Weaver Road generally being the southerly limit.

The NES mapping shows presence of significant features in the way of provincially significant wetlands and significant woodlands. Some of these features are captured within the PNHS with a many sizable features represented outside (this does not reduce their significance or protection). Notably, there are larger tracts of woodlands both significant and other that extend along the Weaver Road corridor towards the Niagara River for the area being described.

The Usher's Creek tributary is also captured within the PNHS that lead into the NPC Legends Golf Course where PNHS is most prominent. Pockets of other wetlands and woodlands are also present in locations that generally follow surface drainage or hedgerows on other lands not within PNHS that currently fragment unconstrained

lands, however would be subjected to further detailed studies if consideration given to this area for inclusion.

Soils for the area are almost entirely Class 3 with small amounts of Class 5 associated closely with the Usher's Creek and Hunters Drain watercourses. There are no active livestock farming operations in the area accepting two potential hobby farms that may be boarding a single horse or two. Most open fields are in production for cash/feed cropping but there are some areas in a fallow or idle state most notably along the southern edge of the existing settlement boundary, south of Chippawa.

Much of the parcels fabric are still sizable agricultural parcels with few farm lot severances apparent. Rural residential clusters are present in the vicinity of Willoughby Drive and Weaver Road and generally all being west of Willoughby Drive.

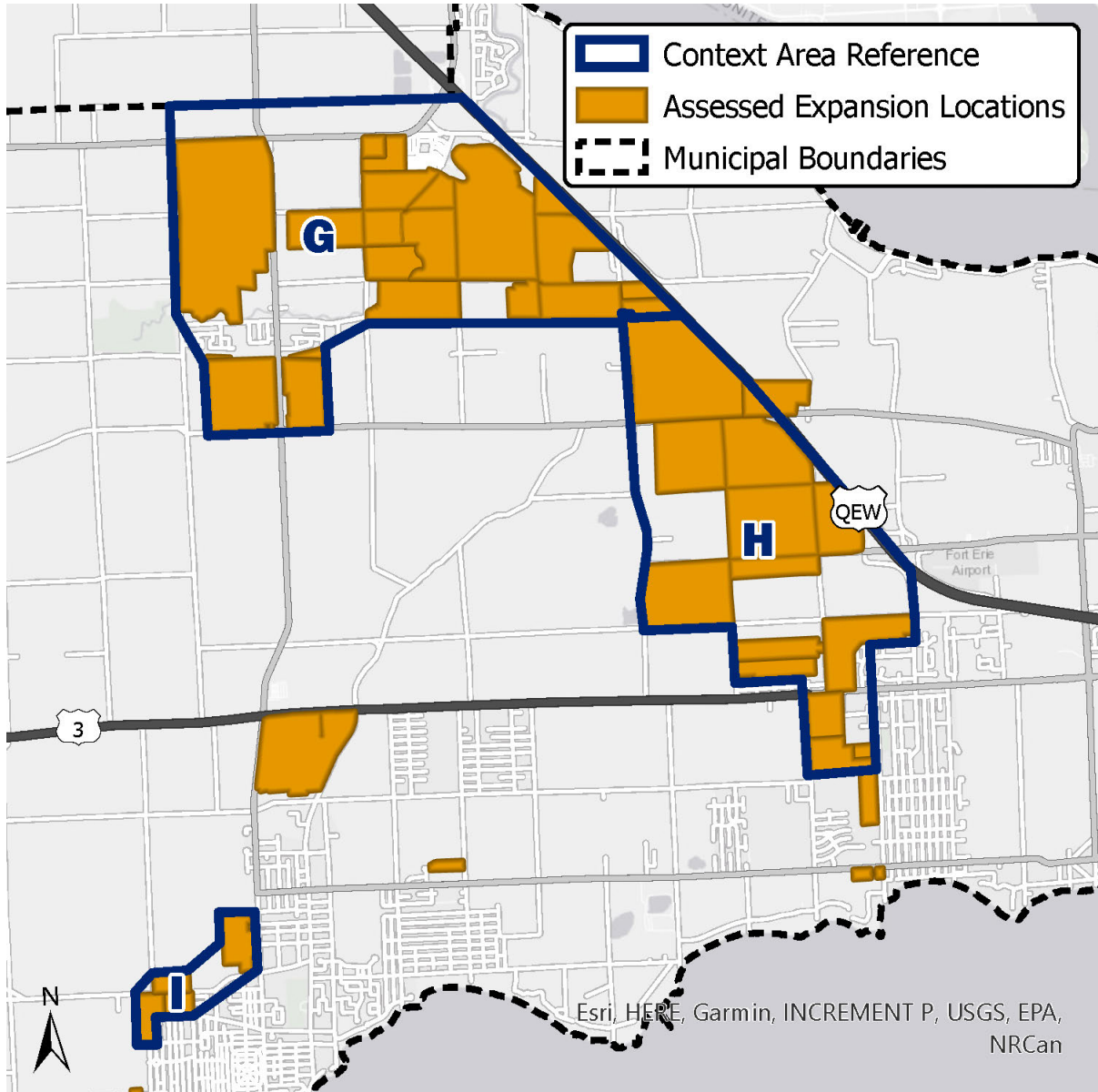
Transportation networks are in the form of concession roads with Sodom Road (RR116) being the primary corridor leading into the urban settlement area to the north. Willoughby is also supplying connection into the settlement area however Sodom as a Regional road provides connection between Lyons Creek Road and the QEW much further south. Connections between local road networks and the concessions roads would appear feasible in most instances.

There are no aggregate resources identified along the southern limits of the Niagara Falls settlement area and the closest active operation is located in the northern end of the municipality.

With respect to servicing, if additional development was to be considered south of Chippawa Creek, a strategy to have sanitary flows directed to the new South Niagara Falls wastewater treatment facility (upstream on Welland River) should be studied as the preferred long term solution.

From a community planning perspective, accessing this area for any major development is less problematic than areas further west on the south side of Lyons Creek. The Lyons Creek Road bridge crossing of the creek is equipped with pedestrian and cycling facilities and serves as the primary route into the Chippawa community from the west. Sodom Road would provide the primary link to access lands to the south along this network.

Lacking a long term solution for servicing both the existing and any potential expansion would need to be undertaken and appropriately captured in any future MSP study undertakings together with other master planning work..



### Fort Erie – Context for Area G

This area is generally described as being the lands between Stevensville and Douglastown in the northern area of the municipality. Area would include lands between Ott Road at west, Municipal boundary to the north, QEW to the east, down to the CNR line along the south. Some lands on either side of Stevensville Road down to Bowen Road are also considered within this commentary.

Area G includes considerable natural features including PSW and Significant woodlands, as well as other wetland and woodlands.

A number of tributaries traverse the larger area with Black Creek and Beaver Creek being the most prominent and flowing east towards the Niagara River. Both have PNHS identification shown as it relates to their function and corridor support. Both also have regulated floodplain that is taken into account with significant floodplain noted in the north-easterly are around the golf course and confluence of the tributaries mentioned. Lands north of the Stevensville settlement area are less encumbered than areas east and southeast.

Soils for the area are almost exclusively Class 3 with Class 5 closely associated and aligned with the primary tributaries mentioned earlier. Most open fields are in production for cash/feed cropping with few locations either being idle or fallow. A large commercial zoo operation is adjacent to the north of the Stevensville settlement area and a public golf course occupies lands in the east close to the QEW.

The transportation network is less established for the concession roads than other parts of the municipality due to environmental constraints or not having need within the agricultural areas. Large parcels for the most part have access from other boundary roads (Winger Road, House Road, Eagle Street and Ridgemount Road). Primary roads servicing the area are Regional and include Bowen Road, Stevensville Road and Netherby Road.

All three Roads mentioned do have access via interchange with the QEW. Additionally, planning this area is challenged because of the identified provincial highway corridor. Phase 1 Environmental Assessment (“EA”) work was completed and Phase 2 EA work has not been advanced; however, the corridor remains of interest to the Province for protection.

Aggregate resources are absent in the area described but are shown for most lands south of Bowen to Lake Erie.

Servicing for the area is reliant on existing lagoons just inside the Niagara Falls boundary with Fort Erie, north of Netherby Road. Capacity issues for the lagoons presents an issue for additional growth beyond current planning approvals of the Douglastown-Black Creek and Stevensville Secondary Plans. A longer term servicing solution is needed in this area. With respect to water supply, Rosehill WTP would provide service to the area but additional upgrades for the system would also be required.



From a community planning perspective, this particular area holds future potential to accommodate community and employment growth, but until such time the future highway and servicing constraints are advanced with more certainty, the other areas proposed better satisfy the criteria to accommodate the forecasted growth. It is for these reasons that expansion is not being recommended as part of this Municipal Comprehensive Review.

## **Fort Erie – Context for Area H**

This area is generally bounded at the north by the Eagle Street road allowance where it meets the QEW. The westerly limit is Ridgemount Road all the way south to Garrison Road. Garrison generally forms the southerly limit save and except lands around the Town Hall location that are part of considerations. The remainder of this area meets up with the existing settlement area boundary and runs north generally along Pettit Road back to the QEW.

Area H is quite large; the NES mapping shows presence of natural features that include PSW and Significant woodlands, as well as other wetland and woodlands.

Two tributaries pass through the area flowing west to east towards the Niagara River. These include Miller's Creek towards the north end and Frenchman's Creek more centrally located. Both have PNHS identification shown as it relates to their function and corridor support. Both also have regulated floodplain that is taken into account. Some modifications had been made to the Miller's Creek tributary to re-align the drainage for a partially-approved racetrack and related uses. Most of Fort Erie is identified as a significant groundwater recharge area including these lands and the same is true for being identified as being within a high vulnerability aquifer zone, which is the case for just about all lands in the southern half of the municipality.

Soils for the area are mostly Class 3 with some Class 2 located in the southern area where development has occurred (golf course, contractors yard, Town Hall). A small area of Class 4 soil is found around the intersection of Bowen and Ridgemount Roads. Soil Class throughout southern Niagara including Fort Erie and Niagara Falls are predominantly Class 3.

Most open fields are in production for cash/feed cropping with few locations either being idle or fallow. There is a small equestrian stable on the east side of Sunset Drive and farm on lands north of Bowen Road next to the QEW and rail line that is

not showing signs of active livestock. A number of hobby farms are observed along Ridgemount Road.

The transportation network is well established with concession roads (Ridgemount Road, Sunset Drive, Pettit Road, Bertie Street, Gilmore Road, Garrison Road and Bowen Road) all used continuously for routes to and from the QEW. Garrison Road is the most significant in terms of local/regional corridor, which changes into Kings Highway 3 just west of the settlement boundary and used as a primary route through to Port Colborne.

The QEW is the prime transportation asset that is highly accessible to the area described. Interchanges at both Bowen Road and Gilmore Road provides high degree of access. These interchanges are heavily used for industrial traffic presently and Bowen Road overpass was just replaced within the last few years. Employment is presently established and close to fully occupied on the east side of the QEW.

Aggregate resources are present throughout most of the southern half of Fort Erie including this area. Active quarrying is occurring west of Ridgemount Road and a licensed property is found east of Ridgemount, south of Bowen. Existing and future aggregate operations have been considered as part of the review process. In addition to stones, several very small sand and gravel deposits are also shown within the area but are located in or adjacent to residential communities in the south close to Garrison Road.

Prior approvals on a large portion of these same lands were part of a servicing strategy prepared by the municipality together with other areas that would be connected to the servicing schematic. These servicing strategies may serve as a basis for future updating to adapt to future land uses in the area. Water supply would come from the Rosehill water treatment plant and sanitary would be treated at Anger Avenue wastewater treatment plant.

From a community planning perspective, this area is of higher interest for both Employment Area use in the northern portion close to the QEW and Community use in the southerly portion close to Garrison Road. Large parcels form much of the area described and are advantageous to both employment and community planning.

These are the best lands in Fort Erie for Employment expansion in the short and mid-term. These lands have QEW frontage and multiple interchange connections.

With respect to community use, there are a considerable amount of existing community facilities and services locating in the southern portion of the area that could be leveraged in supporting additional community growth. Some of the primary community assets include the high school and theatre, arenas and community centre, Boy and Girls Club (former YMCA), Town Hall, existing hotel and conferences centre and Garrison Road commercial corridor. All being facilities that can provide immediate services to new community population and growth. There is a higher interest in community use in this southern area for these reasons.

Part of the natural features discussed earlier form a natural separation between employment and community lands and when viewed as a single large expansion area, planning for servicing, transportation and other core services can be considered as one overall strategy. Secondary Planning, Master Servicing and Transportation Plans, Sub-watershed plans can all be sharing geography to assist in capital and development charge planning that will be needed to plan for growth.

Portions of the area described in this summary are recommended for settlement expansion. Generally lands east of Laur Road, north of Bertie Street totaling 175 ha for Employment Area use and lands south of Bertie Street totaling 93 ha for Community Area.

Additional commentary on the portion of lands recommended for inclusion can be found in Report PDS 41-2021.

## **Fort Erie – Context for Area I**

This area is generally irregular to encompass lands north and south of Michener Road at the northwesterly corner of the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and moving to encompass lands on the southwesterly edge of the Ridgeway Neighbourhood as defined by local official plan identification.

The contextual area being described is smaller than the other areas outlined in Fort Erie and as a result has less NES feature identification. The PNHS is shown on most of the described area however the NES mapping has few natural features identified. The PNHS would be fulfilling identification as a large corridor connection in function as it reaches south towards Lake Erie and the PSW's closer to the lake, and joining a larger significant woodland and tributary north of the Friendship Trail between Cherry Hill Boulevard and Ridgeway Road.

Most of the lands have underlying Significant Groundwater Recharge identification as well as minor incursion of high vulnerability aquifer; both of which are common in much of the southern part of the municipality.

Soils for the area are typical of much of Fort Erie and comprise Class 2 and 3. Agricultural activity includes open fields in cash/feed crop production. An equestrian facility is immediately adjacent to the existing settlement area in a location requested for inclusion between Michener Road and Rebstock Road. Other livestock operations west and northwest do not have MDS impacts on the area described.

Transportation network is established through local networks with the area around Michener Road having access to either Michener or the subdivision roads at the southerly end of the area identified. Access to the area west of Ridgeway has limited points of access off Ridgeway Road and Michener Road also.

The area described is generally free of aggregate resource identification except for a small band of sand and gravel along Rebstock Road and an area occupied by an existing cemetery at Michener and Ridgeway Road. These small resource areas would not be feasible for extraction.

Servicing can be accommodated at the Crystal Beach WWTP. Existing wet weather flows can be addressed locally to reduce infiltration to further improve conditions. Water supply is available from the Rosehill WTP which provides water for the entire municipality. No capacity issues were identified through the assessment review.

From a planning perspective, this location displays potential for growth. Expansion in the location along Michener Road would present itself as more readily accessible and feasible for connection to the existing transportation and servicing networks over lands west of Ridgeway in the short and mid-term.

A portion of the lands within this contextual area totaling 12 ha are recommended for inclusion in the settlement boundary..

One smaller area outside of the contextual area described, along Dominion Road at Bernard Avenue was also a consideration and is recommended. It is a small 1 ha addition to the settlement to complete the urban expansion need for Fort Erie.

Additional commentary on the portion of lands recommended for inclusion can be found in Report PDS 41-2021.



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# NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

## Appendix 5 - PDS 41-2021

**Boundary Changes from Technical  
Adjustments to Urban Settlement Areas  
Settlement Area Boundary Review**

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Niagara Region  
December 2021

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## Settlement Area Boundary Review - Technical Adjustments

In preparing the NOP, the Region identified small mapping discrepancies between Regional and Local urban settlement area boundaries, or between developed parcel boundaries. The Region seeks to fix these discrepancies through the NOP, termed Technical Adjustments.

This section outlines the Technical Adjustment Review process, which was conducted in consultation with local municipalities and the Niagara Escarpment Commission (“NEC”).

The intent of the review is to ensure alignment between regional, local and to the best practical extent possible, NEC mapping moving forward. Technical adjustments do not to increase or decrease development potential in a material way.

To guide the Technical Adjustment Review, the Region developed a process and criteria. The criteria is based on three primary principles detailed below.

This information was released for comment as part of PDS 17-2021 in May 2021 as Appendix 18.4. No comments were received on the criteria.

### Principles

The following principles guide the technical mapping criteria:

- No new settlement areas are created;
- The overall area of an urban area may be increased or decreased to satisfy the technical criteria as described in this document. An attempt is made to not remove lands with reasonable development potential; and
- Boundaries along the Great Lake shorelines and the Niagara River have not been adjusted since these boundaries follow the shoreline, and may naturally adjust from time to time.

### Criteria

As noted, the criteria were released for public comment and shared with local staff in May 2021. No comments were received and the criteria was finalized on this basis.

The Region used the following six criteria to review the technical mapping updates for each settlement area boundary (urban area boundary):

1. Where urban area boundaries marginally exceed or fall short of a parcel boundary, a technical change will be applied by aligning the urban area boundary to the parcel line.

2. Urban area boundaries will be extended in a case where an existing boundary splits a fully serviced developed parcel with limited additional development opportunity. The portion of the parcel outside of the urban area boundary will be incorporated into the urban area, if the size of the area is comparable or lesser in size to the parcel area within the boundary.
3. Where the urban area boundary splits a parcel, and that parcel has a significant amount of land outside of the urban area boundary, the urban area boundary will be drawn to align with the rear parcel line of smaller adjacent lots within the urban area.
4. Where adjacent parcel boundaries are not present to assist in defining the urban area boundary, the limit of existing development or associated planning approval (e.g. local municipal zoning, registered subdivision approval), will be retained as the definitive urban area boundary. If there are no existing developments or associated planning approvals within the area of boundary misalignment, and the Region's existing boundary extends greater than the local boundary, the Region's existing urban area boundary will be retained.
5. Urban area boundaries may be adjusted to reduce the boundary, if the boundary follows the back of predominantly existing developed parcels and the lands that will be removed are likely not to be developed due to environmental constraints or are of a size and orientation/configuration that would not provide any new development opportunity.
6. Where local Official Plan boundaries have been adjusted to add or remove individual parcels along the periphery of the urban area to account for the presence or absence of servicing infrastructure, the local urban area boundary will be used as the definitive boundary, subject to modifications to allow precise alignment with parcel boundaries.

## **Boundary Adjustment Summary**

Regional staff reviewed all urban area boundary data and prepared draft technical adjustment recommendations based on the criteria developed.

Following this, the Region consulted with local municipalities and met with those local municipalities where technical amendments were suggested.

Recommendations were then circulated to Provincial agencies including the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Niagara Escarpment Commission, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. To date, the Region has had two meetings with the Niagara Escarpment Commission and dialogue is ongoing. The Region will continue working with Provincial agencies to identify and address any issues raised during the Provincial review. Further refinements will be made through the formal Provincial review of the NOP.

## **Application and Local Conformity**

Using the criteria developed, the mapping adjustments have been applied through a GIS-based mapping exercise. All recommended technical adjustments have no significant impact on developable lands and are minor in nature. The resulting urban area boundary layer will be applied in relevant schedules of the NOP when the final draft is presented.

Once finalized, the updated digital urban area boundary mapping layer will be provided to local municipalities for inclusion during the local conformity exercise to ensure that urban area boundaries align with and conform to the Niagara Official Plan.

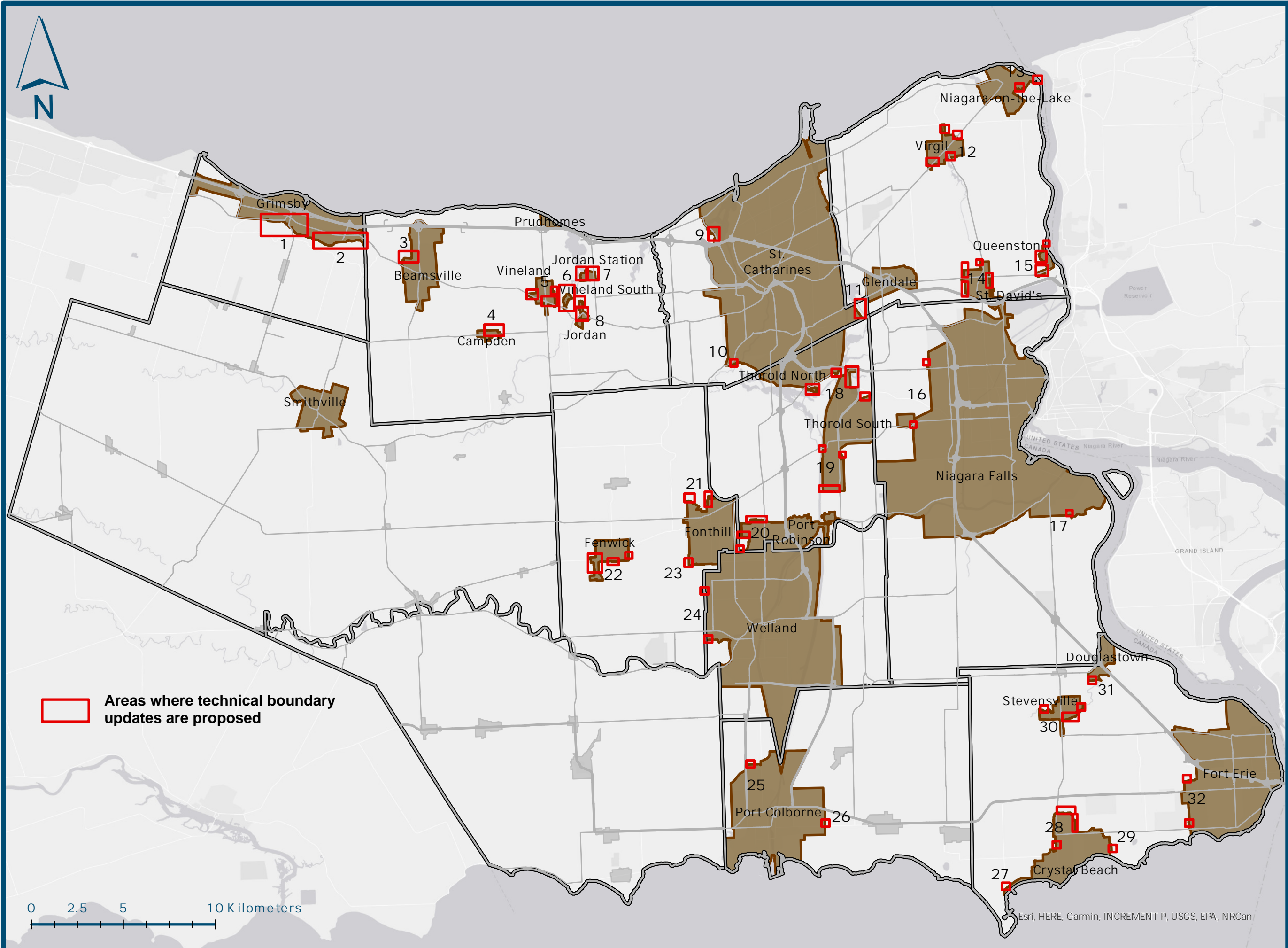
## **Detailed Mapping Available Upon Request**

As part of this review, the attached Region-wide map has been prepared to identify the general areas where urban settlement boundary adjustments were made. A number is assigned to a general area to indicate it has been examined through the technical review and a change was made.

**Detailed mapping is available upon request for specific areas or properties. Requests may be made through the Region ([makingourmark@niagararegion.ca](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca)). Requests should identify the number on the Region-wide map and provide the address of the specific properties of interest.**



# Urban Area Boundary Technical Mapping Update Areas





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# NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

## Appendix 6 - PDS 41-2021 Boundary Rationalizations

### Settlement Area Boundary Review

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## Settlement Area Boundary Rationalization Review

As part of the SABR program, the Region considered boundary rationalizations. Rationalizations are a change that is not based on land need (i.e. new growth), nor is it a technical adjustment meeting the criteria set out in Appendix 6.

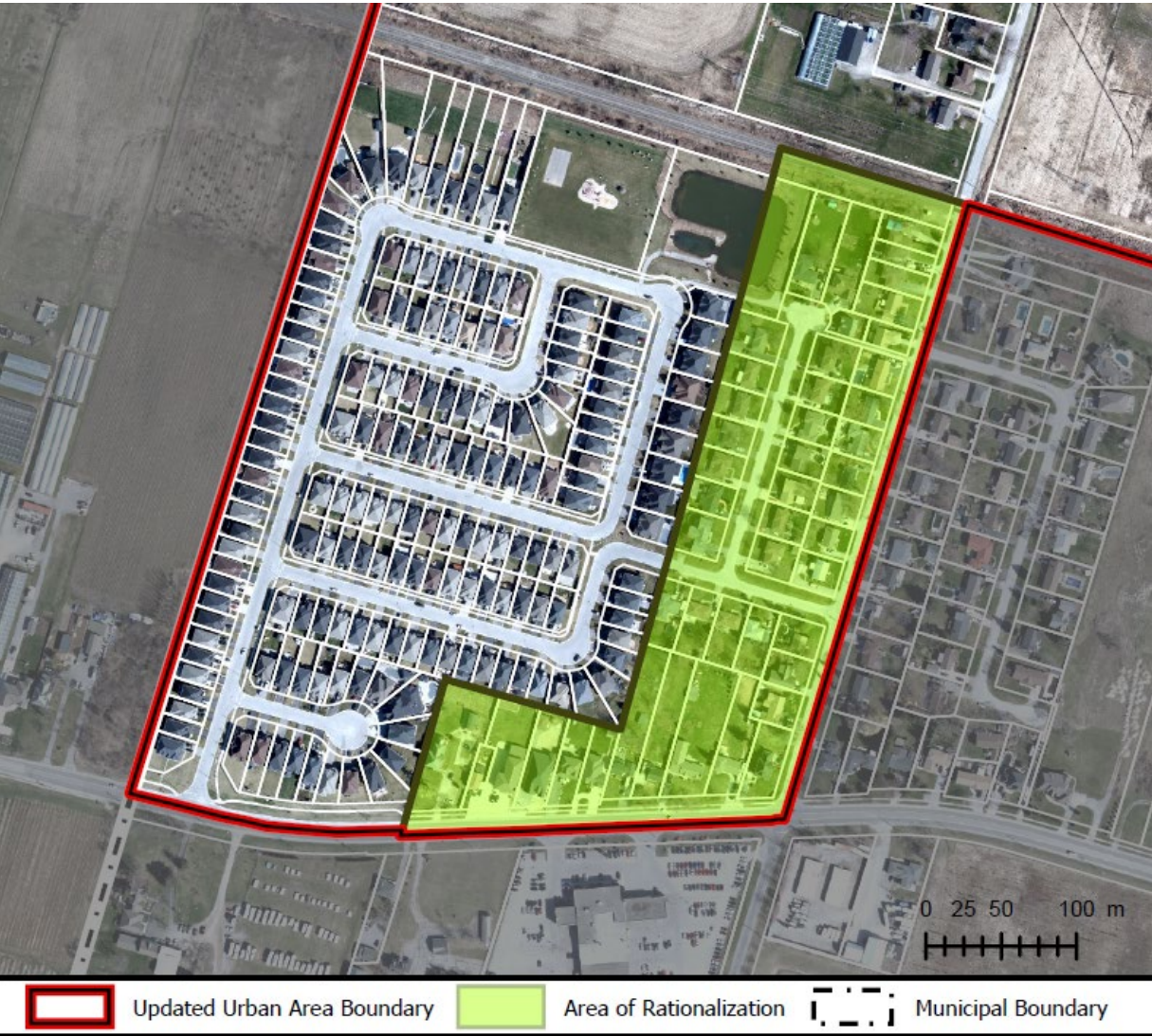
Rather, rationalizations are boundary changes that address areas predominantly developed and serviced, or where very limited infill or intensification would occur. In some cases, the boundary is proposed to change to conform to the Niagara Escarpment Plan Urban designation or reflect longstanding local site specific policy.

Five urban area boundary rationalizations were identified as part of the review, which are located in Grimsby, Thorold South, Port Robinson, Beamsville, and Niagara Falls. A summary review and recommendation of each rationalization is provided below.

### Rationalization 1: Grimsby

Rationalization 1 is located in the Town of Grimsby. It is bounded by Kelson Avenue North to the east, Main Street West to the south, existing residential dwellings to the west, and a rail line to the north.

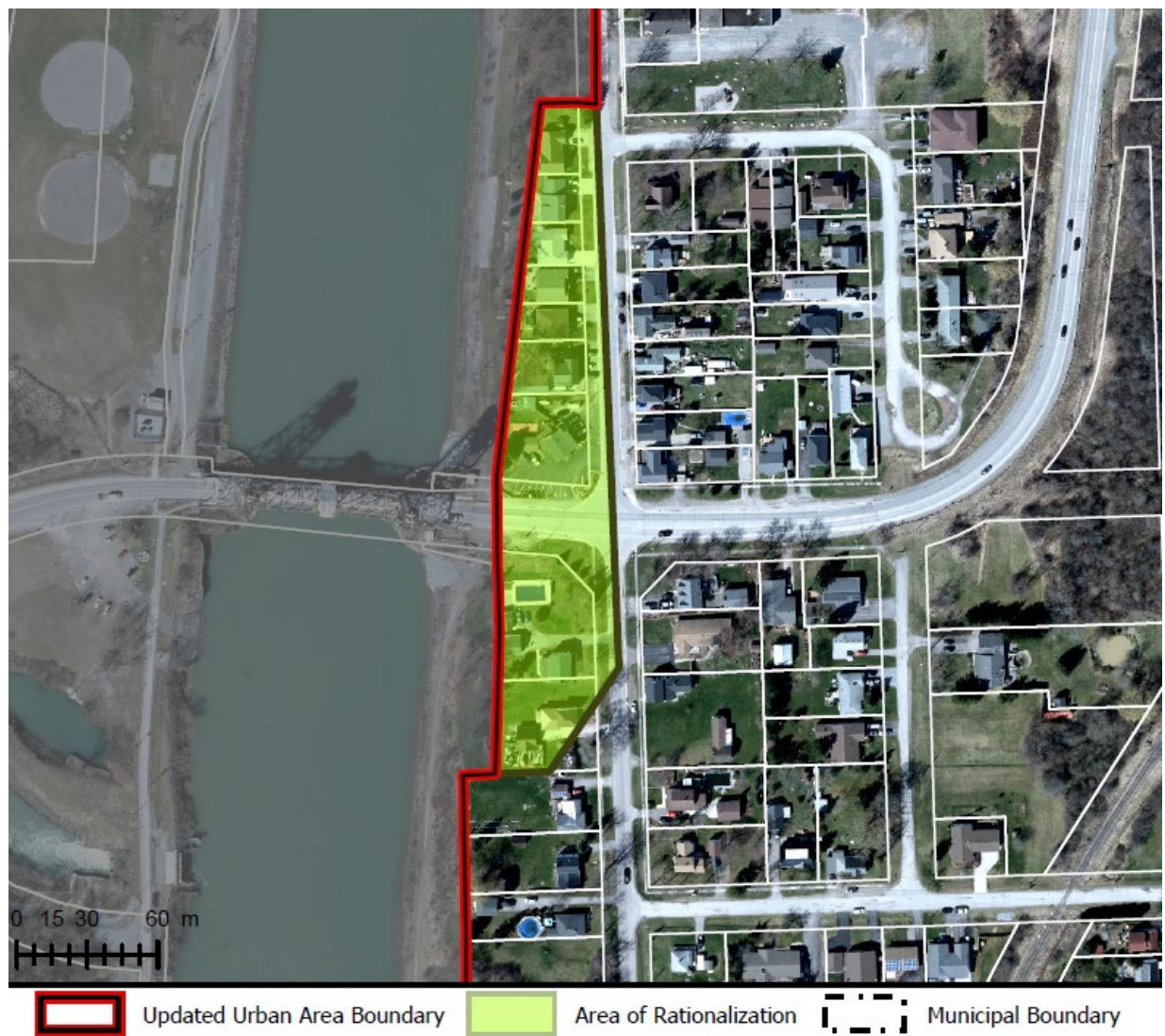
These lands represent part of a residential subdivision which in part is located within the current urban area boundary. Rationalization 1 received support from local staff and Council to bring these already developed lands into the urban area boundary.



## Rationalization 2: Thorold South

Rationalization 2 is located in the southern area of the City of Thorold. It is bounded by Centre Street to the east, a residential property to the south, the Welland Canal to the west, and a wooded area to the north.

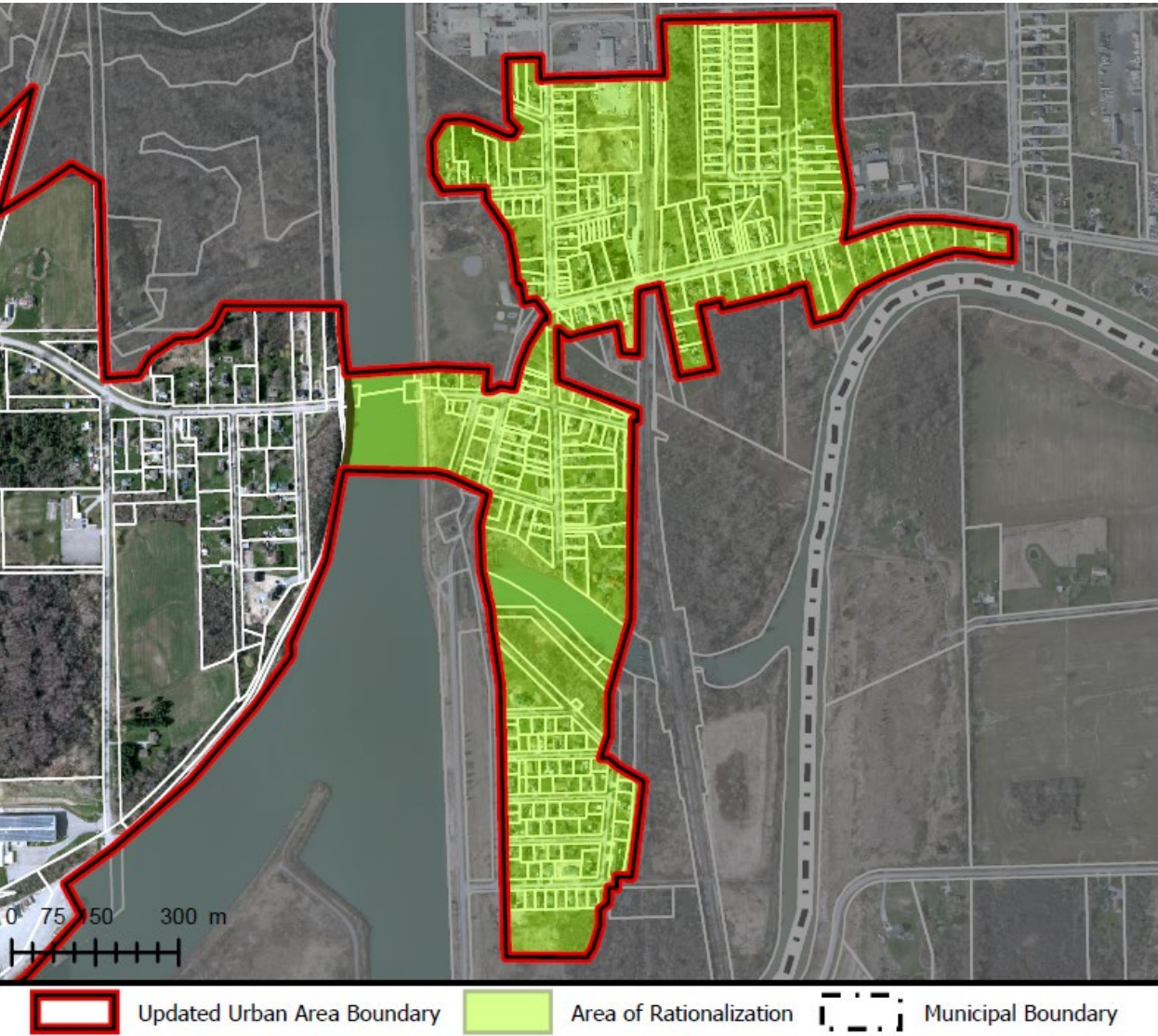
These lands are developed with existing residential uses and are surrounded entirely by urban area east of the Welland Canal. Rationalization 2 was discussed with and supported by local staff to bring these already developed lands into the urban area boundary.



### Rationalization 3: Port Robinson

Rationalization 3 is located in the Port Robinson area of the City of Thorold. It encompasses a large, irregular shaped area. The lands are largely built out and are identified as the Port Robinson East Special Policy Area within the local Official Plan.

The Special Policy Area recognizes this area as a historic and stable rural community that is not a focus area for growth. Rationalization 3 was discussed with and supported by local staff, which will bring these lands into the urban area boundary. These lands will continue to be subject to the applicable policies of the local Special Policy Area.



### Rationalization 4: Beamsville

Rationalization 4 is located in Beamsville within the Town of Lincoln and is a Niagara Escarpment Plan Urban Area. It is bounded by Hixon Street to the east, the Niagara Escarpment to the south, Mountain Street to the west and Hillside Drive to the north.

The site is developed with Albright Centre, a long-term care home, as well as associated residential dwellings. Rationalization 4 has been discussed with and is supported by local staff and the Niagara Escarpment Commission. Rationalization 4 will bring these lands into the urban area boundary to conform to the Niagara Escarpment Urban designation.



## Rationalization 5: Niagara Falls

Rationalization 5 is located in the northern area of the City of Niagara Falls and is a Niagara Escarpment Plan Urban Area designation conformity update. It is bounded by an open field to the east, wooded areas to the south and west, and the Queen Elizabeth Way to the north. The lands currently encompass an industrial operation with associated construction contractors yard, corporate offices and heavy equipment fleet storage.

Rationalization 5 was discussed with and supported by local staff. Rationalization 5 was discussed with the Niagara Escarpment Commission and there was support to bring this area into the urban area boundary, with issues raised with respect to the eastern boundary of the lands. This issue will be addressed through ongoing dialogue with the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

Rationalization 5 will bring these lands developed for industrial purposes into the urban area boundary to conform to the Niagara Escarpment Urban designation.





## **Application and Local Conformity**

The mapping adjustments for the rationalizations have been applied through a GIS-based mapping exercise. The resulting urban area boundary layer will be applied in relevant schedules of the Niagara Official Plan when the final draft is presented.

Once finalized, the digital rationalization mapping updates will be provided to local municipalities to reflect in local Official Plans through local conformity exercises to ensure that urban area boundaries conform to the Niagara Official Plan.



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# NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

**Appendix 7 - PDS 41-2021**

**Provincial Policy Review**

**Settlement Area Boundary Review**

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Niagara Region  
December 2021

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## Provincial 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 is a summary of some applicable Provincial Policy as it relates to this Report. The recommendations in this Report, and updated LNA, conforms to, is consistent with, and does not conflict with these documents, as applicable.

### Provincial Policy Statement (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 (2019) as amended August 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.