

From: [PF-Mailbox-01](#)
To: [Norio, Ann-Marie](#); [Trennum, Matthew](#)
Subject: FW: Online Form - Request to Speak at a Standing Committee or Regional Council
Date: Friday, December 10, 2021 10:25:21 AM

From: Niagara Region Website
Sent: Friday, 10 December 2021 10:25:09 (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: Clerks
Subject: Online Form - Request to Speak at a Standing Committee or Regional Council

Request to Speak at a Standing Committee or Regional Council

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

Name

John Vanderweyden

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Organization

standing committee
Regional Council

Presentation Topic

Planning act as it pertains to urban boundary expansion

Presentation includes slides

Yes

Previously presented topic

Yes

Presentation only new info

Yes

Presentation Details

I have hired a planner to speak on my behalf in regards to the urban boundary expansion proposed sites. And in particular how one site conflicts with the planning act. Also new information on infrastructure services north of Lundy's lane. Note: file will be uploaded once complete

Video Consent

Yes



DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING MONITORING REPORT

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



April 2021

City of Niagara Falls

Planning, Building & Development



Development & Housing Monitoring Report 2020 Year in Review

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SECTION 1 POPULATION

The last Census in 2016, recorded a population of 88,071 people in the City of Niagara Falls which is a 6% increase from the 2011 population of 82,997 (Figure 1). Statistics Canada projects a population estimate for the City of Niagara Falls as of July 1, 2020 to be 96,888* people. The population growth in Niagara Falls, according to Statistics Canada is driven entirely by international and intra-provincial migration and not by a natural population increase. The majority of intra-provincial migrants are between the ages of 45 and 69. The median age of a Niagara Falls citizen in 2016 was 45 years in comparison to the median age of a Canadian citizen of 41 years. It is anticipated that the median age of a Niagara Falls citizen will continue to increase due to natural demographic change and the above noted migration trend.

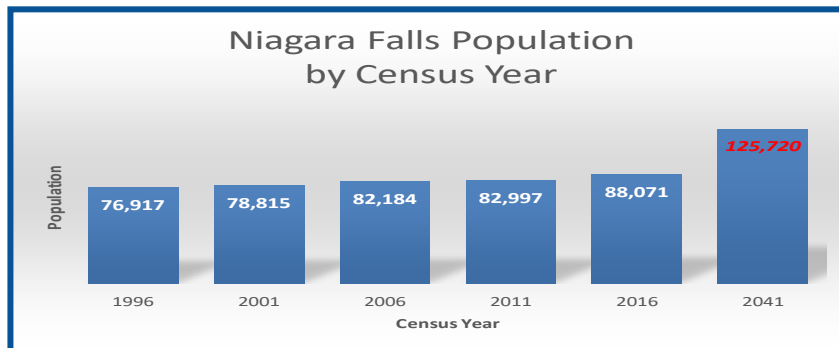


Figure 1 Source: Statistics Canada

Niagara Region's 2041 Growth Strategy projects that the population of Niagara Falls will be 125,720 people in the year 2041. While Niagara Falls will be larger in 2041, the City's age composition will be greatly different. Figure 2 illustrates that the largest increase in the population will be in the age category 65-100 years. Such a large growth in the senior population will put increased pressure on the City's services, programs and facilities. Further, the aging population will also impact transportation, housing and community design going forward. In the summer of 2020, the Provincial Government released updated 2051 population forecasts for municipalities impacted by the Provincial Growth Plan. As a result it is anticipated that the City of Niagara Falls will receive a new projected population target by the summer of 2021.

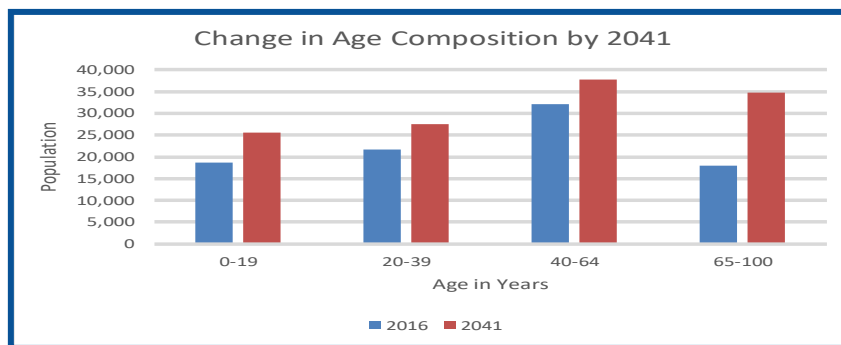


Figure 2 Source: Niagara Region Population Projections 2041

Household size in the City of Niagara Falls has decreased over time from 3.0 persons per household in 1996 to 2.4 persons per household in 2016. The decrease in household size is due to a number of factors that include a slow down in family formation, an increase in the number of lone parent families and people living alone. It is expected that this trend will continue into the future but will be confirmed once the 2021 Census results are analyzed. With an ever decreasing household size and the fact that currently 67% of all dwellings in Niagara Falls are single detached (consisting of many bedrooms), it can be concluded that Niagara Falls is over-housed.

* Source: Stats Canada Population Estimate for Niagara Falls as of July 1, 20120 Table 17-10-0142-01, Population estimates July 1, by Census subdivision, 2016 boundaries.

SECTION 1 POPULATION cont.

The City's population of 88,071 people represents a 16% share of the Niagara Region's population (447,888) for 2016. The City's projected population of 125,720 people (Figure 1) will represent 17% of the Region's 2041 forecasted population of 609,990 people¹. It is worth noting that the proportion of the City's population relative to the Niagara Region's population as a whole through 2041 is expected to remain the same. (Figure 3)

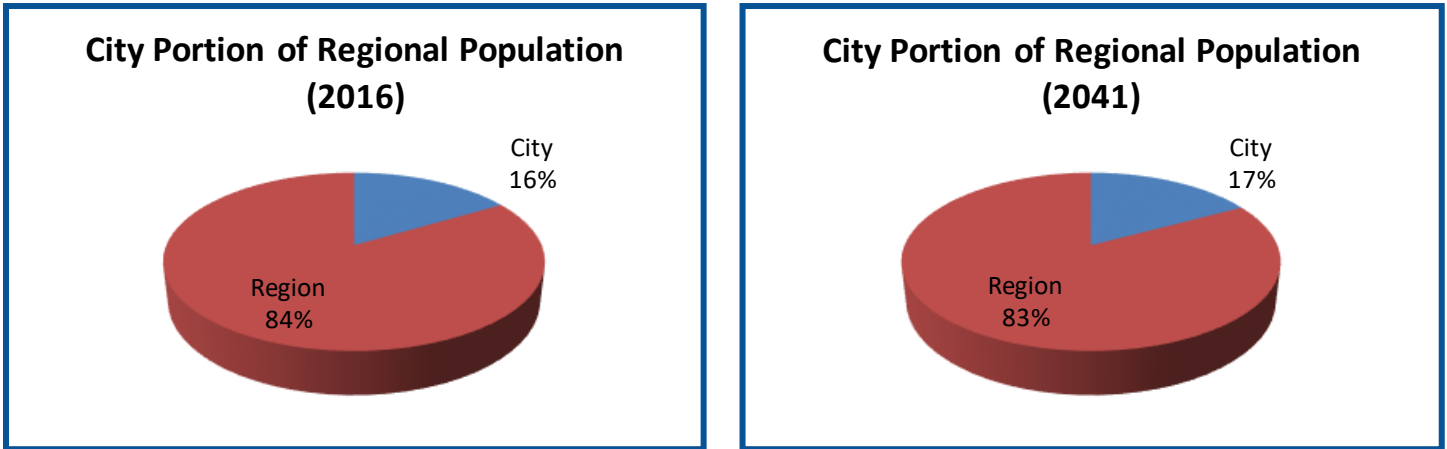


Figure 3 Source: Niagara Region, How We Grow Information Niagara 2041

SECTION 2 BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Building permit activity is a standard indicator of local investment and local economic activity. In spite of a Spring interruption to construction activity due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the City of Niagara Falls issued 573 residential building permits in 2020 compared to 292 permits issued in 2019, a 97% increase. (Figure 4)

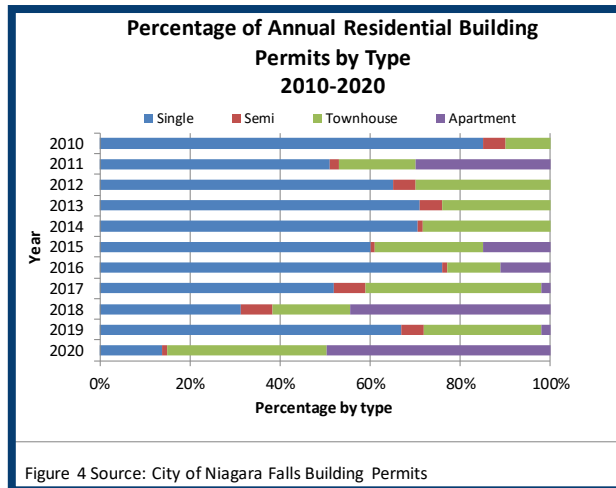


Figure 4 Source: City of Niagara Falls Building Permits

2020 witnessed a dramatic shift in the type of building permits issued. In 2020, 50% of the permits issued were for apartments, 36% for townhouses, 13% for single-detached and 1% for semi-detached units. Most notable, the number of apartment units strongly rebounded from 5 units or 2% in 2019 to 285 units or 50% in 2020. The construction of apartment units reflects an increasing trend to intensify.

SECTION 2 BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY cont.

RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

The chart below shows that over the past 10 years the number of building permits issued has not been consistent however it is important to note that the rate of growth (10 year average) has accelerated since 2016. In the past, single detached housing has dominated new construction followed by townhouse units. Since 2017, single detached housing has represented a smaller fraction of the total number of residential units built in the City as more semi, townhouse and apartment units have been constructed. It is anticipated that as the cost of land rises along with the cost of new housing, this will continue to impact the number of single detached dwellings constructed. (Figure 5 & 6)

Annual Building Permits by Type 2010-2020 (Units Created)						
Year	Single	Semi	Townhouse	Apartment	Total	10 Yr Avg
2020	79	6	203	285	573	522
2019	196	16	75	5	292	464
2018	155	38	83	218	494	326
2017	285	38	212	10	545	438
2016	625	2	98	95	820	412
2015	474	4	192	117	787	353
2014	286	24	113	0	423	304
2013	273	22	92	0	385	297
2012	204	16	95	0	315	300
2011	181	6	60	110	357	297
2010	191	12	22	0	225	286
Total	2,949	184	1,245	840	5,216	

Figure 5 Source: Niagara Falls Building Permits

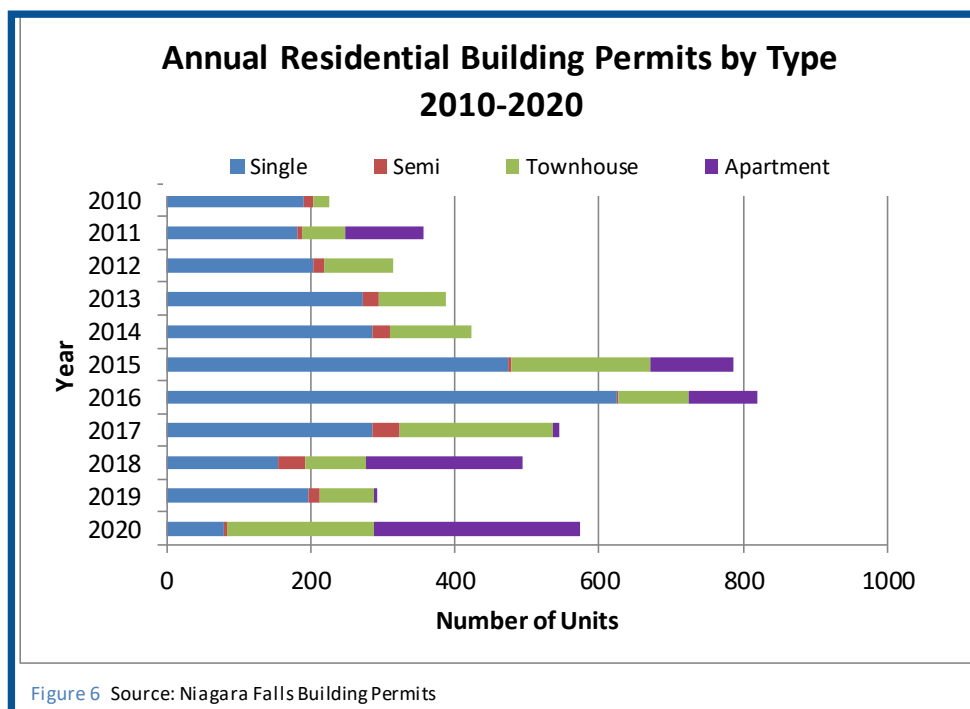


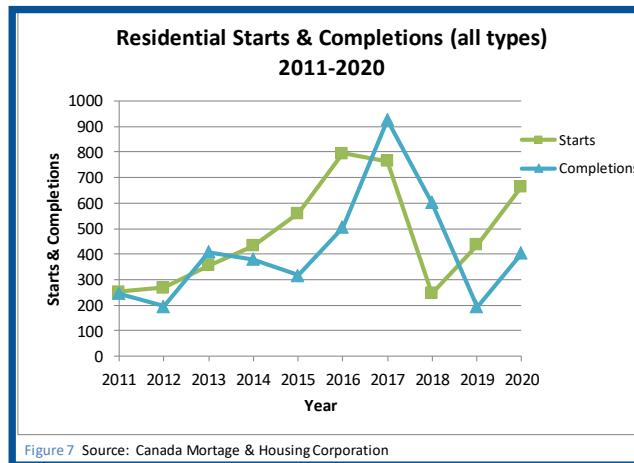
Figure 6 Source: Niagara Falls Building Permits

SECTION 2 BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY cont.

RESIDENTIAL STARTS AND COMPLETIONS

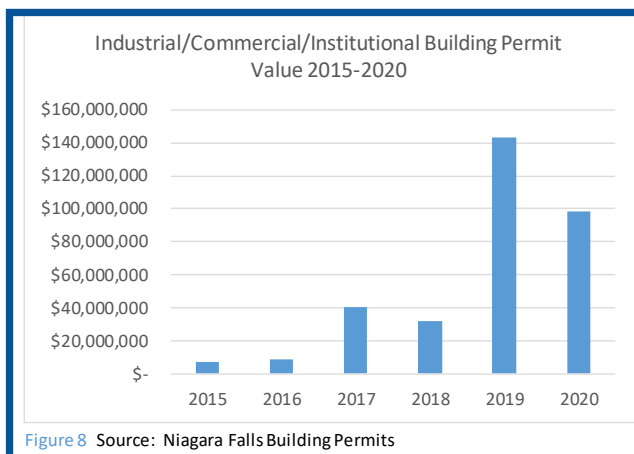
In 2020 the number of residential housing starts (all types) was 665, a 52% increase from 437 units started in 2019. Housing starts in 2020 continued to rebound from a low in 2018 as increased housing costs in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area caused people to seek less expensive housing in the surrounding communities such as Niagara Falls. The highest number of housing starts in Niagara Falls occurred in 2016 and 2017. It should be noted that there is not a direct correlation between housing starts and the number of units created through issued building permits. For example, there may be a time lag (up to six months) between the issuance of a building permit by the City and when a residential unit is actually started for construction.

Residential completions, which represent the end of the construction cycle, increased by 109% as the number of residential units completed grew from 193 units in 2019 to 404 units completed in 2020. The stronger number of housing completions in 2020 was reflective of the increase in housing starts recorded in 2019. (Figure 7)



INDUSTRIAL / COMMERCIAL / INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRUCTION

In 2020, the City saw an expected decrease in the value of new Industrial/Commercial/Institutional (ICI) construction. The value of new ICI construction in 2020 was approximately \$98 million which is a 31% decrease over the record 2019 ICI value of \$143 million dominated by a single new build being the Fallsview Casino Entertainment Centre (\$132 million). Excluding the Entertainment Centre's construction from the 2019 ICI values would demonstrate that ICI construction activity in the City in 2020 actually increased due to a broader range of ICI new builds. (Figure 8 & 9)



Top I/C/I Building Permit Values

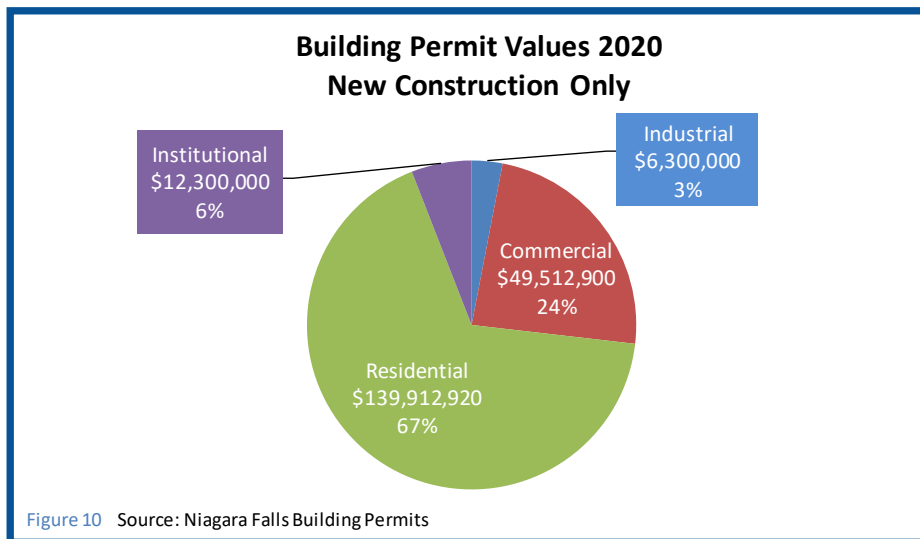
Project	Building Permit Value
Costco outlet & Gas Station	\$46,000,000
City of Niagara Falls Culture Hub	\$10,000,000
Hydro One Building	\$4,000,000
Brewery	\$2,000,000

Figure 9 Source: Niagara Falls Building Permits

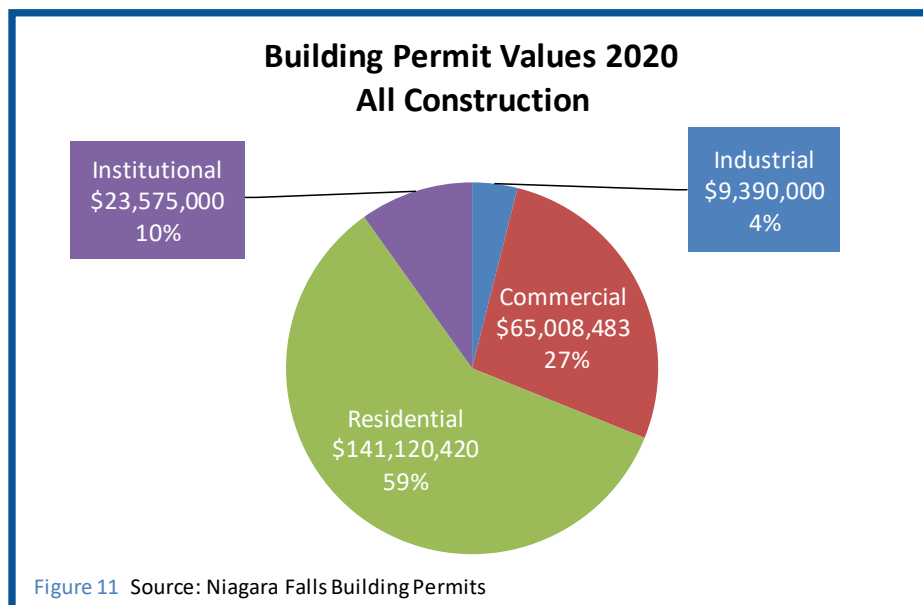
SECTION 2 BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY cont.

TOTAL BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY: NEW AND ALL CONSTRUCTION

The total value of all new construction in the City in 2020 was \$208 million (Figure 10) which is comparable to the 2019 figure of \$214 million. In 2020, residential construction represented 67% of the value of all new construction (\$140M) followed by commercial at 24% (\$50M), institutional at 6% (\$12M) and industrial at 3% (\$6M). A key observation is that in spite of the economic uncertainty brought on by the Covid 19 pandemic, the City's construction activity remained quite buoyant. As the largest valued building permit issued in 2020, the new Costco Warehouse (\$46M) represents a new investment that would not necessary occur every year. It is hoped that the new retail location will assist in generating additional investment and development activity in the south end of the City.



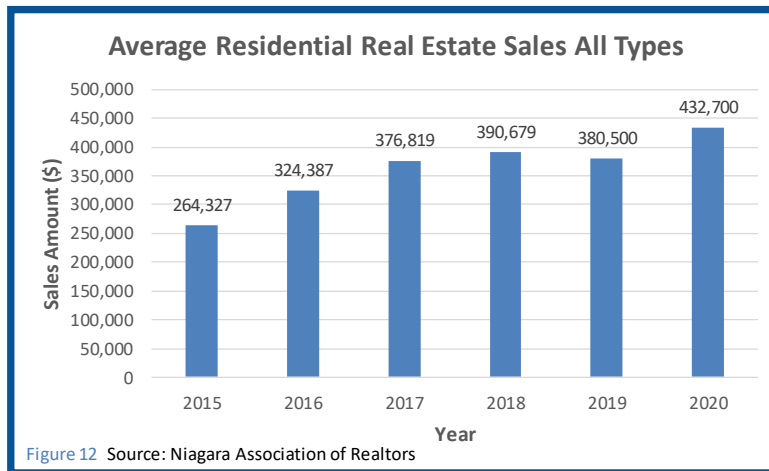
In comparison, the value of all Niagara Falls construction activity which includes new builds, additions and renovations was \$239 million (Figure 11) as compared to \$286 million recorded in 2019. Residential construction activity represented the largest proportion at 59% (\$141M), commercial at 27% (\$65M), institutional at 10% (\$23M) and industrial at 4% (\$9M).



SECTION 3 REAL ESTATE AND RENTAL MARKET

RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE MARKET

The real estate market continued to be very strong in Niagara Falls for 2020 and accordingly, the overall value of housing in the City increased. As demonstrated in Figure 12 the average value of a residential real estate sale for all housing units increased from \$380,500 in 2019 to \$432,700 in 2020 which represents a 13.7% increase in price. From 2012-2018, housing values were calculated using the average sales amount, but in 2019 the housing values were calculated using the Home Price Index, which explains a decrease in house prices in 2019. It is anticipated that housing values will continue to rise into the foreseeable future as there is a strong continued intra-provincial migration into the municipality.



VACANCY RATES & AVERAGE RENTAL COSTS

The City uses Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation data to track vacancy rates of rental housing. Overall, the vacancy rate for Niagara Falls rebounded to 2.3% from historic low of 0.7% in 2019. Across the St. Catharines Niagara Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), vacancy rates increased slightly in 2020 to 2.7% from 2.3% in 2019. A vacancy rate of 3% has traditionally been considered to be a healthy rental vacancy rate which provides sufficient choice for tenants seeking rental accommodation. As can be seen in Figure 13, in spite of an increase in the rental vacancy rate for 2020, rental costs have steadily increased for all apartment types.

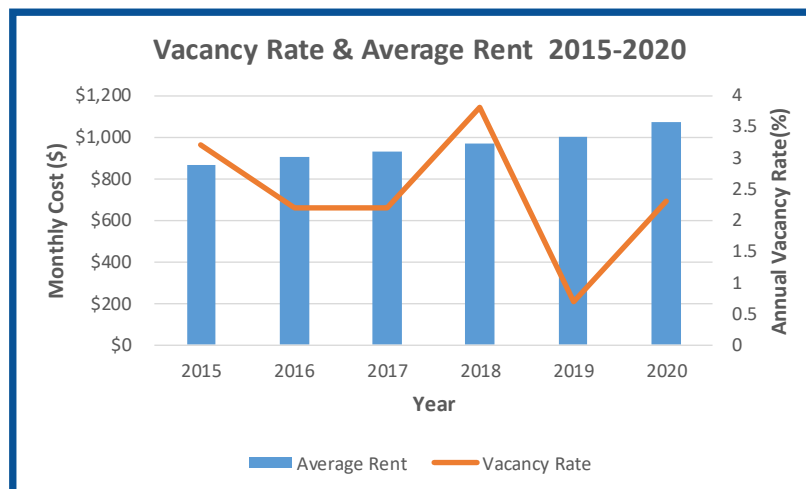


Figure 13 Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey 2021

SECTION 4 LAND SUPPLY

The 2019 Provincial Policy Statement requires at least a 3 year supply of draft approved and registered units with servicing capacity to ensure a healthy supply of soon to be buildable lots. The Niagara Falls Official Plan, through its Growth Objectives, has a similar requirement.

DRAFT PLANS OF SUBDIVISION

In 2020, one new subdivision (6158-6180 Main St) was given draft plan approval for 34 units. In all draft approved subdivisions (as of December 31, 2020) there are 2,589 units. (Figure 14) With respect to draft approved units, 94% of available units are located within the Greenfield Area (2,442) as opposed to 6% of available units that are located within the Built Area Boundary (147). Generally speaking, the Greenfield Area for Niagara Falls is predominantly located in the south end of the City. It should be noted that the Riverfront Subdivision unit types have all been estimated as the specific number and types of units has yet to be determined.

Within the Built Area Boundary, 77% of the available units were for single detached and 23% were available for multiple housing (i.e. townhouses and apartments).

Within the Greenfield Area, approximately 43% of the available units were for multiples (townhouses and apartments), 37% were for single detached and 20% were for semi-detached dwellings.

DRAFT APPROVED SUBDIVISIONS DECEMBER 2020						
Built Boundary	SUBDIVISION NAME	COMMUNITY	NUMBER OF UNITS			Total
			Single	Semi	Multiples	
	7037 Thorold Stone Rd.	Stamford	12	0	0	12
	6158-6180 Main St.	Drummond	0	0	34	34
	Grotolla Subdivision	Stamford	6	0	0	6
	Willoughby Gardens	Willoughby	8	0	0	8
	Beaver Valley Extension	Northwest	87	0	0	87
	Total		113	0	34	147
Greenfield Area						
	Chippawa West Phase 2 (Revised)	Chippawa	40	56	12	108
	Chippawa East Subdivision	Chippawa	364	68	444	876
	Riverfront Subdivision *=estimate	Drummond	348*	348*	349*	1045
	Polocorp Lands	Chippawa	31	0	84	115
	Corbett Land Strategies	Drummond	18	0	12	30
	Splendour Subdivision	Westlane	104	16	148	268
	Total		905	488	1049	2442
TOTAL UNITS			1018	488	1083	2589
Multiples include apartments, townhouses (street and block)						

Figure 14 Source: Niagara Falls Planning Building & Development

SECTION 4 LAND SUPPLY cont.

REGISTERED PLANS OF SUBDIVISION

In 2020, one new subdivision (Forestview Estates 59M-484) was registered in Niagara Falls contributing to a total of 871 units in registered plans available for immediate construction. The number of available units are divided between the Built Area Boundary with 35% (293) and the Greenfield Area with 65% (564). (Figure 15)

Within the Built Area Boundary 44% of the available units were for multiples (townhouses and apartments) and 47% were available for single detached.

Within the Greenfield Area 55% of the available units were for multiples (townhouses and apartments) followed by 45% for single detached. (Figure 15)

NIAGARA FALLS - VACANT LOTS/UNITS IN REGISTERED PLANS - DECEMBER 2020

SUBDIVISION NAME	COMMUNITY	REMAINING UNITS			Total
		Single	Semi	Multiple*	
Built Boundary					
Westway Estates	Northwest	0	0	32	32
Williams Subdivision north side	Chippawa	4	0	0	4
Golia Estates	Stamford	3	0	0	3
Chippawa West	Chippawa	33	0	70	103
Optimist Park	Stamford	12	0	0	12
Chippawa West Phase 2, Stage 4	Chippawa	15	26	0	41
Terravita	Stamford	70	0	0	70
Winzen	Stamford	0	0	28	28
Total		137	26	130	293
Greenfield Area					
Neighbourhoods of St. Davids	Stamford	8	0	15	23
Deerfield Blocks 27 & 275	Westlane	7	0	0	7
Fernwood Phase 1	Westlane	1	0	0	1
Deerfield Estates Phase 8	Westlane	7	0	0	7
Warren Woods East	Westlane	0	0	75	75
Windylane	Westlane	4	0	0	4
Fernwood Phase 3	Westlane	20	0	0	20
German Village	Westlane	7	0	0	7
Deerfield Estates Phase 10	Westlane	8	0	0	8
Oldfield Estates Phase 1	Drummond	28	0	15	43
Oldfield Estates Phase 2	Drummond	48	0	0	48
Oldfield Estates Phase 3	Drummond	4	0	0	4
Southgate Estates	Westlane	6	0	0	6
Warren Woods Phase 5	Westlane	8	0	56	64
Forestview Estates	Westlane	97	0	150	247
Total		253	0	311	564
Agricultural					
Mingle Subdivision	Willoughby	4	0	0	4
Miller Road Estates	Willoughby	3	0	0	3
Miller Road Estates South	Willoughby	7	0	0	7
Total		14	0	0	14
TOTAL UNITS		404	26	441	871

Figure 15 Source: Niagara Falls Planning Building & Development

SECTION 4 LAND SUPPLY cont.

SHORT TERM LAND SUPPLY

Based on the housing supply of 2,589 draft approved units and 871 registered units (3,460 total units) divided by the City's 10 year average housing demand (522 units), the City of Niagara Falls has an approximate 6.6 year supply of draft and registered approved units. The City's 6.6 year supply exceeds the minimum requirement of 3 years contained in both the Provincial Policy Statement and the City's Official Plan. It can be concluded that the City has a healthy supply of available land in the form of unbuilt lots/units available for development in the short term.

LONG TERM LAND SUPPLY—VACANT LAND

The long term land supply for the City includes those lands that are vacant with an approved Official Plan designation yet, have no planning permissions. Figure 16 illustrates that there are 613 net ha of vacant land within the City as of December 2018. The vacant land supply of 613 ha reflects that non-developable features such as Provincially Significant Wetlands and Hydro Corridors have been excluded as per Provincial Growth Plan policy. Of the total vacant land supply, 379 ha are for future employment purposes and 234 ha are for future residential purposes.

VACANT LAND SUPPLY—DECEMBER 2018

	Employment Lands	Residential Lands
Greenfield Area	245 ha	156 ha
Built Area	134 ha	78 ha
TOTAL	379 ha	234 ha

Figure 16, Source: Niagara Region, December 2018

INTENSIFICATION RATE

Provincial policy requires that municipalities promote intensification to maximize urban designated land and municipal services thereby reducing the negative impacts of urban sprawl. In keeping with Provincial direction, a percentage of the City's annual growth must be directed to the Built Area Boundary where new development can take advantage of existing municipal services, the provision of public transit, and other existing community infrastructure and services.

In the City's Official Plan, Niagara Falls has a current intensification target of 40%. Since 2009, the City's intensification rate has ranged from a high of 49% in 2018 to a low of 11% in 2013. In 2020, 477 of the 573 building permits issued were located within the Built Area Boundary resulting in an intensification rate of 77%. As land and housing prices have increased, the market is responding with the provision of a broader mix of housing within established residential neighbourhoods.

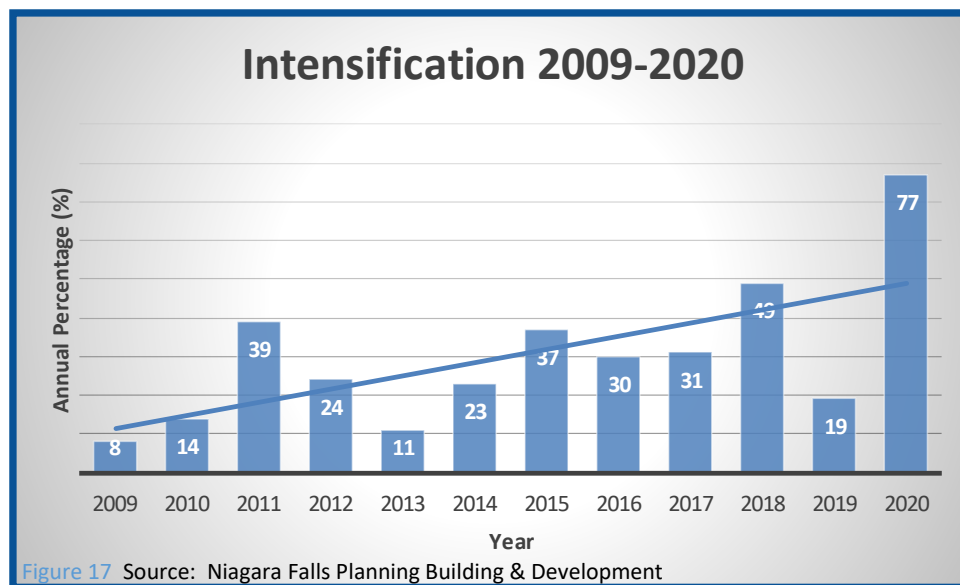
Intensification performance has been tracked since 2009 and as seen on Figure 17, prior to 2020 the Municipality has only achieved its 40% intensification target once in 2018. In the past, development has primarily occurred in the City's existing large Greenfields which can be easier to develop than land within the Built Area Boundary. However, this past year's dramatic surpassing of the 40% intensification target may begin to indicate a re-focusing of development to within the Built Area Boundary resulting in stronger annual intensification performance going forward.

INTENSIFICATION RATE con't

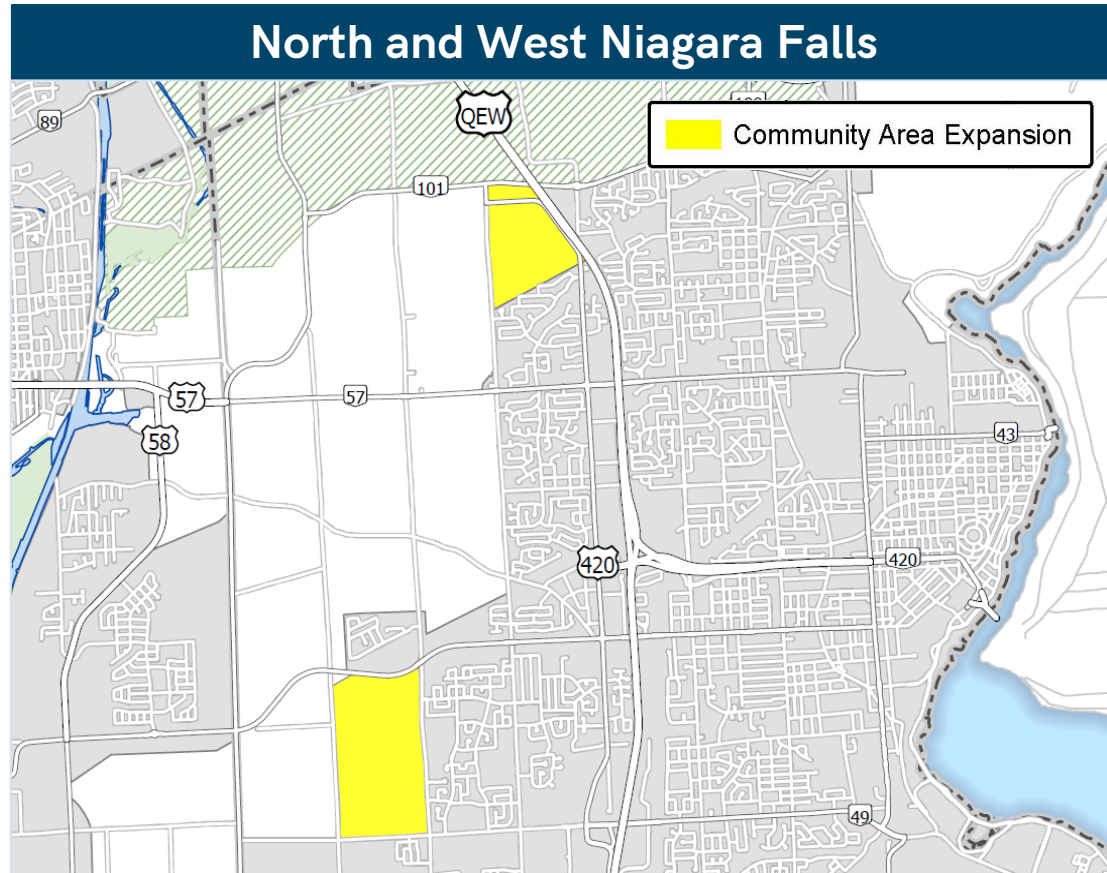
More specifically, a review of 2020 zoning amendment applications proposing new residential development (approved or yet to be approved) shows a strong trend towards multiple unit forms of housing. Approximately 80% of all residential units, if constructed, would be located within the Built Area Boundary and consist of 464 apartment units (60%) and 93 townhouses (17%).

Planning staff note that those applications that were awaiting Council approval at the time of the preparation of this report indicate a strong inclination towards apartment unit development. The proposed apartment units would represent 62% of all new units within the Built Area Boundary and 73% of the all new units proposed within Greenfield Areas. This would appear to reinforce stronger intensification performance in the future.

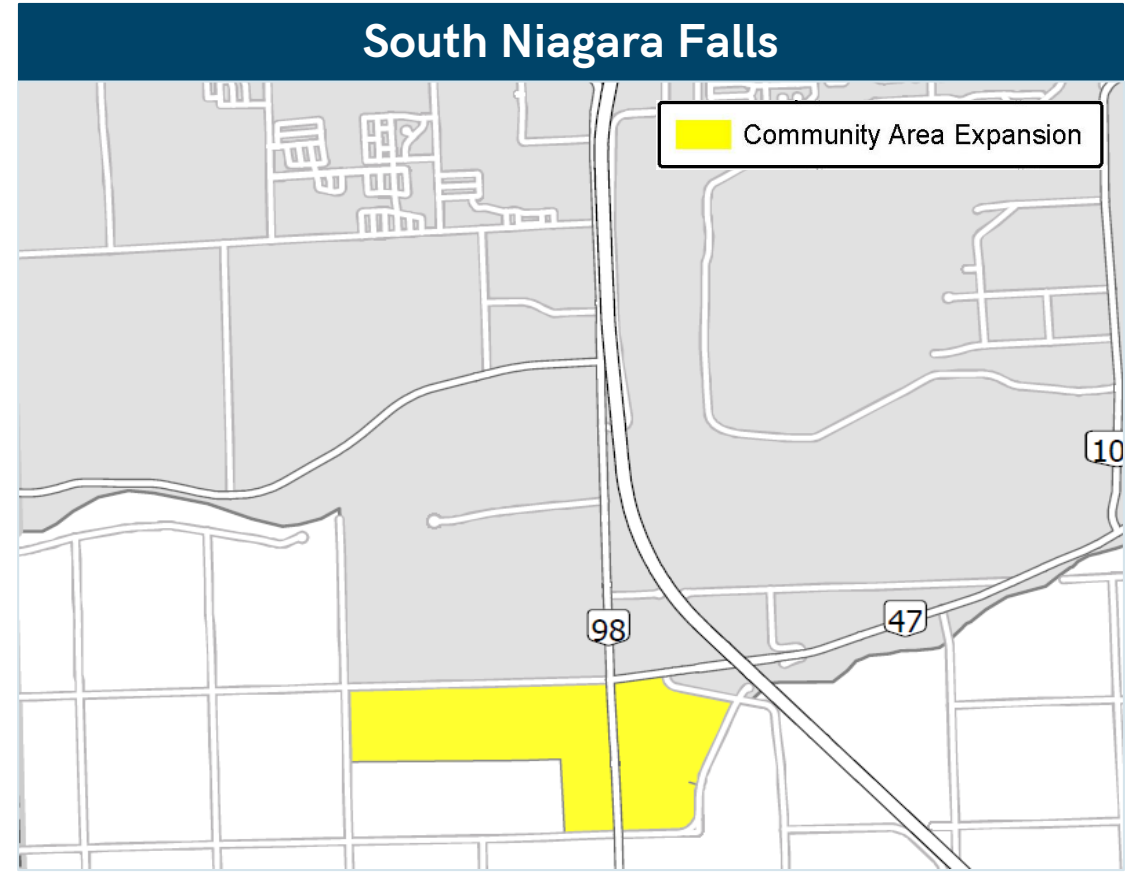
It is important to note that the new Niagara Region Official Plan will require the City's intensification target to be significantly revised upward to reflect updated Provincial and Regional policy. The City's ongoing Housing Needs Study will help inform what will be an appropriate new intensification target for the City. A higher intensification target for the City will result in the provision of a broader range of housing opportunities which will help maximize our existing investments in infrastructure, decrease impacts on environmentally sensitive areas and minimize our future consumption of agricultural lands.



expansion recommendations



① Community Area: 160 ha ② Community Area: 65 ha Total Area: 225 ha



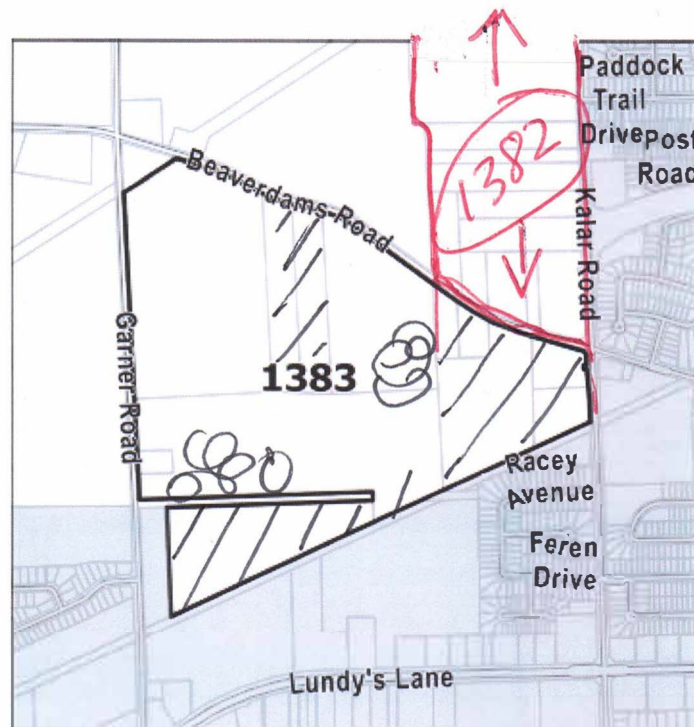
Community Area: 85 ha Total Area: 85 ha

SETTLEMENT AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW ASSESSMENT SHEET

MUNICIPALITY: Niagara Falls

SABR ID: 1383

GROSS AREA: 62.6ha



SANITARY SERVICING

1. *What is the capacity to accommodate the parcel or collection of parcels at WWTP during the planning period?*

Criteria Response: Highly Feasible

Comment: Highly Feasible - Stanley Ave WWTP has some capacity and will have long term capacity as long as new SNF WWTP is constructed

2. *Is sanitary servicing available or can it be made available to the lands?*

Criteria Response: Feasible

Comment: Feasible - adjacent to existing sanitary sewer, will discharge into Kalar Road SPS which has some available growth capacity and discharges to Regional Trunk Sewer then to Stanley Ave WWTP. Further detailed local

servicing plans and review of available capacity/depth of collection system needed to determine additional requirements such as new SPS

3. *Will the extension of servicing have any impact on natural environment, including key hydrologic features and areas?*

Criteria Response: High Impact

Comment: High Impact - appears to have environmental features as well as other land uses (agricultural, other)

4. *In relation to sanitary servicing, how feasibly can the parcel or collection of parcels support additional urban development in its Watershed through mitigating measures?*

Criteria Response: Feasible

Comment: Feasible - Servicing strategy would greatly support other connections and address other issues

MUNICIPAL WATER SUPPLY

1. *Does the existing system have capacity to accommodate the parcel or collection of parcels with municipal water supply during planning period?*

Criteria Response: Feasible

Comment: Feasible - supplied through integrated water supply system with NF WTP, and Decew WTP, there is available capacity at WTP but will most likely require future expansion

2. *How easily can a water supply connection be made*

Criteria Response: Feasible

Comment: Feasible - 2016 MSP identified additional storage for 250 m pressure zone (consistent for all areas) - additional storage beyond current recommendations will be required- extension from existing distribution network - local watermains will require capacity confirmation and network enhancements to ensure fire flows

3. *Will the extension of water servicing have any impact on natural environment, including key hydrologic features and areas?*

Criteria Response: High Impact

Comment: High Impact - appears to have environmental features as well as other land uses (agricultural, other)

4. *In relation to municipal water supply, how feasibly can the parcel or collection of parcels support additional urban development in its Watershed through mitigation or supplemental measures?*

Criteria Response: Feasible

Comment: Feasible - review of distribution network required

TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION

1. *How well can the parcel or collection of parcels access major transportation corridor such as Provincial Highway, Regional Road, rail or marine systems?*

Criteria Response: Available

Comment: The subject lands have a good access to a Regional Rd (Lundy's Lane).

2. *Can a local road network be incorporated for the parcel or collection of parcels, including consideration of environmental matters?*

Criteria Response: Highly Feasible

Comment: cursory review of the site does not present any notable constraints in terms of creating a local road network. As the subject site has accesses to major transportation networks, there are multiple opportunities to access future built local road network.

3. *What is the level of impact to existing road networks and level of service from the addition of the parcel or collection of parcels?*

Criteria Response: Modest Impact

Comment: Traffic signals may be warranted at Garner Rd & Beaverdams Rd or Kalar & Beaverdams Rds. intersections part of development depending on future development size and density . Traffic growth could impact LOS of Garner Rd & Lundy's Lane intersection.

4. *What is the feasibility of extending transit services to the parcel or collection of parcels?*

Criteria Response: Available

Comment: Connected currently

5. *What is the feasibility of extending active transportation facilities to the parcel or collection of parcels?*

Criteria Response: Highly Feasible

Comment: As per the Strategic Cycling Network map shown in the NR TMP 2017, the subject location is bounded by a planned infill AT project at Beaverdams Rd to the north.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

1. *In terms of Provincial Natural Heritage System, how much the parcel or collection of parcels are affected/impacted?*

Criteria Response: Less than half shown as NHS

Comment: Site 1383 is south of Beaverdams Rd and east of Garner Rd. Beaverdams creek crossed a small portion of the north of the site. There is also a moderate and minor watercourse that cross the site. There is a significant woodland on the east portion of the site.

2. *In considering the parcel or collection of parcels in the context of NHS constraints, and as part of the broader NHS, what level of feasibility would be represented on the parcel or collection of parcels in gaining access to fragmented development parcels (without existing R.O.W. frontage)?*

Criteria Response: Highly Feasible.

Multiple options from adjacent lands

Comment: There is some fragmentation of the site given the watercourses and some existing development. Likely sufficient access from Garner Rd.

3. *With respect to Watershed Planning and the overall health of the respective Watershed, what is the impact should the parcel or collection of parcels be added to the urban area and developed for urban use?*

Criteria Response: Modest Impact

Comment: Site 1383 is in the watershed planning area NF-2 and is assessed as modest impact.

4. *What is the level of feasibility related to introducing mitigation measures to improve water quality?*

Criteria Response: Available

Comment: There are opportunities for the introduction of LID measures and other water quality mitigation.

5. *With available information concerning species at risk, what level of impact would be experienced if the parcel or collection of parcels were to be added to the urban area and developed for urban purpose?*

Criteria Response: Modest Impact

Comment: The highest potential for SAR would be associated with Beaverdams creek, the watercourses, and woodland on the site.

6. *What is the impact of including the parcel or collection of parcels on topography and the ability to minimize significant earthworks that could interfere with hydrogeological function?*

Criteria Response: Modest Impact

Comment: There is a moderate valley associated with Beaverdams Creek as well as the moderate watercourse on the site.

AGRICULTURE AGRI-FOOD NETWORK

1. *As defined by the PPS, using the range provided, how best are the parcel or collection of parcels described?*

Criteria Response: Prime Agricultural Lands

Completely

(Class 1-3)

Comment: Prime Ag Area

2. *What is the level of impact on active livestock operations and MDS setbacks by including the parcel or collection of parcels in the Urban Area?*

Criteria Response: Setbacks Impact more than half

Comment: If request 1135 is not converted, MDS review for this site will be required.

3. *What is the impact to the broader Agri-Food Network if the parcel or collection of parcels were Urban Area?*

Criteria Response: High Impact

Comment: Large site with agricultural activity, plus several non-ag uses (auto recycler). High impact to the agri-food system if converted

AGGREGATE RESOURCES

1. *In terms of distance/separation of sensitive land use, and in the context of Ministry D6 Guidelines, what level of impact on existing or planned Aggregate (Stone and Sand & Gravel) operations can be expected if the parcel or collection*

of parcels were added to the existing Urban Area Boundary? (Within 300m being Critical and beyond 1000m being Negligible)

Criteria Response: Modest Impact

Comment: A portion of site 1382 is within 500m of a known deposit of mineral aggregate resource. Site 1382 is not within 1000m of an existing or proposed mineral aggregate operation. Site 1382 is just beyond 1000m from the proposed Walkers quarry.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

1. *Does including the parcel or collection of parcels meaningfully contribute to a complete community? (2,3)*

Criteria Response: Higher Contribution

Comment: Adding this collection of parcels would afford complete community planning potential with limitations due to rail separation from the existing settlement area to the south with some ability to provide lands west of Garner and east of Kalar.

2. *Does inclusion of the parcel or collection of parcels represent a favourable way to achieve the outcome of the Region-identified land needs?*

Criteria Response: Higher

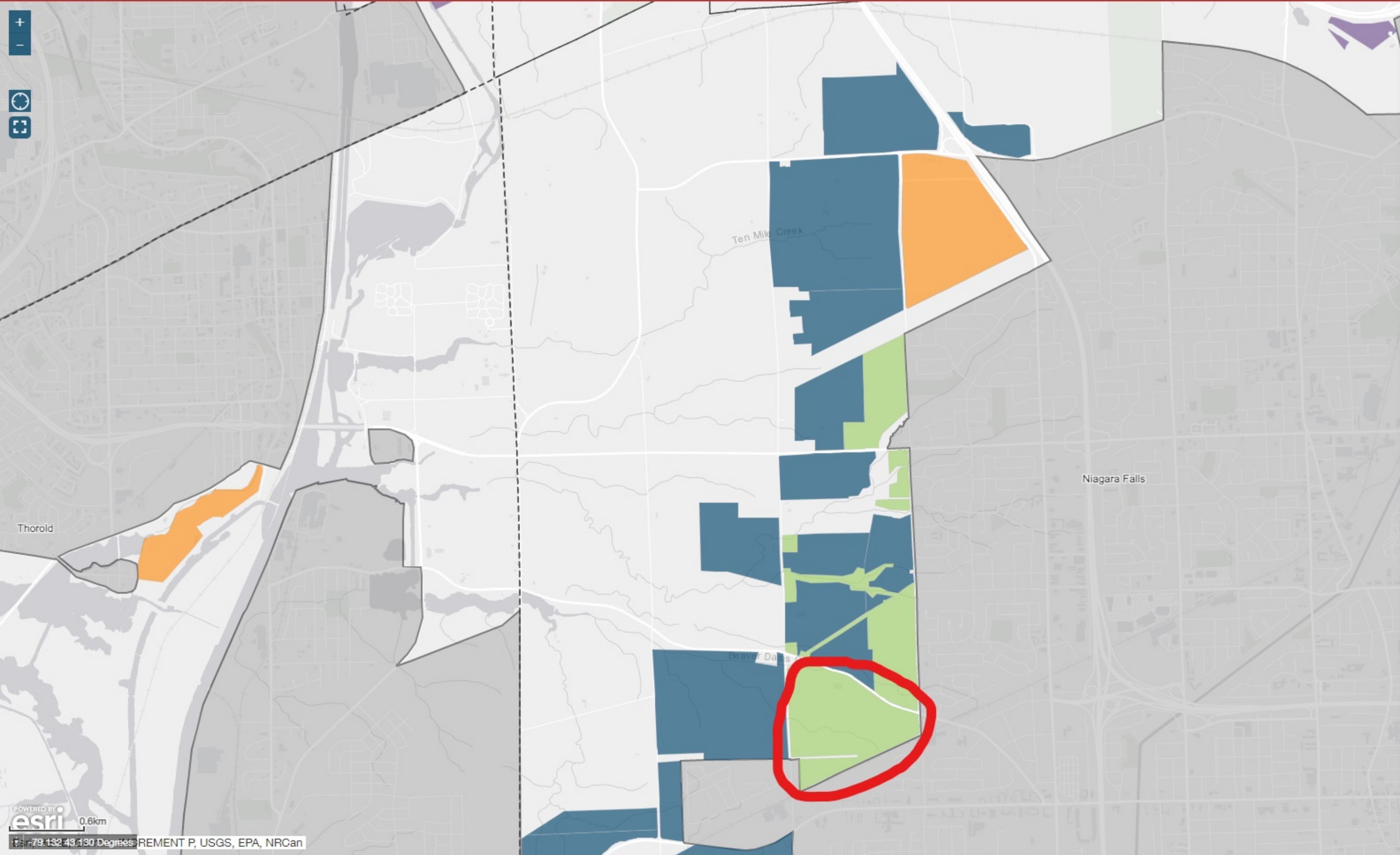
Favourability

Comment: This collection of parcels would offer sizable contribution if considered appropriate for addition to the settlement area.

3. *What are the planning impacts on neighbouring or nearby lands by including the parcel or collection of parcels in the urban area? (2)*

Criteria Response: Minimal Impact

Comment: Planning impacts on neighbouring or nearby lands would be considered minimal when added as community lands.



Legend

Information, Search, Layers, Home, Share, Full Screen icons

- #### Request Type
- Private Land Owner (Dark Blue)
 - Regionally Identified Sites (Light Green)
 - Municipal Council (Orange)
 - Employment Conversion (Teal)
 - NEP Area (Purple)
- #### Urban Area Boundaries
- (Grey outline)
- #### Rural Settlement Area (Hamlets)
- (Grey fill)

Urban boundary expansions planned for Niagara Falls, West Lincoln, Pelham and Fort Erie

By [Bill Sawchuk](#) Standard Reporter
Wed., Dec. 8, 2021 timer 3 min. read
update Article was updated 17 hrs ago

Niagara Region staff have unveiled proposed changes to urban boundaries that include new areas of development in Niagara Falls, West Lincoln, Pelham and Fort Erie.

An exhaustive presentation for regional councillors at Wednesday's planning and economic development committee meeting included a series of maps showing the areas that, if adopted, would become part of the Region's official plan, which is undergoing a comprehensive re-evaluation.

The new areas were selected through a Region land needs assessment that included public engagement and consultation with planning staff from Niagara's 12 lower-tier municipalities.

That assessment found a need for more urban land in Niagara Falls, West Lincoln, Pelham and Fort Erie.

"We have to remember every municipal councillor who deals with this anywhere in the province has the power to make a multimillionaire out of somebody simply by changing a property designation," said Region Chair Jim Bradley.

"That is probably a dangerous power to have, but it is the power we have nevertheless, and solemn planning principles are extremely important in retaining what is unique about Niagara while we deal in development."

Isaiah Banach of the Region's planning department took the lead on the presentation and reminded councillors the changes are only proposed.

The northern municipalities — Grimsby, Lincoln, St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake — have almost no areas to expand because of

provincial prohibitions in the Greenbelt Plan. The study also found Thorold, Port Colborne and Welland already have an “adequate” amount of land to develop.

The province must still approve the final decision on Niagara’s settlement boundaries, but that will only occur after the Region passes the official plan and forwards it for review.

Niagara’s current planning document was created in the 1970s. Parts have been updated over the years, but the province mandated the Region create an entirely new planning document that reflects where the community is today — and where it will be in 30 years.

In developing the land needs assessment, planning staff held more than 30 meetings with stakeholders and municipal planners as well as five public information centres. They also received comments from 73 interested parties. It is a process that is bound to run into some opposition.

Fort Erie Mayor Wayne Redekop said his “head was going to explode” when he saw some land near his town hall included for re-designation.

“We’ve been fighting to try to make sure that we protect these lands, and this would theoretically put it in jeopardy of being cleared down the road,” Redekop said. “Aside from the town hall immediately to the west and south, there are many other natural features that help provide for the wildlife corridors. I think that piece is missing.”

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Redekop said Region staff might need to be “a bit more sensitive” to local concerns.

“We’ve heard loud and clear that wooded areas need to be protected,” Redekop said. “Granted, every wooded area isn’t the same. I get that, but I would like to think that when you’ve got a mix of trees and other vegetation and uncontroverted evidence of wildlife utilizing that area as part of a corridor, those considerations would weigh fairly heavily when these types of decisions are being made.”

The total area recommended for expansion covers 785 hectares. Another 245 hectares are designated for potential employment lands.

A total of 134 parcels of land across Niagara were considered for urban expansion. However, staff eliminated ones that were in the Greenbelt or governed by the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

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