



NIAGARA OFFICIAL PLAN

Appendix 2 - PDS 6-2022 Public Information Centre Comments Summary

Urban Settlement Area Boundary Review

Niagara Region
March 2022

GROWING REGION



Niagara Official Plan – Settlement Area Boundary Expansion Webinar – January 26, 2022

Questions/Comments & Responses

#	Question/Comment	Response
1	Provincial Growth Plan (2019) introduced a new policy (2.2.8.5) to permit urban boundary expansions (each under 40 ha) outside of the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process. It was supposedly interim policy — was it not? What assurance do we have it will NOT be used to keep expanding urban boundaries beyond what you are showing us?	The City of Welland received an expansion under the Growth Plan 40 ha. expansion policy you reference. This expansion was factored in to our land needs assessment as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). This process has identified land needs in specific communities to satisfy growth to 2051 despite an intensification target above the provincial target. Therefore, there is no need for expansions outside of the next MCR process.
2	Why did the Niagara planners not support the comment of the Niagara Falls planners that a 60 percent intensification rate is preferable to the lower intensification rate adopted by the region?	Niagara Falls staff provided two options for council's consideration 50% and 60%. Niagara Falls Council endorsed the lower intensification rate of 50%. We are supporting 60% Regionally and area municipalities can be more ambitious if they choose to do so.
3	What research and/or analysis has been integrated into these boundary expansion reports relative to the amount of abandoned and/or polluted lands (commonly referred to as brown fields) in the Niagara Region? If you have a recent study in regards to brown fields and related lands, then please explain how that information has been taken into account when devising these current boundary expansion projections.	Larger brownfields with active development interests were identified in our intensification strategy. Development on these lands will contribute to the Region's 60% intensification target.
4	The Urban boundaries are being addressed in insolation for each Local municipality. If this were an amalgamated Region as proposed by the Province in 2018, the growth would be distributed over the entire Region. Why is the growth not the net area in the Region, averaging in those Local Municipalities that have excess area, such as Port Colborne that has surplus Urban area.	Urban boundary expansions are being considered on a municipal level in order to account for market demand. Not all urban lands in Port Colborne are available for development due to infrastructure limitations and proximity to active quarry activities.

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5	If the Public Meeting on the new plan is to be held in April, when will the final recommendations from the Planning Department be available for public review	In accordance with the Planning Act, the final draft of the Region's new Official Plan will be available in advance of the April Public Meeting.
6	Why have the precise areas in land to be de-allocated in Thorold and Niagara Falls never mapped. Will these areas be identified before the final recommendation from Planning Department before the Public Meeting.	Lands identified are not de-allocated. They are lands that remain in the urban area unlikely to develop in the time horizon of the Official Plan but if circumstances change could develop.
7	It appears that active aggregate operations have been used as a reason to deallocate lands in Thorold. Is this reasonable if within the next 30 years, this area may be cksised to quarrying and rehabilitated.	Market conditions could change to bring lands online before the planning horizon as targets are minimums.
8	Regarding aggregates, there is a proposal for a new quarry in Niagara Falls close to Thorold. Could this proposal, if accepted have a negative impact on the proposed expansion area south of Lundy's Lane	These areas were outside the area of influence.
9	How close is the above proposed aggregate future operation to the proposed Niagara Falls expansion Number one.	Approximately a kilometer away
10	The recommendation report for expansion did not map the natural heritage features for any of the proposed urban expansions. Why was such mapping absent from the staff report.	Staff are aware of the NES mapping and information and given the timing of review of expansion areas considered both options 3B and 3C in the assessment.
11	The entire block of land from Elizabeth St to the west, Lorraine Road to the east, Hwy #3 to the north and Killaly St to the south are zoned Residential Development. This is close to 100 Ha. There are probably only about a dozen residences in that area at this time. MTE was surveying this area last summer for ELITE Development. So there is interest. That area could easily be averaged in with the PC+Welland demand area.	Port Colborne will be undertaking a secondary plan for the area you have identified and this has been factored into our land needs assessment.

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12	Are not substantial areas proposed to be added to the natural heritage system, along the queen elizabeth highway and netherby road impacted by the proposed Employment Lands indicated in the consolidated plan?	There is no expansion proposed for employment in the Netherby Road area. Where there is natural heritage within an expansion areas the assessment took this in to account and the natural heritage features will be protected according to policy.
13	Good evening, could you please tell us what percentage (and actual acreage) of urban and rural lands have an environmental designation? Referring to percentage of proposed expansion areas.	Settlement area boundary expansion areas and the natural environment system features are both currently under review and subject to possible refinements, in order to delineate the natural features and system in accordance with the provisions for the urban area. Updates or changes to either mapped layer would alter any quantifiable percentage put forward at this time. Draft mapping of all natural environment features across the Region, is viewable through the following online mapping application link: NES Public Review Map (arcgis.com)
14	Can you name the measures that communities can use to increase the amount of intensification within the existing urban growth areas.	The Region will be working with local municipalities to accommodate intensification through intensification and secondary plans.
15	While recognizing the need for planning future population growth, Regional Council in September 2021 declared a Climate Emergency and in that Motion the words “mitigation and adaption” were repeatedly stated. Given your presented plans represent the planned destruction of many thousands of mature trees and the destruction of many wetlands (PSWs) which we ALL know only exacerbate the climate emergency, then how will your plans even meet a minimum criteria for mitigating and adapting its destructive effects?	Selection of expansion locations considered the Natural Environment System, watershed planning and impacts on agriculture amongst other factors. Brining natural features in to the urban area through expansion does not mean these areas will not be protected. The same NES policy protection will apply to these areas and the planning to protect these areas will be achieved by secondary planning, subwatershed planning and Environmental Impact Studies.
16	Where is Wellands official plan? is it included in the Regional Plan?	Once the Regional Official Plan is approved by the Province then local municipalities can adopt local Official Plans that conform to provincial and regional policy and address local

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		issues. Local municipalities can begin initiating background work now.
17	Why is there not a focus on intensification towards the Lake in Wainfleet? Land proposed to be taken out of production in Chambers Corners, for instance, is some of the best land in the area. Should we not focus on saving prime agricultural lands?	The majority of growth for Wainfleet is focused on the Village of Wainfleet. There are environmental features and ground water issue which are constraints closer to the Lake.
18	Fort Erie, has unused commercial properties. What are the plans for starting to use that land before expansion occurs?	These unused lands were considered in the land needs assessment. Expansions for employment focused on more traditional manufacturing employment uses.
19	What uses would you see in rural employment lands?	Rural employment uses support the agricultural area. Examples are feed, tractor and dry industrial type uses.
20	<p>I am interested to know about application for planning & development of a Hamlets within the Region of Niagara. Precisely for (2) proposed Hamlets in recently recommended official plan of Region of Niagara.</p> <p>A: Fulton & B: Caistor Centre.</p> <p>We live within neighborhood town known as Smithville. Yes, I am in constant touch with Township of West Lincoln and like to begin working in a team environment working towards Hamlets plan & developments for both Fulton & Caistor Center.</p> <p>We are currently in negotiations with landowners to acquire proposed recommend Hamlets lands both in Fulton & Caistor Center.</p> <p>Understanding the fact that planning & development of Hamlets involves more with Province of Ontario in cooperation and coordination with local Township as well.</p> <p>And this is the reason that I am reaching out to you through this email communication.</p>	Can you send us your question to makingourmark@niagararegion.ca so that we have your email address and can follow up with you?

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	Please assist, advise & connect with right person / resources.	
21	If we wanted to know if a certain area would be included in the new urban expansion area, who should we email/contact?	Hello, Please send your inquiries to makingourmark@niagararegion.ca
22	Are the SABR criteria equally related?	Provincial policy requires expansions to be assessed comprehensively. The criteria are treated the same and a professional planning opinion rendered based on a comprehensive assessment.
23	Can the maps not include arterial roads and not just regional and provincial roads?	The roads shown on a map are typically dependent on scale of the map. We can work to provide greater detail on future maps regarding expansions.
24	I would like to speak regarding recommendations for the 118 acre land located at Elm Street and Fork Street SABR ID 1234	The speaker was told a meeting would be established to discuss his specific proposal and staff's assessment of same.
25	Since there is no penalty for being late, can you defer this till next elections? I will vote based upon people's protection of the environment, for the region and municipal and provincial governments.	The Growth Plan requires us to conform to it by July 1, 2022. The Ministry has the power to amend our Plan if it does not conform. We are looking to put forward the best plan possible to address Niagara's needs by that date, including our housing/growth requirements.
26	Why was south Niagara Falls near hospital chosen as there is no infrastructure there waste water plant at the moment. There is better land with infrastructure in place near Kalar Road Along side Beaverdams. That would make more sense to me.	It is important to note this is a 30 year planning horizon and the hospital area will be a key focal point for growth over the long term. Infrastructure is planned for the area.
27	My greatest concern is the bias with the EIS process where the developer pays for the Environment Study. This needs to be fixed. Are you considering any options for peer review or preferably an independent peer review by the region? There would still be issues with this process which would need some controls.	Please join us on the 10th for the NES webinar.

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28	Who do you consult with in regards to making good planning decisions to protect biodiversity within developmental sites? Do you incorporate peer reviews? In recent development such as AM-2018-12 we have seen EIS's that do not include species of concern, nor include objective scientific evidence. Hedgerows and trees are removed and wetland changes are made without approval by NDMRF. What does the region recommend to do in these circumstances and if this happens in future developments in our area?	<p>Most development applications are submitted to the local area municipalities as they are the approval authorities. If the application is near an environmental feature or has an environmental feature on site, the Region will require the developer to complete an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) as part of the development review process. The function of the EIS is to describe potential impacts, to better inform staff in making decisions about which impacts of development are acceptable, which should be avoided, and how impacts can be best mitigated. The EIS also describes how the proposed development is consistent with the relevant environmental planning policy.</p> <p>The EIS work is measured against approved survey protocols and is scoped to ensure the work adequately addresses the features impacting the site. Regional staff will reach out to Provincial and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority staff as necessary to clarify issues relating to Species at Risk, Provincially Significant and other Wetlands and Significant Wildlife Habitat. In situations where the EIS does not adequately address the requested information by the Region, the Region can retain a peer review of the EIS and will do so when needed.</p>
29	Is there an interactive map where i can look up my address to see if the zoning / for the wooded area behind my home has changed?	<p>With respect to zoning - you would need to reach out to your local municipality. However, the Region's proposed Natural Environment System mapping is available for review and comment online at the link below. If you have additional questions on this, please let us know.</p> <p>https://niagararegion.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=21e7b3d3663e476799277823f3a40b44</p>
30	Who is on the Review Team by name please.	Staff have expertise in planning, engineering and ecology.

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31	Regarding the claims for deallocation to come up with a precise figure in hectares there must have been some internal map made. From the reply there is a refusal to release this before the public. meeting	The information will be provided in the final land needs assessment report.
32	I am concerned about the expansions in the rural-agricultural landscape. I want to give Kuddos to the City of Niagara Falls for their intensification within the concrete areas. I am concerned for the Expansion in Pelham along Merrit Rd and the intensification plans south of the Welland River in Niagara Falls. Was their a Comprehensive EIS process used to determine where to expand verses what the landowner wants? Why the need when Welland has expanded their boundary. Will this municipal expansions be used to offset the other ones planned by the region?	The Welland settlement area expansion was incorporated in to the Land Needs Assessment. Each municipality was assessed individually from a land needs perspective. Certain areas in Pelham were constrained by the Greenbelt Plan. Regional level watershed planning and the Natural Environment System informed assessments of areas and further sub-watershed planning will inform how development takes place in the larger expansion areas.
33	Is the Greenbelt review happening in 2025?	The Province of Ontario is responsible for the review of the Greenbelt Plan. They review the plan on a 10-year basis. The current Greenbelt Plan was released in 2017. I would expect the next review will begin in 2027.
34	Hi .. Thank you for all your hard work on this huge process. I just wanted a little clarification on the time line you have. Is July still the goal date to have the official plan finalized and provincially approved? When it is approved are the subject urban lands officially in the urban boundary?	The Region is required to get the Plan to the Province for approval by July 2022. Once the Official Plan is approved by the Province the proposed expansion areas would be final. However, that does not mean that development can begin right away as there needs to be further planning completed for these areas and local Official Plans updated first.
35	Why the need when Welland has expanded their boundary. Will this municipal expansions be used to offset the other ones planned by the region?	The boundary expansion Welland, which took place prior to the completion of the Niagara Official Plan, is reflective of their 2051 land need. Likewise, additional expansions have been recommended in other municipalities that require more land for development to 2051.
36	You just showed a map that shows no creeks being mapped	Thanks for the comment. Please also note all of our environmental mapping is up for public review, you can find

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		the link to our mapping application on our OP homepage www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan
37	How are the NH features are going to be protected?	Natural features are protected through the policies of the official plan. When there is a proposed development that triggers the policies of the plan, and natural features could be impacted, an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) would be required. The EIS would be required to identify and protect features in accordance with the policies of the plan.
38	If proximity to aggregates used to deallocate lands in Thorold. Why is close proximity used to justify proposed urban expansion in Niagara Falls expansion area Number Two. It was used to discount the natural heritage features here. This close proximity shows why the agricultural area in expansion Area serves as a natural corridor to be protected from urbanization	The proximity of aggregates in Thorold is within an area of influence whereas the proposed expansion in Niagara Falls is not within an area of influence.
39	Would have been better to show the environmental areas within the expansion areas to get better feed back.	Thank you for the comment.
40	I would like hear how huge community expansion around rural hamlets, e.g. such as the huge expansion around places such as Fulton, addresses the issue of affordable housing. In recent years, the big developments in West Lincoln have included a lot of large, single-family houses on very large lots, and nowhere near public transportation systems. How would more of that kind of development provide affordable housing?	The settlement area in Smithville is for different forms of housing and will assist in addressing market need. The Fulton expansion is for rural employment.
41	How will the Region protect the natural environment features like woodland, wetlands, linkages etc. on the proposed expansion areas when developer-paid Environmental Impact Studies tend to diminish the features and argue for their reduction or elimination?	For expansion areas, larger areas will develop by secondary plans and subwatershed plans. Smaller areas will be planned with accompanying EIS work. Depending on complexity there could be peer reviews although there is staff with expertise to review the EIS work.

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	Will they do peer reviews of the studies? Do they have any plans to hire ecologists to review the studies? How can we trust them to protect what's important when the Region itself is planning to destroy the wetlands and woodlands along Merritt Road?	
42	Niagara Falls canopy is at 17.5 % when 30 % is the min. requirement, if you employ this it will only harm this more.	Thank you for the comment.
43	In agr. area between Nec. lands and Welland River. for ex. Shriners Creek, Ten Mile, and Beaverdams Creeks all connected to Welland Canal Turning Basins.	Thank you for the comment.
44	Niagara has lost an enormous amount of farmland to urban and suburban development over the years, yet empty grocery shelves have shown us how vital local agriculture is to our food security. Young people need to be encouraged to take up farming. Can you assure us that these urban boundary expansions do not take any good farmland out of use?	Lands have been designated for urban development for sometime despite the lands sometimes being used for agriculture. The SABR Report assesses each site based on criteria and for agriculture looked at soil classification, impact on the agricultural system and minimum distance separation from livestock operations to proposed urban residential areas.
45	Regarding Netherby Road these areas are proposed for urban expansion in the just released consolidated plan, not the urban boundary expansions featured in tonight's session. They and lands along the QEW are identified by a purple line.	Thank you for the comment/clarification.
46	95.4% of the provincially significant wetlands are not within the Green belt protection area.	Thank you for the comment.
47	it appears that 2 of the 3 blocks recommended in Niagara falls will depend on a new waste water treatment plant. Will Niagara falls not be short of developable land if the waste water treatment plant gets delayed or if not delayed only one block til 2027??	There is some connection to the central block mentioned. The Official Plan is planning to 2051 and the planning aligns with infrastructure planning. The Treatment Plant for Niagara Falls is planned for 2027. In addition to facilitating development in Niagara Falls the Plant will free up capacity in St. David's, Glendale District and St. Catharines.

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48	You spoke about protecting areas in accordance with the mapping but did not answer the question regarding the mapping of the areas of Niagara Falls.	Apologies as we attempt to keep all the questions organized. Can you give us more detail on what you are asking here?
49	Regarding the purple line expansion in Port Colborne, this shows that the area is expected to grow faster than the rate employed to justify the deallocation here.,	Thank you for the comment.
50	What impact if any does this report have on the west side of highway140 bordering to the east side of the canal and north of highway 3 in Port Colborne.	There are no expansions proposed in Port Colborne
51	The Climate Change policies of the plan stress the need for planning to be serviced by transit. Then why is a 400 hectare expansion being proposed for Smithville which has no transit.,	The expansion in Smithville will add different forms of housing and address market demand. As the area grows transit can be reviewed through the Secondary Plan process.
52	Good evening Great work in progress 👍 How effectively during this expansion plan, team has evaluated the real impact of population growth specially racialize community?	Niagara's demographic is shifting and we recognize the importance of creating a Region that celebrates diversity and inclusion.
53	Urban development impacts existing natural heritage features. through fragmentation and genetic isolation. How are you considering these aspects in the proposed expansion areas?	Impact on the natural environment system was considered in assessing expansion areas and further environmental planning at various levels will take place prior to development within expansion areas.
54	Are the lands around West Grimsby going to be zoned "specialty crop review area"?	The Province identifies Specialty Crop Lands in their Agricultural Land Base mapping. Specialty Crop Lands are not under review and can not be changed as part of this Official Plan work.
55	The former CMS lands in Fort Erie have been identified as Deer Wintering Habitat. How could this function reasonably persist if the area is included within the urban boundaries?	Significant wildlife habitat is requires protection in accordance with the policies of the plan regardless if they are in a rural or urban area of the region.

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56	I understand that Niagara Falls planning staff brought forward a growth plan that included 65% intensification but the plan the NF Council approved is only 50% intensification. Can this be revisited? Also, what is the intensification target for Welland and can that possibly be improved, especially since Welland just got Regional approval for a secondary plan that will lead to the development of 190 ha?	The Niagara Falls Council considered a staff report with options for intensification. The Council supported the Region's proposed intensification target for Niagara Falls. The local intensification targets are minimums and can be exceeded.
57	Could you expand on how you assessed criteria in regards to transportation? How are is public transit judged for the future? Please define and describe active transportation.	Candidate sites were assessed based on their proximity and access to hierarchical road networks including arterial and collectors and highway access. Transit Planning for areas of higher density and future Strategic Growth Areas are imperative to support a healthy, vibrant community. Areas such as Downtown St. Catharines. The GO Stations, Glendale and Brock as well as Downtowns of Niagara Falls and Welland will see the highest focus for provision of transit services while fixed routes can be augmented/planned to areas that will support their service levels accordingly. Not all of Niagara has the same demands, and services for some of the smaller communities have been piloting an on-demand service to connect with fixed services where available. A single transit authority to oversee a metamorphosis will help ensure integration and connectivity for our many communities. Respecting Active Transportation (AT), there are several definitions, but the core is "people powered transportation". That is characterized as cycling and walking primarily, but can include any number of means such as rollerblades and foot scooters. Infrastructure such as sidewalks, trails and bicycle lanes support AT and by extension a healthy lifestyle choice for getting around. Provincial Plans speak to AT provision and many municipalities have AT Committees

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		and/or AT Master Plans to ensure the facilities are being planned for their existing and future communities.
58	Regarding the CMS lands why does the consolidated plan have a provision for the Canadian Motor Speedway, while at the same time an urban expansion is proposed here. This is contradictory since the CMS land is not to allow employment land type uses until the racing stadium construction has begun.,	The site specific policy for the Canadian Motor Speedway reflects an approval process for the development approved by the Ontario Municipal Board.
59	Why are you ignoring the specialty crop findings of the 1979 OMB that revealed the capability for fruit and grapes of the	You are encouraged to review our agricultural system mapping. The draft official plan will introduce a significant amount of new agricultural area for protection.
60	Can the expansion demand meet the province's mandate and still keep all of our natural lands as well as farmlands and not lose either of these?	The Land Needs Assessment incorporated a Regional 60% intensification rate and certain municipalities still need more land to support community and employment growth. Without expansions the intensification rate goes up significantly which puts more people in the built up areas and existing urban areas putting added pressure on natural features in the current urban areas as well as on local planning to accommodate the intensification in established areas. The approach would also not consider the provincial requirement of addressing market demand.
61	We continue to talk about how NHS features will be protected. How does the region plan to accomplish this given that Environmental Impact assessments are paid for by developers? Will the region be hiring experts to review the studies, for example?	The Region currently has on staff qualified ecologist and environmental planners who review EIS that are submitted. The review process ensures that the EIS have been completed in accordance with the EIS guidelines, industry standards and sounds ecological principles.
62	Given the average residential house prices rose approximately 27% last year in the Niagara Region and are forecasted to jump another 14% in 2022, do you believe the current proposed urban expansions coupled	Increasing the supply of housing in general as well as medium or higher density housing can assist in assisting with tackling affordability but there are many other social housing and financial aspects that must be considered

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	with our intensification targets will be enough to make Niagara Region a place where young families can move and get into the housing market?	comprehensively to address affordable housing and core housing need.
63	In looking at the "actual need" of the municipalities, what over site is undertaken to be sure they are approving land use changes and future growth plans that actually address the housing needs not wants or current purchasing trends. Why is Niagara falls able to put forward a future growth plan that accommodates less Growth outside the existing boundaries (50 %) when their own personnel brought forward a viable plan that could accommodate up to 65% potential growth within the existing boundary.	The Niagara Falls Council considered a staff report with options for intensification. The Council supported the Region proposed intensification target for Niagara Falls. The target is a minimum and can be exceeded.
64	If we are not talking about development tomorrow why are we not considering properly zoned and designated lands in Thorold and port Colborne be developed before these agriculturally zoned and designated lands.	<p>The Province will approve our Official Plan; if it does not conform to the provincial policies on growth planning, the Province will add or amend our Official Plan to do so. As a result, the risk is that the Province may plan for growth without input from the Region or community. It's best that we plan for the growth with our Niagara-centered approach than leave it to others.</p> <p>The Settlement Area Boundary Review being presented to Council represents a balanced approach that protects the environment, agricultural lands, provides intensification opportunities and also allows for growth that will provided for different housing types.</p>
65	If a cities official plan has not been followed and land use is not aligned with the current mapping, does the region consider its impact on the plan, and on the surrounding properties? Does the region then amend the map to reflect the land use?	When the Region's Official Plan is approved by the Province local municipalities must bring their Official Plans in to conformity with the Region's. The Region works with the local municipalities on this process and the Region is the approval authority for local Official Plans.

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66	Why is the overall intensification target for Niagara only 56%? I know the Province is now only asking for 50% and our Region has targeted 56% intensification. If the previous Provincial policy were still in effect, they would've had to reach 60%... And some cities like Hamilton have said no to urban boundary expansion altogether. Considering the need to protect agricultural land and natural areas, and to prevent the cost of sprawl and to limit our greenhouse gas emissions, can't we do better than 56%?	The intensification rate was increased from 56% to 60% in August 2021. 60% is a significant target and well above the Provincial minimum of 50%.
67	The Premier of the Province has issued somewhere around 22 ministerial orders to override local planning. How would the Region respond if a ministerial order is issued to put development outside the areas of the official plan and/or on a significant wetland?	Normally a Ministers zoning order receives input from the municipality. The planning work completed for the MCR demonstrates we can accommodate forecasted growth with the combination of the intensification target and settlement boundary expansions proposed.
68	Regarding the natural heritage features, some of these are protected wetlands, especially in the area south of the Niagara Falls hospital. Could not urban expansion led to species loss and the removal of their protected status.	Urban expansion will not lead to the loss of provincially significant wetlands (PSW's). PSW are protected regardless if they are in a rural or urban area of the region.
69	Regarding the future Employment Lands which there is a reluctance to discuss they are mapped in an Appendix Two of the Consolidated Plan. You are pretending that this mapping does not exist.	Thank you for the comment.
70	According to Environment Canada the area we live in (known as the Carolinian Zone). We have more endangered and rare species than any other ecoregion in Canada. According to biologists 95.4% of Niagara regions wetlands are located in Niagara South and where most remaining SAR exist. The proposals in Chippawa such as the proposed employment land along Welland River is one of the largest wooded areas left	Significant woodlands and significant wetlands are required to be protected in accordance with the policies of the plan, regardless if the area is within the urban or rural part of the Region. The habitat of endangered and threatened species is required to be protected in accordance with provincial and federal legislation.

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	standing in area. Why are you and the remaining species at risk Niagara South according to biologists we have 95.4% of wetlands here -	
71	The mapping in Appendix Two shows that Port Colborne may have much more development than the projected deallocation justifies.	It is unclear what document is being referenced.
72	Once the plan is completed what steps will be taken to insure that the proper amount of intensity development inside present urban boundaries takes place and development does not only take place in green field community development areas.	Growth and intensification will be monitored and tracked. The Region's Official Plan is not a static document and can be updated as necessary. Further, the Region participates in the local municipality's secondary planning process where growth is planned on a community level.
73	Disagree. There was a clear disagreement with the intensification target	Thank you for the comment
74	This may be incredibly naive but ...Why Growth? Given the constraints of environment and problems with housing our current population why do we automatically consider growth to be a given aim of our governance? What is wrong with stasis and planning for dealing with our current reality?	The Province requires the region to plan for allocated growth. Communities are not static and southern Ontario is an attractive place to reside. Growth is coming as evidenced over the last few years so a proactive planning approach is best to ensure growth takes place in the overall best manner.

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75	There are contaminated lands in Niagara Falls where they have ignored it and people will be harmed, through the brownfield redevelopments poor environmental protections hence people's health. What will be done when the growth programs in Niagara falls run into more contamination? just keep building on them?	As part of brownfield redevelopment there is a process to clean the sites up at the development stage in accordance with Provincial requirements. There are also financial incentives to assist with brownfield redevelopment.
76	Regarding two of the Niagara Falls expansions, two of them have never been subject of a council decision.	Thank you for the comment.
77	This summer did you not receive comments from the Niagara Falls Planning Department that they were not interested in urban boundary expansions.	Staff are not unaware of any direct correspondence sent to the Region with such a request. Staff are aware that Niagara Falls Planning staff made recommendation to their local Council to increase their intensification target higher than what the Region had allocated, but their local Council did not support the increased density, opting instead to have expansion to accommodate a portion of the forecasted growth.
78	In Fort Erie, you have identified adding 105 hectares for community land needs. That is a gross number have you calculated the net need after removing any constraints on those properties i.e. PSW or Natural Heritage features	The numbers reported are net numbers and remove non developable features.
79	In making the final recommendations to council, is it possible to recommend that future Environmental Impact Statements on these lands be funded by the Region rather than developers to inform the secondary plan development?	The policies promote looking at the natural environment comprehensively through Secondary Plans and Sub-Watershed Plans for large development areas. An EIS would then be completed following the direction of these plans. The Region has staff with expertise to review the numerous EISs associated with development applications and has the option for a complex EIS to incorporate peer review. There is ongoing discussion on policy implementation.

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80	Under the current regional plan are not Environmental Planning studies required before urban boundary expansions. Why was this not done before these expansions were recommended.	For SABR environmental planning work was considered via Region wide watershed planning and the proposed Natural Environment System mapping.
81	I also feel strongly that environmental areas should have been included within the expansion areas. I found the maps hard to 'read' without these details, such as road names, etc.	Thank you for this comment.
82	EIS is just watershed planning before you add to urban area? What about species at risk. This should be more comprehensive EIS before these areas are added as urban expansion areas.	Adding land to an urban area is not the last step in the planning process. Each site added to an urban area will require a detailed analysis before development can begin. Either through a subwatershed study or environmental impact study. There is a requirement for natural features to be protected in accordance with the policies of the plan.
83	Regarding response to aggregate proximity in Thorold how can this statement be made with any credibility unless these lands that are supposed to have a negative impact from aggregates are actually mapped.	Thank you for the comment.
84	Many developers are clear cutting first then worry about everything later. How do we stop this?	The Region has a woodland by-law and investigates tree cutting when made aware. Tree clearing that occurs that is not in compliance with the by-law can be addressed through restoration or the courts. Niagara residents are doing a good job of notifying the Region of tree cutting.
85	What will the costs be to taxpayers to service the new growth in Smithville re. all the infrastructure that must be built? (Development charges do not pay the full cost). How do they plan on solving the transportation issue that Grimsby has as the gateway to Smithville.	The Smithville Master Plan is currently under development and is taking a comprehensive approach ensuring the transportation and servicing capital work can be incorporated into development charges so growth pays for growth.
86	The Natural Heritage Inventory map fails to show the areas proposed for urban expansion. (the boundary lines are not mapped). Why was this not shown before	The draft Schedule's C1, C2, and C3 are mapped with the proposed new urban boundaries.

#	Question/Comment	Response
	the Planning Department made recommendations for these expansion areas.	
87	Regarding Urban Expansion areas One and Two in Niagara Falls why was close proximity to estate wineries not considered.,	Yes, proximity to agricultural uses were considered for all expansion reviews.
88	So you are guaranteeing that no Class 1 farmland has been included in these urban boundaries expansions?	If you are referring to the Canada Land Inventory soil classification -Staff do not recall any of the preferred SABR sites containing class 1 soil. There were a number of SABR requests made within the Greenbelt Plan Specialty Crop area, where soil classes 1-3 are dominant. These areas were not considered for expansion under the SABR process.
89	Did not earlier mapping in Smithville's urban boundary expansion indicated that there were areas in the northerly expansion area that would impact livestock operations under Code of Practice.	Areas in the northwesterly portion of the study area did have impacts from livestock and were subsequently left out of recommendations for expansion.
90	People that will live where wet lands were inevitably will have flooding problems and there will be insurance problems like in BC. What are the plans when we get more rains from global warming...?	Planning for climate change is part of the scope of work for the official plan. In regards to natural hazards and flooding, this is the mandate of the NPCA under the Conservation Authorities Act.
91	Add on to my question- ... or is it possible to recommend that a peer review of future Environmental Impact Statements be required.	The Region can require peer review of very complex EIS but there are staff that have the expertise to review EISs submitted.
92	Are you able to provide insight and solutions as to what you see as effective actions and ways we can bring about change to ensure cities follow educated advice from biologists and ecologists to enforce solutions and better planning for sustainable development while maintaining biodiversity? The proposals in Niagara South are in areas where most remaining species at risk exist. Many developments in this area can have negative impacts on ecological functions. Can you	The Region is currently updating our stormwater management guidelines. The updated guidelines are proposed to place a greater emphasis on low impact development (LID) and other treatment train approaches to managing stormwater. The draft natural environment system policies include policies to protect woodlands in the Region.

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	consider incorporating the following considerations: Do not include wet engineered stormwater ponds (they are ecological traps for wildlife) but rather support dry stormwater ponds (MOE 2003) and enhanced grassed swales to mitigate stormwater impacts as they are the preferred ecological solutions and request developers not to remove existing woodlands so we can try to reach the 30% tree canopy cover recommended by the government (note we are only at 17% tree cover in Niagara).	
93	Regarding Port Colborne your response ignores Appendix Two in consolidated plan	Thank you for the comment.
94	The recommendation report for expansion did not map the natural heritage features for any of the proposed urban expansions. Why was such mapping absent from the staff report.	If you are interested in reviewing the draft Official Plan's Natural Environment System mapping, you can view that here: https://niagararegion.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=21e7b3d3663e476799277823f3a40b44
95	Regarding Smithville the comments regarding Hamilton are part of the sub-market arguments that province in the past rejected as violation of Growth Plan. How has growth plan changed to now allow such expansion based on sub-market rather than regional need	West Lincoln is being allocated growth within the context of Niagara. Proximity to Hamilton is a consideration and one of the reasons why growth pressures have been high in Smithville for over a decade. Smithville was giving a boundary expansion through RPPA 2-2009 to support growth to 2031. The additional expansion is needed to support growth to 2051.
96	How does the passing of Option 3C effect the proposed development of t Merritt Rd. from Cataract to Rice Rd. when a major part of the undeveloped roadway is Provincial Significant Wetlands and Woodlot- I believe this is the Merrit Road EA	Infrastructure projects such as the Merritt Road Environmental Assessment (EA) are governed by the Environmental Assessment Act. The Environmental Assessment Act sets out a planning and decision-making process so that potential environmental effects are considered before a project begins. Both the current and

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		draft Official Plan policies recognize the applicability of the Environmental Assessment Act for infrastructure projects and defer to that approval process.
97	On one of the maps, the area around west Grimsby was labelled as "Specialty Crop land review area".. will this be the new zoning designation for West Grimsby lands? Or will we be agriculture zoning?	The Province of Ontario has indicated that no changes can be made to the Greenbelt Plan Specialty Crop designation, this includes the redesignation of lands for urban boundary expansions. As such, land identified in the Greenbelt Plan Specialty Crop area will maintain its current designation in the draft Official Plan.
98	What would happen if a new provincial government changed the demands for urban growth and future planning?	If provincial planning policies were to change, the Region would update the policies in its Official Plan as necessary to comply. That said, this Official Plan must address the provincial policies currently in place.
99	Thanks for this response, Erik. I need to research what exactly is meant by "Specialty Crop area", but your answer has reassured me. :)	Specialty Crop Area, is what the Greenbelt Plan also illustrates to as "Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape Area". If you would like additional information, please reach out erik.acs@niagararegion.ca
100	Once the Region has received all comments on February 7th is the Region open to adjusting the recommended boundary expansion areas if the technical responses provide sound planning and engineering justification?	The Region is undertaking consultation to confirm the policy directions make sense from a planning perspective. Revisions can be made based on new information that warrants a change and represents good planning.
101	Do arguments re Smithville contradict Hamilton council's decision that no urban expansions are needed here., It seems like a defacto Hamilton urban expansion	The Growth Plan has separate growth forecasts for municipalities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The City of Hamilton has a growth allocation separate from Niagara. Smithville is part of Niagara, any proposed growth is associated with Niagara's growth projections.
102	Mr. Lamberts comments about providing more sewage capacity in the north is a grave concern for anyone wanting to preserve this specialty crop area.	Thank you for the comment.

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103	How would density targets be impacted if Thorold and Port Colborne actually built on?	Density targets are 50 people and jobs per hectare across the entirety of the Region's DGA.
104	SO can the Region tell the city's to go back to the drawing board to not expand and increase intensification through going up instead of out. This would also address a better way for affordable housing.	The Land Needs assessment incorporated a Regional 60% intensification rate and certain municipalities still need more land to support community and employment growth. Without expansions the intensification rate goes up significantly which puts more people in the built up areas and existing urban areas putting added pressure on natural features in the current urban areas as well as on local planning to accommodate the intensification in established areas. The approach would also not consider the provincial requirement of addressing market demand.
105	So — no interest in other sorts of agricultural production. Hmmmm... that seems to me to be very short-sighted. Not your problem, of course. Niagara Region's planners are doing an excellent job and all your comments are very much appreciated..	Thank you for the comment.
106	What are the ramifications to the Region if we do not plan for the growth that has been allocated by the province	<p>The Province will approve our Official Plan; if it does not conform to the provincial policies on growth planning, the Province will add or amend our Official Plan to do so. As a result, the risk is that the Province may plan for growth without input from the Region or community. It's best that we plan for the growth with our Niagara-centered approach than leave it to others.</p> <p>The Settlement Area Boundary Review being presented to Council represents a balanced approach that protects the environment, agricultural lands, provides for intensification opportunities and also allows for growth that will provided for different housing types.</p>

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107	A recent Scotiabank report indicated that the Province of Ontario currently has a deficit of 650, 000 residential units..your Land Needs Assessment Methodology is based on future growth projections but it does not address the current residential unit shortage...how does the shortage of housing supply get addressed if the current deficit is not addressed in these settlement area boundary expansions.	The Provincial LNA is focused on increasing housing supply and mix. Urban expansions are not viewed as the solution to housing shortages nor affordability. The solution to shortages is an increase in housing mix (more towns and apartments) within the existing boundaries.
108	am wondering why the area on Ort Road in south Niagara Falls was not considered in the Urban Boundary expansion considering that properties and who got their application on the East, West and North side of Niagara Falls in this same area was included in the expansion? Was this excluded because of Niagara Falls 50% target for Urban expansion and the fact that others got their application in first and it was a first come first served?	The assessment process did not work on a first come first serve basis. Requested expansions were all reviewed against the same approved criteria that were presented in previous reports and SABR PIC webinar. The consideration of all the criteria together relative to various locations formed the basis of professional planning opinion and ultimately the selection of recommended expansion locations.
109	Why has no figure been given for brownfield redevelopment regarding need projections. This would appear to eliminate some of the proposed need for Employment lands since such areas have reduced clean up standards.	Redevelopment of brownfield lands was considered in both Community and Employment Area land needs.
110	Regarding need for Smithville if it is for Hamilton, could this growth projection just be assigned to Hamilton.	West Lincoln has been growing strong for over a decade. Growth allocations, and subsequent expansion, are reflective of a maturing community and one that is important to achieving the Regions overall growth forecasts from the Province. The City of Hamilton is its own Regional Market Area with forecasts set out in the Growth Plan.
111	Why have no Secondary Plans been considered which could encourage Thorold and Port Colborne to utilize all of their vacant Greenfield lands.	Secondary Plans are required for Strategic growth areas and larger expansion areas. The Region encourages secondary plans and intensification strategies for built up at areas. Secondary Plans are an important component for growth management planning.

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112	We don't have a choice...no, of course you don't. And you are all doing an excellent job. We are voters, not employees of the region — and we DO have a choice. And it's high we decide what our priorities are for the future. One thing we all know now: the future is not going to look anything like the past.	Thank you for the comment
113	Why has the region not considered any Secondary Plans to encourage intensification to prevent urban expansion.	Secondary Plans are required for Strategic growth areas and larger expansion areas. The Region encourages secondary plans and intensification strategies for built up areas
114	The Region has a minimum growth target set by the Province. Is that broken down into categories? For example, growth within the current boundaries and growth within expansion.	The Growth Plan requires municipalities to direct a minimum of 50% of new housing to the existing built-up area. The other 50% is to be accommodated to the existing Designated Greenfield Area and expansion areas.
115	St. Catharines is developing a secondary plan to convert some Employment lands to residential lands. Could this reduce the residential need being used to justify urban expansions.	The conversion of lands in St. Catharines will support the 95% intensification rate for St. Catharines and does not offset the need for expansions elsewhere.
116	Risk assessments and record of site conditions are not done well and clean ups are minimal when they should be done to protect the environment, hence our health. It should be understood genetic disease is caused by these brown fields. Therefore if it costs 1 million for clean up the savings are in health care by many time s that .	Thank you for the comment
117	Can you provide the public with a large map of Nat. Areas as the on-line Map is very difficult to read?	The Natural environment system mapping tool on the website has a high resolution allowing the user to zoom in on specific sites. You will be contacted to provide you assistance in using the mapping tool.
118	the only secondary plans the region has developed are in parts of St. Catharines and Niagara on the Lake.	The Region has developed the Glendale District Plan (St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake) and the Brock District Plan (St. Catharines and Thorold). A District Plan is a tool

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	Could not such plans in other municipalities reduce need for urban expansions.	the Region uses to set a shared vision and land use direction for areas with cross-jurisdictional interests. District Plans are implemented at the local level through a new or updated Secondary Plan process. New District Plans may be prepared in other areas of the Region in the future. Please see policies in Section 6.1.1 of the draft Niagara Official Plan related to District Plans.
119	Please ignore the first question as the curser had a bit of problem.	The Region has a woodland by-law and investigates tree cutting when made aware. Tree clearing that occurs that is not in compliance with the by-law can be addressed through restoration or the courts. Niagara residents are doing a good job of notifying the Region of tree cutting.
120	The situation regarding illegal tree cutting on Dominion Road, illustrates the problem in the real world of protecting natural areas within urban boundaries. Is not this a more difficult challenge than has been suggested in this matter.	The tree cutting at Dominion Road was investigated by the Regional Forester. An inspection by the Forester indicated that a few small trees were damaged by the work. However, the site visit, review of google street view images and review of the previously submitted Environmental Impact Study work confirms that the clearing was confined to an area not meeting the "woodland" definition in the Woodland Conservation by-law. Therefore, the work does not represent a violation of the Woodland Conservation by-law.
121	What are the preventative strategies the Region is using to stop clear cutting of lands? At the moment, it is a reactive system with photos and investigation FOLLOWING the destruction.	Niagara Region has a Woodland Conservation By-law. The by-law governs the protection and preservation of woodlands in Niagara. The intent of the by-law is to conserve woodlands and ensure that, where tree cutting occurs, it's carried out under good forestry practices. The by-law prohibits the injury or destruction of any tree located within a woodland or designated as a Heritage Tree or a Significant Community Tree except under certain specified circumstances.

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122	<p>I applaud the hard work and consideration that the Region has undertaken to accommodate the required expansion of growth set down by the province. I realize and appreciate that intensification is a very viable planning tool.</p> <p>My question is why is this not mandated to happen within the existing boundary instead of promoting more sprawl outside the boundary.</p> <p>In 2051 these boundaries will be revisited again looking to forward expansion.</p> <p>We only have so much land please use it wisely!!!</p>	<p>The Province requires Niagara to plan for a wide range of housing options and consider market-demand for housing. Limiting housing growth to the existing urban areas will result in a shortfall of single detached housing units.</p>
123	<p>regarding the supposed excellence of West Lincoln's planning when the issue of natural heritage areas within the urban boundaries came up at a zoom meeting. The reply from the consultant is that these would disappear and be replaced in other areas. This is not good planning.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment</p>
124	<p>Where can I obtain information on the new South Niagara WWTP Environmental Assessment Process, and where can I get information on the flow of the discharge</p>	<p>Project Page is at https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/south-niagara-falls-treatment-plant/</p>
125	<p>Hi Sean, the exercise that you just spoke of - was it completed has a tabletop exercise or did it involve staff going onto the site and performing a comprehensive inventory of the area.</p>	<p>The Niagara Watershed Plan project was completed using the best available existing information. Typically site visits and detailed inventories of natural features is undertaken during the EIS or subwatershed study phase.</p>
126	<p>Regarding provincial requirements much of this could have been met within urban boundaries if there was no deallocations in Port Colborne and Thorold. Province should not be blamed for urban expansions-region has a choice.</p>	<p>Existing Settlement Areas cannot support all growth to 2051. Directing additional growth to Thorold and Port Colborne would still result in a shortfall of developable land and ignore market demands in other municipalities in Niagara.</p>

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127	Appendix 2 - Urban Expansion Areas and Future Employment Areas shows a new graphic indicating future employment areas along the future Niagara GTA East Corridor. What is the status of the MTO's Environmental Assessment required to determine the final highway alignment within the designated corridor?	Additional details regarding the NGTA East Corridor were summarized in the Niagara Region's 2017 Transportation Master Plan. The specific section can be found at this link https://www.niagararegion.ca/2041/pdf/tmp-niagara-hamilton-trade-corridor.pdf The Niagara Region continues to work with the MTO, as well as Provincial and Federal Economic Development Offices on partnering and funding to start the first phase of the program; the Planning and EA Study. This will define the alignment and property requirements. The Region has made previous funding applications to commence the project which have not been successful to-date. Regional staff will continue to submit for future funding in order to start the project.
128	Given our climate crisis it seems that our regional government has the responsibility to guarantee citizens that all greenfield, wooded areas, wetlands, watersheds, natural heritage areas be fully protected from developers. The mapping should clearly identify these areas as off limits to development. We The citizens should not have to ask our government to protect these areas it should go without saying. it seems now that we The citizens have to fight and protest our governing bodies who only too often forfeit these precious assets and this seems absolutely backwards.-	Thank you for the comment
129	In developments in Niagara I have seen EIS peer reviews seem to go unaddressed and as a result habitat is being destroyed and simple solutions such terrestrial connections for species, need for edge expansion and management of PSWS, protection of waterways and improving linkages for species, are not be incorporated. Can you please support solutions that protect biodiversity in our sensitive areas.	Thank you for the comment

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130	Mapping tool could have shown urban expansion areas. It did not. People are expected to do this themselves. I have actually commented on various areas and do not need help. It was wrong for you to keep this information out of the on line map. There should be apology not claim I do not understand the map.	Thank you for the comment