

Growing Better Together

Child Care Space Expansion

Our Ask

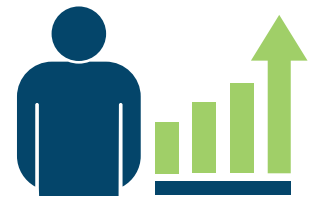
That the Province invest in the compensation and wages of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and commit to continuously reviewing and updating Niagara Region's child care expansion targets to respond to community need.

Why is this Important?

Niagara Region has one of the highest enrolment rates for Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care (CWELCC). As CWELCC improves affordability for families and Niagara's population continues to grow, the demand for licensed child care will increase requiring a larger RECE workforce and greater child care space allocation.

Aligning with Provincial Priorities

The Province has committed to creating 86,000 new licensed child care spaces by 2026, including targeted CWELCC expansion to diverse and underserved populations. Without further attraction and retention of RECEs, there will be an estimated workforce shortage of 8,500 by 2026. Ensuring municipalities have access to a qualified RECE workforce and allocating child care spaces reflective of community need will support the Province in successfully implementing the national child care program across Ontario.



694,000

Projected population

43% increase

236

Additional RECEs are estimated to be needed in Niagara

to ensure current centre-based care can operate at 90%



Estimated workforce shortage of

8,500 RECEs

across Ontario by 2026

Our Opportunity

- As the Ministry of Education develops a province-wide strategy to address sector workforce challenges, there is an opportunity to introduce a recruitment and retention strategy that would support the expansion of the licensed child care system
- Providing RECEs with a liveable wage, which child care experts and advocates argue should be \$30 per hour, will support the successful implementation of the national child care plan
- Niagara Region has identified 12 priority communities for targeted CWELCC expansion to support low-income families, vulnerable and diverse communities, children with special needs, Francophone families, Indigenous families and families requiring flexible care

Our Challenges

- In Ontario, only 55 per cent of RECEs registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators work in child care, with many finding opportunities in other professions
- As of March 31, 2023, the centre-based child care system in Niagara is operating at approximately 64 per cent of its licensed capacity
- To achieve 90 per cent capacity, it is estimated that an additional 236 RECEs are needed, not including any additional staff required to cover breaks and supply staff that are typically required to offset sick days and vacation
- Niagara Region has been allocated 4,067 spaces for CWELCC expansion
- While this is a welcomed investment, approximately 1,200 additional child care spaces are required by 2026 to adequately service Niagara's priority communities
- Further, to meet this expansion target, additional RECEs will be required

The Impact

- Accessible, affordable, quality licensed child care supports the economy, advances early learning in children and can even reduce poverty in lower income families
- There is also clear evidence of a connection between access to affordable, high-quality child care and labour force participation by women
- By working with municipal partners to ensure licensed child care centres have the resources required to operate at a higher capacity, the Province will be supporting workforce participation and early childhood learning



Approximately
7,192
CWELCC eligible
children
need licensed child
care in Niagara
June 2022



Average Wages
\$23.46/hour
Licensed child care
centre in Niagara
VS.
\$27.75/hour
RECEs employed
with local
school boards
2022

Contact Information

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Let's create a sustainable child care system that can meet current and future community need. Let's Grow Better, Together.

Growing Better Together

The South Niagara Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant

Our Ask

That the Ministry of Infrastructure advocate, in partnership with Niagara Region, that the Federal Government reintroduce the Building Canada Fund – Major Infrastructure Component program.

Why is this Important?

Once completed, the South Niagara Falls Wastewater Solutions project will support significant economic growth, specifically larger employment sites along the QEW, and will provide greater flexibility in development serving in St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Thorold, Niagara-on-the-Lake and potentially Fort Erie. However, without confirmation of external funding, the project cannot move forward.

Aligning with Provincial Priorities

Collaborating on this project will support the Province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, help protect our Great Lakes, and is in alignment with the \$184 billion 2023 provincial budget commitment for infrastructure projects.



Will protect the Great Lakes by reducing combined sewer overflows by approximately

60-70%



\$400 Million
Estimated total cost of project

Investment partnerships required



1. Regional investment
2. Provincial investment
3. Federal investment

Our Opportunity

- The Federal Building Canada Fund – Major Infrastructure Component (MIC) program ran from 2007 to 2014 and allocated \$8.8 billion to large-scale infrastructure projects that created a stronger economy, cleaner environment and prosperous communities
- Joint advocacy efforts have been endorsed by a number of Provincial Cabinet Ministers, including Premier Ford who also committed, in principle, to providing 1/3 funding for the project
- Niagara's Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FMC) representative in partnership with the Regional Chair have since sent the letter to the Federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities requesting the reintroducing of the MIC program, or a similar program, to support this critical project
- The Region is also exploring opportunities to meet with Federal ministers in the winter of 2023 to further discuss the request

Our Challenges

- This project represents one the of the most significant Regional capital investments over the next 10 years; however, it cannot move forward without confirmation of external funding
- It is expected that development charges (DC) will cover approximately 50 per cent of total project costs; however, the introduction of Bill 23 has significantly increased the anticipated amount of time the Region will need to build the respective DC reserve
- This project does not qualify for any Federal infrastructure programs currently operating

The Impact

- Establishing a new wastewater treatment plant will support the Region's efforts to build sustainable healthy communities through:
 - Planning for future growth
 - Protecting the Great Lakes by reducing combined sewer overflows by approximately 60 to 70 per cent with new technology and system improvements
 - Strengthening our local economy by creating new jobs and providing the infrastructure needed to support new businesses and future investment in Niagara

Rendering of the South Niagara Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant



Contact Information

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Let's build the infrastructure we need to support new people, homes and jobs. Let's Grow Better, Together.

Growing Better Together

Large-Lot Signature Employment Sites

Our Ask

That the Province partner with the Region to service large-lot employment sites within Niagara to support Provincial Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and attract new jobs to Ontario.

Why is this Important?

Niagara Region is the only area in the Greater Golden Horseshoe that has the combination of land and an array of 400 series highways complimented by five border crossings to the US; however, there is a lack of large-scale lands ready to accommodate manufacturers looking for serviced employment sites. Identifying and servicing strategically located, large-lot employment sites for industrial users would strengthen Ontario's competitive advantage in securing new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) opportunities in key sectors across the province.

Aligning with Provincial Priorities

Introducing new large-lot employment sites would allow Niagara to be a catalyst in the Province's commitment to electrification as outlined in the Driving Prosperity document, and would further support a future Ontario Marine Strategy, as committed to in the transportation plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Niagara can also be a compliment to the Province's plan to maintain Ontario as an Automotive HUB given our proximity to market and tier two supplier base.



Niagara's manufacturers exported

\$7.3 Billion

in goods (2022)
and generated

\$2.5 Billion

in GDP (2022)

Niagara Region is the only area in the Greater Golden Horseshoe that has:



4 400-series highways



5 International border crossings into the US



6 International airports within 100 km



2 Class 1 railways



Welland Canal connects the Great Lakes to the world



Niagara's manufacturing sector directly employs

20,000+
people

Our Opportunity

- As some of the last remaining greenfield lands with direct 400-series highway access in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, lands along Niagara's transportation corridors are ideally located to support investment
- Regional and local Economic Development offices have collaborated in identifying 50+ acre sites and have developed a mapping tool to showcase those sites
- Additionally, large-lot signature employment sites could also be identified on existing airport lands that have excess acreage, as well as along the Welland Canal where 12,000 acres of land are under the purview and management of the St. Lawrence Seaway
- Servicing large-lot employment sites would allow the Region to leverage Niagara's exclusive assets and accommodate for long-term employment growth

Contact Information

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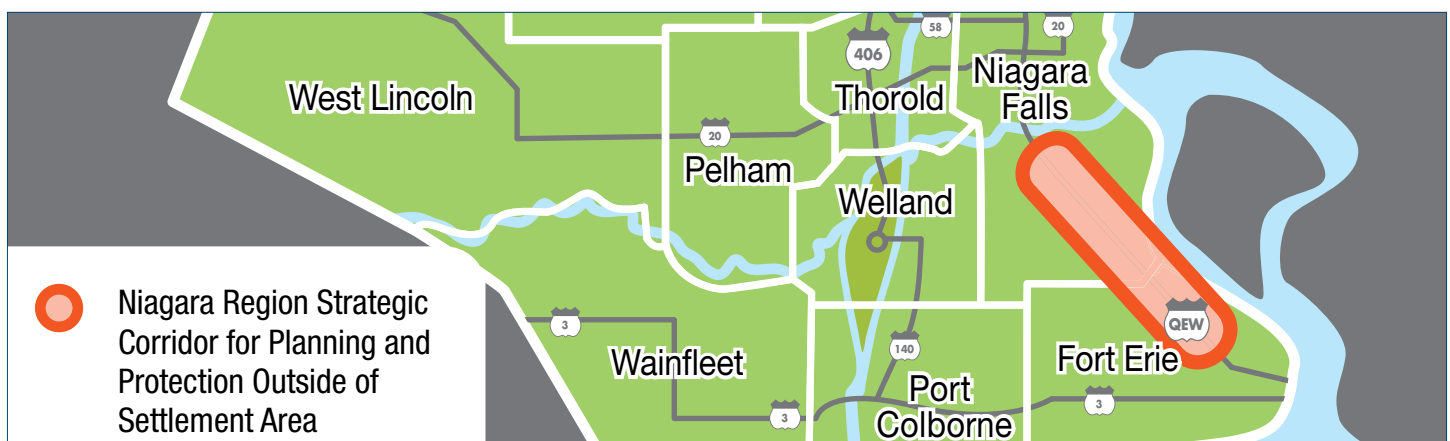
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Our Challenges

- In spite of the unique transport offerings Niagara brings to the area, there is a lack of turnkey signature employment lands to accommodate industrial manufacturers looking for serviced employment site
- Local, Regional and Provincial Economic Development staff have been receiving an influx of requests for manufacturing investment opportunities; however, employment areas are often occupied or are not large enough for industry needs
- Utility capacity at those sites generally require infrastructure improvements and or new infrastructure to be implemented on sites

The Impact

- Introducing additional large-lot employment sites would provide the Region with capacity to support the infrastructure needs of today's employer
- It would also ensure Niagara is well positioned to accommodate future population and employment growth, which is estimated to reach 694,000 people and 272,000 jobs by 2051



Let's continue to increase employment opportunities across Niagara and Ontario. Let's Grow Better, Together.

The Impact

- Provincial co-investment in the project bundle will provide Niagara with the resources needed to begin the work and help the Region make a stronger case for Federal co-investment
- These projects will accelerate the broader Affordable Housing Strategy by having a cascading effect on Niagara Region's ability to redevelop other existing and underutilized sites by providing options to temporarily accommodate tenants that will be displaced through future development

Contact Information

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Development zones of 200 Garrison Road, Fort Erie (Gilmore Lodge)



Development zones of 403 Ontario Street, St. Catharines (Linhaven)

Growing Better Together

Niagara's Affordable Housing Strategy

Our Ask

That the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing partner and co-invest in Niagara Region's Affordable Housing Strategy, which will support the success of the Region's new Strategic Transformation Office and Consolidated Housing Master Plan (CHMP)

Why is this Important?

Niagara's population is estimated to reach 694,000 by 2051. To accommodate this growth, approximately 102,700 new housing units and a total of 20,700 community housing units must be made available.

Aligning with Provincial Priorities

Co-investing in Niagara's Affordable Housing Plan supports the provincial priority of increasing the supply of housing by 1.5 million units over the next ten years.



26,000
households
are in need of
affordable housing

Median Asking Rent Costs



\$1,550
1-Bed Unit
(+19.2% from 2021)
\$1,800
2-Bed Unit
(+12.5% from 2021)

479

Additional community housing units must be introduced every year for the next 25 years

Let's work to ensure that Niagara remains a home for all.
Let's Grow Better, Together.

Our Challenges

- In comparison to other municipalities, Niagara housing is significantly challenged for affordability with some of the fastest increasing rental market prices, lowest income employment sectors and above average social assistance cases
- Bill 23 has resulted in a **\$60 million funding shortfall for affordable housing projects**
- Consequently, property taxes will have to be increased, or planned projects will have to be cancelled, reducing the number of new housing units

Our Opportunity

Niagara's New Strategic Transformation Office

- Will complement numerous initiatives and activities by Niagara Regional Housing and the Region's Community Services department to increase attainable housing
- Efforts will include undertaking a student housing strategy, an employment-focused housing strategy, and providing a housing-as-priority lens for the corporation

Niagara Region's Affordable Housing Strategy

- Engages private, non-profit and local municipal partners to support a range of housing options for non-senior singles, families and seniors, with a total development potential of nearly 11,000 units
- Includes innovative initiatives to help address the housing crisis, including supporting the intensification of existing community housing sites and incorporating modular construction and micro-condominiums housing
- Supports a portfolio approach, which allows for project bundles suitable for co-investment

Project Bundle Ready for Co-Investment

Address	Estimated Units	Benefit
Lions Douglas, 255 High Street, Fort Erie	62 net new affordable seniors' infill apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for co-investment of \$75,000 per unit to support construction costs • Federal government has provided seed funding through grants from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Federation of Canadian Municipalities
200 Garrison Road, Fort Erie (Gilmore Lodge)	341 net new residential units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 25 percent affordable • 75 per cent market and/or attainable units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will support site preparedness, detailed design, and construction costs • Opportunity to introduce commercial space on the first floor of private dwelling development • Unique co-investment opportunity for the non-for-profit sector, NRH and private developers
403 Ontario Street, St. Catharines (Linhaven)	440 net new residential units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 25 per cent affordable • 75 per cent market and/or attainable units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding is needed to support conceptual design, site preparedness, detailed design, and construction • Unique co-investment opportunity for the non-for-profit sector, NRH and private developers
5925 Summer Street, Niagara Falls	43 net new affordable units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding is needed to support construction costs • Project is currently in the midst of its Site Plan Application • Niagara Region has invested money into this site to operate a temporary homeless shelter • This project was not identified in the CHMP. Lands were deemed surplus by the City of Niagara Falls
320 Geneva Street, St. Catharines	84 net new units, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 affordable units • 12 supportive housing units • 36 bridge housing units • Additional market-rate units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of access to Development Charge funds is negatively impacting project viability • Bridge Housing is using Homeless Prevention Program funding (Year 1: \$4,303,900, Year 2: \$7,153,900) • Opportunity for co-investment of affordable units at \$150,000 per unit • Funding is needed to support site preparedness (i.e., site condition) detailed design, and construction costs • Note: Geneva will be used to house existing tenants from other sites while they are intensified
Haney Street & 709 King Street, Port Colborne	27 affordable units (22 net new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensification development of existing community housing • Funding is needed to support site preparedness, detailed design and construction costs • Contamination has been identified on the site that requires remediation

Growing Better Together

Modernizing Two-Tier Municipal Services

Our Ask

That Niagara meet with the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction to share an update on Niagara's shared service efforts and detail how the Province and Niagara Region can work together to modernize and streamline services with the reintroduction of the Municipal Modernization Program.

Why is this Important?

Together, Niagara Region and its 12 local area municipalities are continually exploring ways to modernize service delivery, reduce redundancies and innovate customer focused services for our residents. For example, in Spring 2023 a Strategic Transformation Office was established at Niagara Region to provide dedicated resources for large-scale strategic transformational priorities, including shared services.

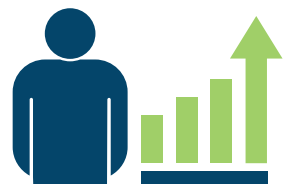
Aligning with Provincial Priorities

As the Province continues to plan for future growth, all levels of government must use resources more efficiently to meet increasing service demands. This supports the Province's ongoing efforts to reduce red tape, streamline customer service and deliver efficient and effective government.

Growing Niagara to 2051



272,000
Projected jobs
23% increase



694,000
Projected population
43% increase



We need to use resources more efficiently to meet increasing service demands as we grow

Our Opportunity

- From internal administrative functions to public facing services, Niagara Region and its local area municipalities have an excellent track record of implementing shared service initiatives that create a seamless, cost-effective and efficient experience for residents and businesses
- Recent examples implemented at the local level include shared fire service pilots, library mergers and the coordination of animal control services
- To capitalize on the efficiencies gained through these initiatives, Niagara's Strategic Transformation Office will work in partnership with the local area municipalities to:
 - Determine which shared services can be extended or expanded
 - Align to provincial priorities to build more homes faster
 - Collectively advance additional internal/ administrative opportunities available with minimal delay

Our Challenges

- Niagara has proven that we can tackle large, complex uploads like Niagara Regional Transit
- Other opportunities to explore and implement additional larger-scale shared services across Niagara exist; however, additional one-time resources are needed to move forward
- The reintroduction of the Municipal Modernization Program with a targeted focus on two-tier municipalities would ensure local governments can close the gap on one-time transition costs and allow Niagara to move forward with multiple new shared-service opportunities

The Impact

- Introducing additional shared services across Niagara will ensure our Regional and local governments are best positioned to deliver world class services to our growing population
- Reintroducing the Municipal Modernization Program with a targeted focus on shared service delivery between two-tier municipal governments would help local governments achieve economies of scale, reduce duplication of roles and support the exchange of best practice to allow for innovation
- It would enable us to succeed in advancing provincial objectives to grow Ontarian communities and make them more prosperous

Some potential opportunities for shared service include:

Public-Facing Opportunities

- Single water/ wastewater delivery
- Shared emergency dispatch service
- Fire services

Internal and Administrative Opportunities

- Financial management
- IT services, including cyber security
- Printing services
- Joint procurement

Contact Information

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Let's continue to implement new and innovative services that increase collaboration and improve customer service experience. Let's Grow Better, Together.

Growing Better Together

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Offloading

Our Ask

That the Ministry of Health

- Provide reimbursement for the \$1,755,466 permanent allocation for additional EMS crews in response to unplanned offload delay hours
- Work with Niagara Region to address underlying factors of offload delays, including
 - Establishing a task force to identify root causes
 - Supporting the expansion of primary care capacity by introducing an additional Family Health Team within the region

Why is this Important?

Three of Niagara's hospitals consistently rank in the bottom quartile for offloading time. Between 2021-2022, Niagara experienced a nearly 55 per cent increase in offload delays, representing almost 34,000 hours in lost time. With Niagara estimated to grow to 694,000 residents by 2051 (43 per cent increase), creating a sustainable emergency care system is critical.

Aligning with Provincial Priorities

Increasing access to patient-centred care supports the Province's Plan for Connected and Convenient Care. Specifically, it meets the goals of the Plan's second pillar to provide faster emergency care and increased paramedic and ambulance availability by reducing offload delays.



EMS incurred
33,908
of offload delay
hours in 2022



Time lost due to
offload delays equals
24
paramedics
for 365 days



\$1.7 Million
allocated from 2023
Regional property
taxes to address
EMS needs

Our Opportunity

We appreciate the work the Province is doing to better emergency care in Niagara, including providing the Region with

- Funding for three additional Ambulance Communication Officers
- Greater flexibility in how Niagara hospitals can use Dedicated Offload Nurse Program funding
- \$587,500 one-time funding for the Emergency Communication Nurse program

Niagara continues to implement innovative programs that seek to reduce the impact of EMS call volumes, for example our

- Mobile Integrated Health Model of Care, which includes our Mental Health and Additions Team that provides support without transporting patients to the Emergency Department 85 per cent of the time
- Emergency Communications Nurse Program
- Fit to Sit initiative, which originated in Niagara and is now used across the province

These contributions provide critically needed support to improve current service; however, more help is needed to create a sustainable emergency care system as Niagara's population continues to grow.

Our Challenges

- Between 2021 and 2022, there was a 54.76 per cent increase in offload delays. This equates to a loss of 24 paramedics for 365 days
- As of June 30, 2023, the Region has incurred a total of 12,163 offload delay hours

- \$1.7 million of Regional Levy has been permanently allocated to add additional EMS crews to mitigate the unexpected loss of ambulance hours resulting from these offload delays
- There are many factors contributing to Niagara's poor performance, such as Niagara's
 - Higher-than-average opioid-related death rate
 - Aging population
 - Rural communities
 - Increased residents suffering from poor mental health

The Impact

- Building on the investments the Ministry of Health and Niagara are making in emergency care will improve service delivery for years to come
- Reducing offload delays will build a sustainable EMS service and increase access to care
- Finding long-term solutions will save local and provincial tax dollars in the long run as emergency funding will no longer be required

Contact Information

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Let's create an emergency care system that can support current and future residents. Let's Grow Better, Together.