



creative niagara

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10. Creative Niagara

In a global world, place making has become more, not less, important. People want to live in distinctive places with unique characteristics and identities. Authenticity and appeal of place underpin the ability of communities to attract and retain residents, visitors, businesses and creative workers alike. Thus, the attraction of place impacts the diversity and viability of local and regional economies.

In this context Niagara is blessed as an area with great history, unique cultural assets, unrivalled landscapes and natural resources. It has an enviable and unique mix of very different communities and places spread over a largely rural landscape including urban centres with an industrial heritage, tourist centres, small towns and *rural areas*.

In recognition of the interrelated nature of culture, the Niagara Region supports and implements the Niagara Culture Plan by including policies and objectives into this plan that: support Creative People as the drivers of a Creative Economy; support Creative Places through land use planning policies and *infrastructure development*; and promote awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Creative Identity of Niagara that adds cultural vibrancy, and enhances both the pride in our individual communities and a shared sense of identity in Niagara.

10.A Creative Niagara

10.A.1 Objectives

Objective 10.A.1.1 To value our cultural assets as essential to the quality of life in Niagara Region and enhance our reputation as a place where people want to live, learn, work, play, create and invest.

10.B Creative People as the drivers of a Creative Economy

Increasingly, businesses and governments are recognizing the powerful role that creativity plays in driving the economy. By strengthening the creative cultural sector and creative cultural workforce the Region aims to enable the sector to maximize its contribution to Niagara's economic health.

10.B.1 Objectives

- Objective 10.B.1.1** To support cultural assets, *creative cultural industries* and cultural workforce as drivers in building a creative economy.
- Objective 10.B.1.2** To permit a wide range of cultural assets and *creative cultural industries* in locations throughout the Region.
- Objective 10.B.1.3** To work collaboratively with local municipalities, businesses and community partners to advance an economic and land use agenda to support cultural assets and *creative cultural industries*.

10.B.2 Policies

- Policy 10.B.2.1** The Region recognizes its cultural asset mapping as an important tool and indicator of the role culture plays in advancing the quality of life, economy and identity of all Niagara residents.
- Policy 10.B.2.2** The Region encourages local municipalities to utilize cultural asset mapping initiated by the Region to further investigate and define local cultural assets and significant *cultural clusters* and to build a supportive local planning policy framework in partnership with the cultural community and other partners.
- Policy 10.B.2.3** The Region will undertake an economic impact assessment to characterize and define the value of culture to Niagara's economy. Amendments to the Regional Official Plan may be required to incorporate the findings and support the priority areas defined therein.
- Policy 10.B.2.4** Through collaboration with the local municipalities, the Region may develop supportive research, guidelines, or model policies to support local municipalities in their approach to the identification of locally significant *cultural clusters* and the *development* of locally appropriate planning tools to support the incubation of ideas, innovation and *development* of new products.
- Policy 10.B.2.5** The Region will encourage partnerships to create additional cultural workforce opportunities through support for *creative cultural industries*.

Policy 10.B.2.6 The Region will encourage and support enhanced education and training opportunities including the identification of skills relevant to the cultural workforce and various opportunities to partner to enhance those skills. These opportunities could include but shall not be limited to:

- a) formal education opportunities;
- b) peer-to-peer learning;
- c) mentorships;
- d) job placements;
- e) professional *development* and internships;
- f) education regarding planning tools used to support cultural *development*.

Policy 10.B.2.7 Local municipalities through their Official Plans and Zoning By-laws should define and categorize *creative cultural industries* in *Urban Areas* to address, among other local issues, the following:

- a) The appropriate size, scale and location of *creative cultural industries*;
- b) The appropriate location for live-work spaces with a focus on *adaptive re-use, brownfield and greyfield remediation*;
- c) The relationship between *creative cultural industries* and downtowns; and
- d) The appropriate use of employment lands for *creative cultural industries*

Policy 10.B.2.8 *Creative cultural industries* that may not be directly related to agriculture but benefit from a farm location and are consistent with the farm diversification policies and definition in this Plan may be recognized and regulated in *Agricultural Areas* by the *local municipality*. Any activity considered under this policy shall be subject the following:

- a) The scale of the operation is limited and appropriate to the site and surrounding area;
- b) The use has minimal impact on, does not interfere with and is compatible with the surrounding agricultural and rural uses;
- c) The use is serviced by sustainable private services;
- d) The use does not cause off site impacts related to *infrastructure* or transportation/traffic;
- e) The use does not take farmland out of production; and,
- f) The use complies with all other applicable provisions of the Regional Official Plan.

- Policy 10.B.2.9** Lot creation to accommodate *creative cultural industries* in *Agricultural Areas* is not permitted.
- Policy 10.B.2.10** Local municipalities are encouraged to develop Official Plan policies for Rural and Hamlet/Village areas to support the rural creative economy. These policies should identify Hamlets/Villages as the potential location of tourism related activities and small-scale *creative cultural industries* while also preserving the rural character and community fabric.

10.C Creative Places

The story of Niagara region can be found in thousands of places and spaces that represent its historical and contemporary identity. The Region recognizes these assets are a physical representation of Niagara's unique characteristics. These places and spaces should be recognized for the critical role they play in creating a sense of place and improving quality of life for residents and visitors.

10.C.1 Objectives

- Objective 10.C.1.1** To support the identification and conservation of significant *built heritage resources*, significant *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* and areas of archaeological potential.
- Objective 10.C.1.2** To recognize the aesthetic, cultural, and economic value of open space, parks and recreation opportunities that meet the leisure needs and desires of present and future residents and visitors.
- Objective 10.C.1.3** To recognize the vital role that *community infrastructure* plays in nurturing Niagara's cultural potential, improving quality of life, and the health and well-being of residents and visitors.
- Objective 10.C.1.4** To recognize the importance of quality design and its role in reinvigorating and enhancing Niagara and Niagara's economy.
- Objective 10.C.1.5** To conserve significant *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes* within the unique community context of every site.

10.C.2 Policies

10.C.2.1 Built Heritage Resources, Cultural Heritage Landscapes and Archaeological Resources

- Policy 10.C.2.1.1** Significant *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes* shall be *conserved* using the provisions of the **Heritage Act**, the **Planning Act**, the **Environmental Assessment Act**, the **Funeral, Burial and Cremations Act** and the **Municipal Act**.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.2** The Region shares an interest in the protection and conservation of significant *built heritage resources* and encourages local municipalities to develop policies to protect and conserve locally significant *built heritage resources* and to utilize its authority under the **Ontario Heritage Act** to designate individual properties, *cultural heritage landscapes* and heritage conservation districts that are of cultural heritage value or interest.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.3** Municipalities are encouraged to establish a Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) to advise and assist Council on matters related to Parts IV and V of the **Ontario Heritage Act**. Local Councils may

expand the role of this committee to advise and assist Local Councils on other matters of cultural heritage conservation.

- Policy 10.C.2.1.4** Public works projects and plans undertaken or reviewed by the Region, where in the vicinity of significant built and/ or *cultural heritage landscapes* will be designed in a sensitive manner and will provide appropriate mitigation measures in both design and location to conserve, enhance and complement the existing significant built and/ or cultural heritage resources.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.5** Where *development, site alteration* and/ or a public works project is proposed on or *adjacent* to a significant built heritage resource(s) or *cultural heritage landscapes*, a heritage impact assessment will be required. The findings of the assessment shall include recommendations for design alternatives and satisfactory measures to mitigate any negative impacts on identified significant heritage resources.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.6** The Region encourages local municipalities to establish *Cultural Heritage Landscapes* policies in their official plans and identify Significant *Cultural Heritage Landscapes* for designation. The purpose of this designation is to conserve groupings of features (buildings, structures, spaces, archaeological sites and natural elements) with *heritage attributes* that, together form a significant type of heritage form, distinctive from that of its constituent elements or parts.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.7** The local municipalities shall adopt official plan policies to conserve significant cultural heritage resources and ensure that *development* and *site alteration* on *adjacent* lands to protected properties will conserve the *heritage attributes* of the protected heritage property.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.8** The Region will assist local municipalities with the preparation of Cultural Heritage Landscape Conservation Plans for Significant *Cultural Heritage Landscapes* that cross municipal boundaries or are of Regional interest.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.9** The Region, in collaboration with local municipalities, will prepare and maintain a Regional Implementation Guideline for Significant Cultural Heritage Landscape Conservation.
- Policy 10.C.2.1.10** The Region will assist local municipalities in preparing Archaeological Management Plans where desirable, that include information mapping, and an associated Implementation Guideline. The Master Plans will contain information on the methods used to determine areas of archaeological potential and confirm the archaeological review process. Areas of archaeological potential will be determined through the use of provincial screening criteria, or criteria developed by a licensed consultant archaeologist based on the known archaeological record of the municipality and its

surrounding region. Such criteria may include a range of environmental, physiographic and historical features, information from local stakeholders and the effects of past land use.

Policy 10.C.2.1.11 Where an Archaeological Management Plan has not been completed the Region and local municipalities will require applicants to submit an archaeological assessment, should it be determined that the site meets the provincial and federal criteria for determining areas of archaeological potential. Archaeological assessment reports prepared by licensed consultant archaeologists based on clear, reasonable and attainable standards and guidelines as set out by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, as well as the terms and conditions of an archaeological license under the **Ontario Heritage Act**.

Policy 10.C.2.1.12 A marine archaeological assessment shall be conducted by a licensed marine archaeologist pursuant to the **Ontario Heritage Act** if partially or fully submerged marine features such as ships, boats, vessels, artifacts from the contents of boats, old piers, docks, wharfs, fords, fishing traps, dwellings, aircraft and other items of cultural heritage value are identified and impacted by shoreline and waterfront developments.

Policy 10.C.2.1.13 *Development and site alteration* shall only be permitted on lands containing *archaeological resources* or areas of archaeological potential if the significant *archaeological resources* have been *conserved* by removal and documentation, or by preservation on site. Where significant *archaeological resources* must be preserved on site, only *development and site alteration* which maintain the heritage integrity of the site will be permitted.

10.C.2.2 Community Infrastructure

Policy 10.C.2.2.1 Local Municipalities, with support from the Region, are encouraged to identify areas of their municipality that are underserved by *community infrastructure* and develop policies, and incentives to enhance access to *community infrastructure* in accordance with the Regional Official Plan.

Policy 10.C.2.2.2 The Region encourages and promotes the shared use of schools, parks, community facilities and public open space.

10.C.2.3 Design

- Policy 10.C.2.3.1** The Region supports the use of planning tools, such as Model Urban Design Guidelines, Alternative *Development* Standards, *Development* Permit Systems or Community Improvement Plans to encourage community design that support cultural objectives.
- Policy 10.C.2.3.2** The Region and local municipalities will ensure that new public and private facilities are designed in accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act** and other applicable Provincial legislation.
- Policy 10.C.2.3.3** When developing or redeveloping leased, operated or owned facilities (buildings or structures) the Region will consider and apply the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines and Facility Accessibility Design Standards.
- Policy 10.C.2.3.4** The Region, in cooperation with the local municipalities, will update its Model Urban Design Guidelines to enhance the guidelines to incorporate cultural elements as defined in the Culture Plan.
- Policy 10.C.2.3.5** Local municipalities will support the enhancement of *creative cultural industries* and creative places by:
- a) Strengthening the identity and distinct nature of individually identified locally significant *cultural clusters* through the *development* of unique and recognizable thematic designs;
 - b) Incorporating public art in public facilities at the time of design, redesign or construction;
 - c) Developing partnerships with the cultural and business community to establish temporary gallery space in prominent downtown locations or in locally significant *cultural clusters*;
 - d) Supporting the use of public spaces such as parks, parking areas, roads, squares and other municipal property as non-traditional performance spaces.
- Policy 10.C.2.3.6** The Region will encourage and enable input from residents, visitors and the cultural community in Regional facility design as well as the purchase and installation of public art.

10.D Creative Identity

Niagara's culture is much larger than the built and natural heritage, art and creative industries. It also includes many intangible assets which are the unique stories and traditions that define a community's identity and create a sense of place. These assets are seen in the everyday activities of life, and reflect forms of traditional knowledge, languages, unique skills and abilities, festivals, artistic expression, contemporary creativity and history.

10.D.1 Objectives

Objective 10.D.1.1 The Region encourages, and where possible, supports efforts to raise awareness, build understanding and enhance the appreciation of culture and its power to build both vibrant, unique communities as well as a shared identity of Niagara.

10.D.2 Cultural Expression

Policy 10.D.2.1 The Region will review and revise where necessary current policies, funding and incentives programs to:

- a) Support creative people in Niagara;
- b) Support *creative cultural industries*, with a focus on locally defined *cultural clusters*;
- c) Support art in public places; and
- d) Support professional *development* partnerships between the business community and creative workers.

Policy 10.D.2.2 Local municipalities are encouraged to develop policies to enable the use of Section 37 of the **Planning Act** and will list 'Public Art' and 'public cultural facilities' as a community benefit.

Policy 10.D.2.3 The Region will examine a range of funding, partnership and collaboration models to support Public Art as part of the Region's commitment to culture.

Policy 10.D.2.4 The Region encourages the creation of public art that reflects its creativity, cultural diversity and history. Public art will be promoted by:

- a) Identifying a public art program with a specific mission, objectives (and a means of measuring their success), an appropriate funding model, arms-length artistic review panel, long-term maintenance, and a process to incorporate the consideration of Public Art as a matter of corporate practice at the Region;

- b) Working with local municipalities to identify important sites and opportunities (capital works projects, significant public or private sector *developments*) for public art installation; and,
- c) Encouraging the *development* of a public art funding program. The program would state when a percentage of a capital project should be required for public art and considerations for the expenditure of allocations.

10.D.3 Community Identities

- Policy 10.D.3.1** The Region will encourage the presentation of intangible elements of the community's identity through the use of visual and performing arts, literature, music, media, design, materials and techniques. The creation of a permanent record of these expressions will be supported, where possible.
- Policy 10.D.3.2** The Region will encourage and support efforts to highlight vibrant, unique geographic and cultural communities of Regional significance throughout Niagara. These efforts may include plaques and other permanent commemorations to physically manifest the stories and historical landscapes of Niagara.

10.E Cultural Tourism

Due to its ability to integrate communities throughout the Region and provide for a range of experiences, *cultural tourism* is well situated to capture the interests of visitors. Draws to urban and *rural areas* may include cultural facilities such as museums, theatres, sports venues, wineries, natural landscapes and vistas and festival.

10.E.1 Objectives

Objective 10.E.1.1 To promote, support and encourage tourism within the Region.

Objective 10.E.1.2 To foster and promote cooperation amongst Niagara Region, local municipalities, *creative cultural industries*, event and festival organizers, promoters and distributors of culture.

Objective 10.E.1.3 To promote cultural/ heritage experiences that attract local, regional and international visitors.

10.E.2 Policies

Policy 10.E.2.1.1 The Region shall encourage the growth of *cultural tourism* and encourage collaboration in the *cultural tourism* sector.

Policy 10.E.2.1.2 The Region will encourage the coordinated promotion of Niagara's cultural assets to tourists and residents.

10.F Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape

The Welland Canal was designated a National Historic Site as an event in 1929 and is a key physical structural element of the Niagara Region. The value of the Welland Canal lies in the combination of the operating canal and its major role in the shipping industry, its historic engineering works and buildings, open spaces, natural features, and *adjacent* diverse landscapes, which together constitute a cultural heritage resource of outstanding significance.

The Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape extends across associated local area municipalities and consists of both “relict” and “continuing” landscapes. Municipalities, upon additional study can further refine the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape within the municipality. The operating canal is an important transportation route for the movement of goods. Niagara Region recognizes the importance of the operating canal for this purpose and supports the Saint Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation in their management of the operating canal.

The Region will work with its partners and stakeholders to balance the bona fide operations of the Canal for shipping with an accessible Canal so that the landscapes, are maintained and improved, in terms of their cultural heritage, scenic quality, recreational and economic benefits.

10.F.1 Objectives

- Objective 10.F.1.1** To recognize the Welland Canal as an important transportation route for moving goods and supporting the economic, cultural and social growth of Niagara
- Objective 10.F.1.2** To recognize the importance of the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape as an asset that contributes to improving the quality of life and creating a sense of place within Niagara.
- Objective 10.F.1.3** To promote the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape as a multi-faceted cultural heritage destination that attracts local, regional, national and international visitors.
- Objective 10.F.1.4** To encourage and promote collaboration among stakeholders in the ongoing identification and preservation of *built heritage resources* of the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape.

10.F.2 Policies

- Policy 10.F.2.1.1** The Region encourages local municipalities to use, as appropriate, relevant Provincial legislation, including municipal designation under the Ontario Heritage Act, that enables the conservation of cultural heritage resources within the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape.

- Policy 10.F.2.1.2** The local municipalities that are located within the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape shall be encouraged to provide policy direction in their Official Plans for:
- a) open space, parks and recreation opportunities within the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape
 - b) the appropriate site and architectural design of properties that reflect themes found within the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape
 - c) the preservation of *built heritage resources*
 - d) *development, redevelopment or site alteration* on lands within the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape.
- Policy 10.F.2.1.3** The Region supports the conservation of significant *built heritage resources* and *archaeological resources*, as appropriate, to ensure that the heritage integrity of the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape is preserved and promoted.
- Policy 10.F.2.1.4** The Region encourages all stakeholders to work with senior levels of government to identify funds to preserve and enhance significant heritage resources within the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape.
- Policy 10.F.2.1.5** The Region encourages the continuing research of the industrial, social, economic, and environmental elements of the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape.
- Policy 10.F.2.1.6** The Region encourages collaboration with the local municipalities, the cultural sector and tourism marketing organizations in the promotion of the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape as an asset to tourists and residents.