



**NIAGARA** OFFICIAL PLAN

COMPETITIVE REGION



# COMPETITIVE REGION



## 4.1 The Agricultural System

The *agricultural system* contains a structure for the agricultural land base and the *agri-food network* that enables the agri-food sector to thrive.

The agricultural land base is comprised of *prime agricultural areas*, including *specialty crop areas*, and *rural lands*. The *agri-food network* includes *infrastructure*, services and

assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector. Farm stewardship facilitates agricultural protection and the environmental benefits of *natural heritage features* located throughout the *agricultural system*.

Together, the Region's *agricultural system* and *natural environment system* provide a significant contribution to Niagara's resilience and ability to adapt to *climate change*. The agricultural land base will be protected for the provision of healthy, local food for present and future generations. Farming will be productive, diverse, and sustainable.

**The objectives of this section are as follows:**

- a. facilitate a strong, diverse, and resilient agricultural economy;
- b. protect the region's agricultural land base;
- c. ensure agriculture is the predominant land use in *specialty crop areas* and *prime agricultural areas*;
- d. restrict and control non-agricultural uses to minimize potential conflicts;
- e. ensure the long-term sustainability and function of uses within the *agricultural system*;

### Niagara's Agricultural Economy

Niagara region is home to an active and vibrant farming sector, which includes a wide range of farming types including grape and tender fruit; greenhouse, nursery, floriculture operations; oilseeds and grain operations; livestock operations, and more. In Niagara, farmland generates over \$1.4 billion GDP from agriculture and has a high employment impact for the region.

- f. protect *specialty crop areas* from fragmentation;
- g. protect *prime agricultural areas* from fragmentation;
- h. protect and recognize *rural lands* as part of the *agricultural system*;
- i. provide for a limited amount of non-agricultural residential development on *rural lands*; and
- j. recognize and control changes to *existing uses* to ensure a viable *agricultural system*.

## 4.1.1 Region's Agricultural Land Base

- 4.1.1.1 The geographic continuity of the agricultural land base, as shown in Schedule F, and the functional and economic connections to the *agri-food network* will be maintained and enhanced in accordance with the policies of this section.
- 4.1.1.2 *Prime agricultural areas* and *specialty crop areas*, as shown on Schedule F, shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.

*Prime agricultural areas* are areas where *prime agricultural lands* predominate. *Specialty crop areas* shall be given the highest priority for protection, followed by Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 lands, and any associated Class 4 through seven lands within the *prime agricultural area*, in this order of priority.

- 4.1.1.3 *Settlement areas* are not permitted to expand into *specialty crop areas*.
- 4.1.1.4 An *agricultural system* has been identified in which all types, sizes, and intensities of *agricultural uses* and *normal farm practices* shall be promoted and protected in accordance with Provincial standards. Removal of land from *prime agricultural areas* may only occur for expansions or identification of *settlement areas* in accordance with Section 2.2.5 of this Plan. Revisions to the Greenbelt Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan boundaries and redesignation of *specialty crop areas* are prohibited.
- 4.1.1.5 The removal of topsoil in *specialty crop areas*, *prime agricultural areas*, and *rural lands* is discouraged. Further, the placement of fill in *specialty crop areas* and *prime agricultural areas* is prohibited except for *normal farm practices* conducted in accordance with Ontario Regulation 409/19 and the Rules for Soil Management and Excess Soil Quality Standards. Local Area Municipalities are encouraged to enact by-laws to regulate the placement of fill in accordance with Section 3.7 of this Plan.



## 4.1.2 Specialty Crop Areas and Prime Agricultural Areas

- 4.1.2.1 *Specialty crop areas* shall not be redesignated in official plans for non-agricultural uses. Non-agricultural uses may be permitted subject to Policies 4.2 to 4.6 of the Greenbelt Plan and Section 4.1.3 of this Plan.
- 4.1.2.2 In *specialty crop areas*, all *existing uses* lawfully used for such purpose prior to December 16, 2004 are permitted. In *specialty crop areas*, single detached dwellings and accessory structures are permitted on existing lots of record, provided they were zoned for such or permitted through other regulation as of December 16, 2004.
- 4.1.2.3 In *specialty crop areas* and *prime agricultural areas*, all types, sizes and intensities of *agricultural uses* and *normal farm practices* shall be promoted and protected and a full range of *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* are permitted.
- 4.1.2.4 *Prime agricultural areas* within the Greenbelt Plan as identified on Schedule F are subject to the *prime agricultural area* policies of this Plan.

## 4.1.3 Minimize Conflicts of Non-Agricultural Uses

- 4.1.3.1 Non-agricultural uses should not be located in *specialty crop areas* or *prime agricultural areas*.
- 4.1.3.2 Non-agricultural uses must address Greenbelt Plan policies for non-agricultural uses in *specialty crop areas* and *prime agricultural areas*.
- 4.1.3.3 Applications for non-agricultural uses shall require completion of an *agricultural impact assessment*.
- 4.1.3.4 In *specialty crop areas* lands shall not be redesignated in official plans for non-agricultural uses.
- 4.1.3.5 In *prime agricultural areas* lands shall not be redesignated in official plans for non-agricultural uses except for:
- a. refinements to the *prime agricultural area* and *rural lands* designations, subject to the policies of Section 5.3 of the Greenbelt Plan; or
  - b. *settlement area* boundary expansions, subject to Policies 3.4.1 to 3.4.5 of the Greenbelt Plan.
- 4.1.3.6 New land uses in *specialty crop areas* and *prime agricultural areas*, including the creation of lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities, shall comply with the *minimum distance separation formulae*.

**4.1.3.7** Where *agricultural uses* and non-agricultural uses *interface*, land use compatibility shall be achieved by avoiding or, where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts on the *agricultural system*, by incorporating measures as part of new or expanding non-agricultural uses, as appropriate, within the area being developed.

## **4.1.4 Lot Creation and Related Development Within the Agricultural System**

**4.1.4.1** Within the *prime agricultural area*, including the protected countryside of the Greenbelt Plan which also includes *specialty crop area*, lot creation is discouraged and may only be permitted in accordance with the policies in Sections 4.1.4, 4.1.5 and 4.1.6 of this Plan.

**4.1.4.2** Proposed residential lots being considered under Sections 4.1.5 and 4.1.6 for a consent within the agricultural land base must meet the following conditions:

- a. the size of any new lot shall be an area of 0.4 hectares except to the extent of any additional area deemed necessary to support an on-site private water supply and long-term operation of a private sewage disposal system as determined by Provincial and Regional requirements;
- b. any new lot has an adequate groundwater or other water supply, in compliance with Provincial requirements;
- c. any new lot has sufficient frontage on an existing publicly-maintained road;
- d. where possible, joint use should be made of the existing road access to the farm operation;
- e. road access to any new lot does not create a traffic hazard because of limited sight lines on curves or grades or proximity to intersections; and
- f. proposed lots shall be located and configured to minimize impacts on surrounding farming operations.

**4.1.4.3** All proposed *development* and uses will include sustainable on-site private water supply and private sewage disposal systems subject to applicable Provincial and Regional regulations and associated approvals.

## 4.1.5 Lot Creation in Specialty Crop Areas

4.1.5.1 In the *specialty crop areas*, consents to convey may be permitted only in accordance with the following provisions and the general consent provisions in Policy 4.1.4.2. Within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, as amended from time to time, shall prevail unless the following policies are more restrictive, then the more restrictive policies shall prevail.

- a. the consent is supported through a planning justification report;
- b. the consent is for an *agricultural use* where the severed and retained lots are intended for *agricultural uses* and provided the minimum lot size is 16 hectares for both the severed and retained lots;
- c. the consent is for an *agriculture-related use*, provided that any new lot shall be limited to the minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services;
- d. the consent is for acquiring land for public *infrastructure* purposes, where the facility or corridor cannot be accommodated through the use of easements or rights of way, provided that:
  - i. the need has been demonstrated and it has been established that there is no reasonable alternative; and
  - ii. an *agricultural impact assessment* has been completed by a qualified professional;
- e. the consent is for facilitating conveyances to public bodies or non-profit entities for natural heritage conservation, provided it does not create a separate lot for a residential dwelling;
- f. the consent is for *legal or technical reasons* as determined by Local Area Municipalities, provided they do not create a separate lot for a residential dwelling, there is no increased fragmentation of a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*, and complies with other policies in this Plan; and
- g. the consent is for a *residence surplus to a farming operation* as outlined in Policy 4.1.5.2.

4.1.5.2 The severance of a *residence surplus to a farming operation* may be permitted under the following circumstances:

- a. the proposed lot contains a habitable residence, which existed as of December 16, 2004, that is rendered surplus as a result of farm consolidation;

- b. the size of any new lot shall be an area of 0.4 hectares except to the extent of any additional area deemed necessary to support an on-site private water supply and private sewage disposal system as determined by Provincial and Regional requirements to a maximum of one hectare;
  - i. proposals that exceed one hectare may be considered subject to an amendment to this Plan; and
- c. to reduce fragmentation of the agricultural land base, the retained lot shall be merged with an abutting parcel. Where merging of two lots is not possible, the retained farm parcel shall be zoned to preclude its use for residential purposes.

## 4.1.6 Lot Creation in Prime Agricultural Areas

4.1.6.1 In *prime agricultural areas* outside of *specialty crop areas*, consents to convey may be permitted only in those circumstances set out in the following provisions and the general consent provisions of Policy 4.1.4.2:

- a. the consent is for *agricultural uses*, subject to the following criteria:
  - i. the resulting parcels are both for *agricultural uses*;
  - ii. the minimum lot size for the severed and retained lot is 40 ha, the resulting parcels meet the Local official plan and agriculture zoning provisions, and:
    - 1. is appropriate for the farming activities proposed;
    - 2. is suited to the particular location and common in the area; and
    - 3. provides some flexibility for changes in the agricultural operation.
- b. the consent is for *agriculture-related use* subject to the following criteria:
  - i. any new lot shall be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the proposed use and appropriate sewage and water services; and
  - ii. any new lot shall be zoned to preclude residential uses in perpetuity.
- c. the consent is for a *residence surplus to a farming operation* as outlined in Policy 4.1.6.2;
- d. the consent is for a lot adjustment for *legal or technical reasons*; or
- e. the consent is for public *infrastructure*, where the facility or corridor cannot be accommodated through the use of easements or rights-of-way.

**4.1.6.2** The severance of a *residence surplus to a farming operation* may be permitted under the following circumstances:

- a. the lot contains a habitable residence, which existed as of June 16, 2006, that is rendered surplus as a result of farm consolidation;
- b. the size of any new lot shall be an area of 0.4 hectares except to the extent of any additional area deemed necessary to support an on-site private water supply and private sewage disposal system as determined by Provincial and Regional requirements to a maximum of one hectare;
  - i. proposals that exceed one hectare may be considered subject to an amendment to this plan; and
- c. to reduce fragmentation of the agricultural land base, the retained lot shall be merged with an abutting parcel. Where merging of two lots is not possible, the retained farm parcel shall be zoned to preclude its use for residential purposes.

## **4.1.7 A Resilient Agricultural Economy**

**4.1.7.1** The Region encourages the continued operation and expansion of agricultural infrastructure including irrigation and drainage systems as shown in Appendix 1.

**4.1.7.2** Temporary accommodation for seasonal or full-time farm labour may be permitted where:

- a. the size and/or nature of the agricultural operations makes the employment of such help necessary;
- b. such temporary accommodation does not have a significant effect on the tillable area of the agricultural operation or its viability; and
- c. the severance of a temporary accommodation for seasonal or full-time farm labour is not permitted.

### **Agri-Food Strategy**

Agri-food is a term that refers to all forms of commercial agricultural activity and all stages of food and beverage processing. The Niagara region agri-food sector contributes significantly to the economic prosperity and quality of life of residents. The strategy looks to support agri-food prosperity and sustainability.



4.1.7.3 *Agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* are permitted in the following areas:

- a. *specialty crop areas*;
- b. *prime agricultural areas*; and
- c. *rural lands*.

**Table 4-1 Agricultural Uses, Agriculture-Related Uses and On-Farm Diversified Uses**

Type of Use	Agricultural Uses	Agriculture-Related Uses	On-Farm Diversified Uses
Description	Growing of crops or raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures	May or may not be on a farm; farm-related commercial or industrial use; compatible with surrounding agricultural operations; directly related to farms in the area; supports agriculture, provides products or services to farms; benefits from proximity to farms	On a farm; secondary use; limited in area; includes, but is not limited to, home occupations, home industries, <i>agri-tourism uses</i> and value-added uses; compatible with surrounding agricultural operations
Examples include, but are not limited to	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. cropland</li> <li>b. pastureland</li> <li>c. barns and other associated buildings and structures</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. processing of agricultural products</li> <li>b. farm equipment repair shop</li> <li>c. agriculture research centre</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>agri-tourism uses</i></li> <li>b. pick-your-own operation</li> <li>c. home occupations</li> </ol>

4.1.7.4 Proposed *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be *compatible* with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations.

4.1.7.5 *Agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be consistent with the provisions of the Provincial Policy Statement, and conform to the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan, and Niagara Escarpment Plan.

- 4.1.7.6** *On-farm diversified uses* shall be:
- a. located on a farm;
  - b. secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property;
  - c. limited in area; and
  - d. *compatible* with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations.
- 4.1.7.7** The appropriate scale for *on-farm diversified uses* may vary depending on the type of use and whether the activities are located in the *specialty crop area* or in other *prime agricultural areas*.
- 4.1.7.8** The following criteria shall be considered when reviewing applications for proposed *agriculture-related uses*:
- a. whether the proposed activity is more appropriately located in a nearby *settlement area* or on *rural lands*;
  - b. whether the use is required for or in close proximity to the agricultural operation for it to support and complement the agricultural activity;
  - c. the extent to which the use is *compatible* with the existing farming operation and surrounding farming operations;
  - d. whether the scale of the activity is appropriate to the site and farming operation;
  - e. whether the use is consistent with and maintains the character of the agricultural area;
  - f. the use does not generate potentially conflicting off-site impacts;
  - g. the activity does not include a new residential use;
  - h. the use is limited to low water and low effluent producing uses and the site is capable of accommodating the use on private water and private sewage treatment systems;
  - i. the use does not require significant improvements to *infrastructure*; and
  - j. the use complies with all other applicable provisions of this Plan.
- 4.1.7.9** Within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area, the policies contained in the Niagara Escarpment Plan apply. *Agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* must meet the permitted uses, development criteria and policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan.
- 4.1.7.10** Local Area Municipalities are encouraged to utilize site plan control to regulate the impact of *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses*, in relation to entrances, parking and loading facilities, signage, grading and storm water drainage, buffering and landscaping, and landscape protection.

## 4.1.8 Rural Lands as Part of the Agricultural System

- 4.1.8.1 The predominant use of *rural lands* will continue to be agriculture, but some non-agricultural related development may be permitted subject to the policies in Sections 4.1.8 and 4.1.9.
- 4.1.8.2 Permitted uses on *rural lands* include:
- a. management or use of resources in accordance with all other applicable provisions of this Plan;
  - b. limited residential development in accordance with Section 4.1.9;
  - c. *agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses, normal farm practices*, in accordance with this section;
  - d. home occupations and home industries in accordance with Local official plan and zoning by-law provisions;
  - e. cemeteries; and
  - f. other uses not described in this chapter may be permitted, subject to an amendment to this Plan.
- 4.1.8.3 The *rural lands* along the Lake Erie shoreline contain historic patterns of seasonal and permanent residential development. These uses and expansions thereof continue to be permitted in accordance with Local official plans and zoning by-law provisions.

## 4.1.9 Non-Agricultural Uses on Rural Lands

- 4.1.9.1 Limited non-agricultural residential development may be permitted on *rural lands* in accordance with the policies of this section.
- 4.1.9.2 Proposals for non-agricultural residential development on *rural lands* must meet the following criteria and the general consent provisions in Policy 4.1.4.2, in addition to the other requirements of this Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Local official plan:
- a. maximum of three new lots (in addition to the retained lot) may be permitted on each lot in existence as of June 16, 2006;
  - b. the minimum size of the proposed and retained lots shall each be one hectare unless it is determined through a hydrogeological study, that considers potential cumulative impacts, that a smaller size lot will adequately accommodate private water and sewage treatment facilities for long-term operation but not be less than 0.4 hectares;

- c. the *development* will be at a scale and density suitable to the physical characteristics of the site;
- d. soil and drainage conditions are suitable and permit the proper siting of buildings, the supply of potable water and the installation and long-term operation of an adequate means of waste disposal;
- e. the proposed *development* will be consistent with Section 3.1; and
- f. proposed *developments* must be appropriately separated and protected from:
  - i. incompatible land uses such as existing pits and quarries;
  - ii. *mineral aggregate resources* recognized in this Plan;
  - iii. livestock operations and anaerobic digesters, in accordance with the *minimum distance separation formulae*;
  - iv. existing and former solid waste sites;
  - v. major existing and proposed transportation facilities; and
  - vi. employment uses.

#### 4.1.10 Non-Conforming Uses in the Agricultural System

- 4.1.10.1 This Plan shall not prohibit the continued operation of legally established uses, such as residential, commercial, employment, *agricultural*, and *institutional uses*.
- 4.1.10.2 Expansions to existing buildings and structures, accessory structures and *existing uses*, as well as conversions or *redevelopment* of legally *existing uses* that bring the use more into conformity with this Plan, are permitted subject to demonstration of the following:
  - a. new municipal services are not required;
  - b. the proposal does not expand into *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*, unless there is no other alternative in which case any expansion shall be limited in scope and kept within close geographical proximity to the existing structure;
  - c. if applicable, the proposed new use complies with the *Specialty Crop Guidelines*, as amended from time to time;
  - d. for conversions or *redevelopments* only, the completion of an *agricultural impact assessment* by a qualified professional;
  - e. the proposal does not result in the intrusion of new incompatible uses; and
  - f. the proposed use is in accordance with the *minimum distance separation formulae*.



- 4.1.10.3** Within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, the Niagara Escarpment Plan Policies also apply to *existing uses*.
- 4.1.10.4** In accordance with the developed *shoreline area* policies of the Greenbelt Plan and Growth Plan, notwithstanding Sections 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.5, 4.1.6, 4.1.8, and 4.1.9 of this Plan, infill *development, redevelopment*, and resort development is permitted in developed *shoreline areas* of Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, and the Niagara River that are designated or zoned for concentrations of *development* as of July 1, 2017, subject to the following requirements. The *development* will:
- a. enhance or be integrated with existing or proposed parks and trails, such as the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, and will enhance ongoing or planned stewardship and remediation efforts;
  - b. restore, to the maximum extent possible, the ecological features and functions in developed *shoreline areas*; and
  - c. in the case of *redevelopment* and resort development:
    - i. establish, or increase the extent and width of, a *vegetation protection zone* along the shoreline to a minimum of 30 metres;
    - ii. increase the extent of *fish habitat* in the littoral zone;
    - iii. be planned, designed, and constructed to protect *hydrologic functions*, minimize erosion, and avoid or mitigate sedimentation and the introduction of nutrient or other pollutants into the lake;
    - iv. exclude shoreline structures that will impede the natural flow of water or exacerbate algae concerns along the shoreline;
    - v. enhance the ability of native plants and animals to use the shoreline as both *wildlife habitat* and a movement corridor;
    - vi. use lot-level stormwater controls to reduce stormwater runoff volumes and pollutant loadings;
    - vii. use natural shoreline treatments, where practical, for shoreline stabilization, erosion control, or protection;
    - viii. meet other criteria and direction set out in applicable *watershed planning* and *subwatershed plans*;
    - ix. be serviced by *sewage works* which reduce nutrient inputs to groundwater and the receiving water body from baseline levels; and
    - x. demonstrate available capacity in the receiving water body based on inputs from existing and approved *development*.

## 4.2 Planning for Employment

The Region is required to plan for and protect lands to accommodate the Province's forecasted employment growth coming to Niagara. These lands will play a critical role in the ability to retain and attract employment investment that contributes to Niagara's economic competitiveness on provincial, national, and global scales. The provision of lands for employment is an important component of *complete communities*.

### Employment Lands and Employment Areas

The Region maps and develops policies for *employment areas*. Local Area Municipalities map and develop policies for *employment lands*.

The policies encourage employment development in *urban areas* and recognizes the contribution of rural employment in the agricultural community toward Niagara's prosperity. Emphasis is on fostering communities that attract people, jobs, and investment, while protecting employment uses for the long-term.

#### The objectives of this section are as follows:

- a. designate *employment areas* for long-term protection and plan for forecasted employment growth within *employment areas*;
- b. maximize the economic development potential of the *Niagara Economic Centre* and *Niagara Economic Zone*;
- c. identify and consider future *employment areas* in long-term planning for *settlement area* expansion;
- d. plan *employment lands* to enhance economic resilience through a diversified economy;
- e. guide future *redevelopment* of *employment lands*;
- f. protect *airport* and *aerodrome* lands short-term and long-term operational needs;
- g. enhance rural *employment lands* within *rural settlements* and recognize rural *employment lands* outside of *rural settlements*; and
- h. identify opportunities for strategic investments that further economic prosperity.

## 4.2.1 Employment Area Types and Densities

- 4.2.1.1 Niagara's *employment areas* are shown on Schedules B and G.
- 4.2.1.2 The following are prohibited in all *employment areas*:
- a. residential uses;
  - b. *major retail / major commercial uses*; and
  - c. *major office uses*, except *major office uses* are permitted on *employment area* lands within a *strategic growth area*.
- 4.2.1.3 *Sensitive land uses* that are not ancillary to the primary employment use shall be limited in *employment areas* and only permitted if such use can comply with D-6 Guidelines.
- 4.2.1.4 *Employment areas* are classified in three types, as identified on Schedule G and Table 4-2.
- 4.2.1.5 Core *employment areas* are clusters of traditional employment uses, such as industrial, manufacturing, construction, transportation and warehousing. Core *employment areas* shall be protected and planned for similar employment uses, *major facilities*, and *freight-supportive* forms of *development* and *redevelopment*. *Major institutional uses* are prohibited in core *employment areas*.
- 4.2.1.6 Dynamic *employment areas* are clusters of traditional and lighter industrial uses with a broader mix of employment uses including *office parks* and *institutional uses* that can function without limiting the viability of one another. A mix of complementary employment uses will be encouraged through *development* or *redevelopment* within dynamic *employment areas* that do not limit the ability for other employment uses within the *employment area* to grow or expand.
- 4.2.1.7 Knowledge and Innovation *employment areas* are clusters of higher density employment uses, including *office parks*, and *major institutional uses*. Knowledge and Innovation *employment areas* will:
- a. contain a mix of complementary land uses to facilitate partnerships and promote the sharing of ideas and information;
  - b. accommodate *built form* that supports nearby *major institutional uses* and *major office uses* where permitted;
  - c. attain high-quality urban design;
  - d. encourage densities that are *transit-supportive*; and
  - e. incorporate *active transportation* facilities along *active transportation* networks.

4.2.1.8 Local Area Municipalities shall map *employment areas* shown on Schedule G in Local official plans.

4.2.1.9 The Region and Local Area Municipalities shall plan for existing *employment areas* to achieve the minimum density targets to 2051 identified in Table 4-2.

**Table 4-2 Employment Area Minimum Density Targets to 2051**

Employment Area Sub-Grouping	Local Area Municipality	Employment Area (see Schedule G)	Minimum Overall Density Target (jobs per hectare)
Core	Fort Erie	FE-1 Stevensville Industrial Cell	15 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Fort Erie	FE-2 International Peace Bridge Trade Hub	15 jobs/ha
Core	Fort Erie	FE-3 Bridgeburg Rail Zone	10 jobs/ha
Core	Grimsby	GRM-1 West Niagara QEW Corridor	45 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Grimsby	GRM-2 Casablanca-East QEW Corridor	45 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Grimsby	GRM-3 Main Street East Employment District	40 jobs/ha
Core	Lincoln	LIN-1 Beamsville GO Precinct	30 jobs/ha
Core	Lincoln	LIN-2 King Street at Bartlett Junction	10 jobs/ha
Core	Niagara Falls	NF-1 Highway 405 Employment Area	15 jobs/ha



<b>Employment Area Sub-Grouping</b>	<b>Local Area Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Area (see Schedule G)</b>	<b>Minimum Overall Density Target (jobs per hectare)</b>
Core	Niagara Falls	NF-2 North Niagara Falls Secure Storage Employment Area	15 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Niagara Falls	NF-3 QEW / 420 Employment Area	25 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Niagara Falls	NF-4 QEW Centre Employment Area	50 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Niagara Falls	NF-5 Montrose Road Industrial Area	20 jobs/ha
Core	Niagara Falls	NF-6 Dorchester Road Employment Area	45 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Niagara Falls	NF-7 Stanley Avenue Business Park	15 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Niagara-on-the-Lake	NOTL-1 Virgil Business Park	35 jobs/ha
Knowledge and Innovation	Niagara-on-the-Lake	NOTL-2 Glendale Momentum District	60 jobs/ha
Core	Port Colborne	PC-1 Port Colborne West Transshipment Terminal	10 jobs/ha
Core	Port Colborne	PC-2 Port Colborne East Transshipment Terminal	25 jobs/ha
Core	St. Catharines	STC-1 Port Weller Employment Area	25 jobs/ha

<b>Employment Area Sub-Grouping</b>	<b>Local Area Municipality</b>	<b>Employment Area (see Schedule G)</b>	<b>Minimum Overall Density Target (jobs per hectare)</b>
Knowledge and Innovation	St. Catharines	STC-2 Hannover Employment Area	145 jobs/ha
Dynamic	St. Catharines	STC-3 Hiscott Employment Area	95 jobs/ha
Dynamic	St. Catharines	STC-4 Bunting / Welland / Eastchester / Cushman Road Employment Area	35 jobs/ha
Dynamic	St. Catharines	STC-5 West End Employment Area	45 jobs/ha
Core	St. Catharines	STC-6 Glendale Avenue East Employment Area	30 jobs/ha
Knowledge and Innovation	Thorold	THO-1 Brock District University Innovation Park	80 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Thorold	THO-2 McCleary Highway 58 Industrial Park	40 jobs/ha
Core	Thorold	THO-3 Thorold Tunnel Crossing	40 jobs/ha
Core	Thorold	THO-4 Thorold South Allanburg Industrial Park	10 jobs/ha

Employment Area Sub-Grouping	Local Area Municipality	Employment Area (see Schedule G)	Minimum Overall Density Target (jobs per hectare)
Dynamic	Welland	WEL-1 North Woodlawn Hospitality Node	40 jobs/ha
Core	Welland	WEL-2 South Woodlawn Industrial Niche	10 jobs/ha
Core	Welland	WEL-3 Highway 140 Canalside Artery	15 jobs/ha
Dynamic	Welland	WEL-4 Flatwater Rally Employment Area	20 jobs/ha
Core	West Lincoln	WL-1 Smithville Industrial District	20 jobs/ha

- 4.2.1.10** *Employment area* minimum density targets established in this Plan shall be implemented in Local official plans and zoning-by-laws, and used to promote employment *development* and *redevelopment* that supports achievement of the target.
- 4.2.1.11** Conversion of lands within *employment areas* shall not be permitted except during the Region’s *municipal comprehensive review*. The Region will work with Local Area Municipalities to review and update *employment area* minimum density targets through the Region’s *municipal comprehensive review*.
- 4.2.1.12** Local Area Municipalities shall use planning tools identified in policies 4.2.4.2 and 4.2.4.3 to achieve land use compatibility between *employment areas* and non-employment lands.
- 4.2.1.13** *Employment areas* will be promoted by aligning land use planning and economic development strategies to retain and attract investment.
- 4.2.1.14** *Employment areas* near *major goods movement facilities and corridors* associated with the movement of goods, such as international border crossings, the Welland Canal, *rail* and *marine facilities*, and Provincial highways, shall be protected and planned for employment uses.

- 4.2.1.15 The Region and Local Area Municipalities may support employment *development* and *redevelopment* serviced through sustainable private services, including dry industrial development, within *employment areas* where there are constraints to *municipal water and wastewater systems/services*, provided that in *settlement areas*, *individual on-site sewage services* and *individual on-site water services* are only used for infilling and minor rounding out of existing development.
- 4.2.1.16 Land use permissions approved through a secondary plan or equivalent process prior to the approval of this Plan shall continue to apply within *employment areas*.

## 4.2.2 Niagara Economic Centre and Zone

- 4.2.2.1 The *Niagara Economic Gateway* is comprised of the total geographic area of the Local Area Municipalities that are a part of the *Niagara Economic Centre* or *Niagara Economic Zone*, including all *major goods movement facilities and corridors* as shown in Schedule G.
- 4.2.2.2 The Region will work with the other levels of government to prioritize improvements to *major goods movement facilities and corridors* and *planned corridors* within the *Niagara Economic Gateway* to focus on:
- within *settlement areas*, the *development* and *redevelopment* of *major facilities*, manufacturing, manufacturing-related and supply chain facilities;
  - supporting economic diversity and promoting increased opportunities for cross-border trade, movement of goods, and tourism.
- 4.2.2.3 Lands within the *Niagara Economic Gateway* are preferred for the planning of future *employment areas* in accordance with Policy 4.2.3.2. Lands within the *Niagara Economic Zone* and the *Niagara Economic Centre* are preferred for *provincially significant employment zones*.
- 4.2.2.4 Within the *Niagara Economic Centre*, *employment lands* and *employment areas* should be planned to support the concept of a *multimodal* hub along the Welland Canal.

## 4.2.3 Future Employment Areas

- 4.2.3.1 Future *employment areas* are shown conceptually in Appendix 2 due to their location within the *Niagara Economic Gateway* and proximity to *major goods movement facilities and corridors*, and/or near *planned corridors*.



- 4.2.3.2** Future *employment areas* are outside of existing *settlement areas* and may be planned for long-term protection, provided lands are not designated beyond 2051.
- 4.2.3.3** Future *employment areas* may be considered for inclusion within the *urban area* through a *municipal comprehensive review*.
- 4.2.3.4** The Region will work with Local Area Municipalities to review and evaluate any proposal to protect future *employment areas* using the following considerations:
- a. proposed lands are adjacent to the *urban areas*;
  - b. proposed lands are located within the *Niagara Economic Gateway*;
  - c. proposed lands are not located within the Greenbelt Plan Area and/or Niagara Escarpment Plan Area;
  - d. proposed lands consist of large contiguous parcels conducive for large-scale employment uses;
  - e. proposed lands can be or have the ability to be serviced by *municipal water and wastewater systems/services* and *public service facilities*;
  - f. proposed lands have no major restrictions by *natural heritage systems*, *water resource systems*, or other undevelopable and human-made features;
  - g. proposed lands will not adversely impact the *agricultural system* and/or *agri-food network*;
  - h. proposed lands may be a *brownfield* site, have known contamination, or have other hazardous conditions;
  - i. proposed lands have advantageous access to *major goods movement facilities and corridors* and/or *planned corridors*; and
  - j. proposed lands are not located near other land uses that may limit employment viability, growth, or expansion, including *minimum distance separation formulae* and D-6 Guideline requirements.

## **4.2.4 Employment Lands**

- 4.2.4.1** The Region will support Locally identified *employment lands* by:
- a. improving *connectivity* with transit and *active transportation* networks;
  - b. providing for an appropriate mix of amenities and open space to serve the workforce;
  - c. planning for the *intensification* of employment uses;

- d. ensuring that the introduction of non-employment uses, if permitted by other policies in this Plan, would be limited and not negatively impact the primary function of the area; and
- e. encouraging approaches to transportation demand management that reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicle use.

**4.2.4.2** *Major facilities* and *sensitive land uses* shall be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential *adverse effects* from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of *major facilities* in accordance with Provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

**4.2.4.3** Where avoidance is not possible in accordance with Policy 4.2.4.2, planning authorities shall protect the long-term viability of existing or planned industrial, manufacturing or other uses that are vulnerable to encroachment by ensuring that the planning and *development* of proposed adjacent *sensitive land uses* are only permitted if the following are demonstrated in accordance with Provincial guidelines, standards and procedures:

- a. there is an identified need for the proposed use;
- b. alternative locations for the proposed use have been evaluated and there are no reasonable alternative locations;
- c. adverse effects to the proposed *sensitive land use* are minimized and mitigated; and
- d. potential impacts to industrial, manufacturing or other uses are minimized and mitigated.

**4.2.4.4** Within *employment lands*, retail and office uses will be directed to locations that support *active transportation* and have existing or planned transit.

**4.2.4.5** The retail sector will be supported by promoting *compact built form* and *intensification* of retail and service uses and areas and encouraging the integration of those uses with other land uses to support the achievement of *complete communities*.

**4.2.4.6** *Major office* and appropriate *major institutional* development will be directed to the Downtown St. Catharines *Urban Growth Centre*, *protected major transit station areas* or other *strategic growth areas* with existing or planned *frequent transit service*.

**4.2.4.7** Sustainable practices will be encouraged, such as *green infrastructure* and *low impact development*, to address the impacts of *climate change*.

- 4.2.4.8 *Employment lands* planned for industrial or manufacturing uses should include an appropriate transition to adjacent non-employment lands in accordance with Section 6.2.
- 4.2.4.9 Local Area Municipalities should encourage *intensification* on designated *employment lands*, where appropriate, through zoning and economic development initiatives, including:
- a. expansion to employment uses and/or land operations; and
  - b. reuse of buildings and *infrastructure* for new employment uses.
- 4.2.4.10 Notwithstanding Policy 7.12.2.5, *development* applications within a two kilometer radius of the Cytec Canada Inc. facility in Niagara Falls shall be subject to Policy 4.2.1.11 of this Plan, except for the lands currently designated Neighbourhood Commercial in the local official plan.

## 4.2.5 Redevelopment of Employment Lands

- 4.2.5.1 Any proposed *redevelopment* of non-employment uses on *employment land*, outside of *employment areas*, shall retain space for a similar number of jobs to remain accommodated on site.
- 4.2.5.2 Local official plans may contain criteria for *employment land redevelopment* to non-employment uses outside of an *employment area*. If Local criteria are unavailable, the Region and Local Area Municipalities may use the Region's Employment Land Redevelopment Criteria Guideline identified in Appendix 3.
- 4.2.5.3 The Region and Local Area Municipalities shall discourage any *redevelopment* of *employment land* that may restrict the ability for nearby existing or planned employment uses to operate or expand.

## 4.2.6 Airport and Aerodrome Lands

- 4.2.6.1 Niagara's *airport* and *aerodrome* lands are shown on Schedule G.
- 4.2.6.2 The Region and Local Area Municipalities shall consult with applicable *airport* or *aerodrome* authorities at the time any planning matter arises that may impact the ability for the facilities to operate and expand.
- 4.2.6.3 The Region recognizes the Niagara District Airport as a non-curfew *airport* of entry. The *airport* and its associated lands as mapped in accordance with Federally approved Airport Zoning Regulation (SOR/84-901), as amended, on Schedule G will be supported as an economic contributor to the *regional market area* and is a valued component of Niagara's *transportation system*.

- 4.2.6.4** Expansions to *airport* and *aerodrome* lands may be serviced by *municipal water and wastewater systems/services* or sustainable private services, where appropriate.
- 4.2.6.5** Land use permissions and zoning for lands within the *airport's* area of influence shall maintain the Federal Government's recommended Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) contours where applicable and be *compatible* with the operations of the *airport*.
- 4.2.6.6** Federal, Provincial, and Municipal policies and guidelines apply where *sensitive land uses* are proposed near existing or planned *airports* and *aerodromes*.
- 4.2.6.7** Conflict between *airport* lands and surrounding land uses shall be minimized to ensure:
- a. there will be no negative impact on *airport* operations and viability;
  - b. an expansion of *airport* operations will not be limited;
  - c. land uses in the *airport's* area of influence, as shown in Local official plans, in conformity with this Plan, will not cause a potential aviation hazard; and
  - d. land uses in the *airport's* area of influence, as shown in Local official plans, in conformity with this Plan, will not limit existing and/or the expansion of *airport* operations.
- 4.2.6.8** The Region and Local Area Municipalities will work with the Federal Government to expedite the construction of *airport* related uses on *airport* lands and improve *transportation system* connections to *airports*.

## **4.2.7 Rural Employment Lands within Rural Settlements**

- 4.2.7.1** The Region and Local Area Municipalities should support rural employment within *rural settlements* by:
- a. ensuring sufficient rural *employment land* is available to accommodate forecasted employment within *rural settlements*;
  - b. providing opportunities for rural employment clusters and more intensive rural employment uses within *rural settlements* to build synergies;
  - c. supporting rural character and community, and leveraging rural amenities and assets; and
  - d. using rural *infrastructure* and *public service facilities* efficiently.
- 4.2.7.2** In directing *development* to *rural settlements*, Local Area Municipalities shall consider rural characteristics, the scale of *development*, and provision of appropriate service levels.



## 4.2.8 Existing Rural Employment Areas

- 4.2.8.1 Existing rural *employment areas* are shown on Schedule G. These rural *employment areas* are located outside of *settlement areas*, on *rural lands* and are designated for employment uses within a Local official plan.
- 4.2.8.2 Uses within rural *employment areas* shall be serviced by private water and wastewater systems or have minimal water and wastewater requirements.
- 4.2.8.3 Any new *development* within a rural *employment area* shall be subject to the land use permissions of the Local official plan and site plan control. Applications will require submission of required studies identified at the time of pre-consultation. The Region shall be circulated on all site plan control applications for *development* identified within the rural *employment area*.
- 4.2.8.4 Expansion to uses in rural *employment areas*, permitted in the Local official plan, may be permitted to support the immediate needs of the existing business and if *compatible* with surrounding uses.
- 4.2.8.5 Rural *employment areas* may be subject to Policies 4.2.3.1 - 4.2.3.4 for consideration as future *employment areas*.

## 4.2.9 Strategic Investments for Economic Prosperity

- 4.2.9.1 Planning for employment will align with the Region's Master Servicing and Transportation Master Plans.
- 4.2.9.2 *Municipal water and wastewater systems/services* and *infrastructure* to *employment areas* will be prioritized by the Region and Local Area Municipalities.
- 4.2.9.3 The Region and Local Area Municipalities will work with the Province to plan for and expedite improvements to major goods movement facilities and corridors and *planned corridors* to support *freight-supportive* employment *development* and *redevelopment*.

## 4.3 Mineral Aggregate Resources

*Mineral aggregate resources*, such as sand, gravel, stone, and shale, are located throughout Niagara Region. These resources are finite and must be protected from incompatible land uses or uses that would limit their extraction in the future.

The Province provides direction to municipalities that as much of the *mineral aggregate resource* as is realistically possible, shall be made available as close to market as possible.

The extraction, processing, and transportation of *mineral aggregate resources* must take place in a manner that minimizes social, economic, and environmental impacts. This includes defining haul routes and managing truck traffic, conserving and recycling *mineral aggregate resources*, and rehabilitating pits and quarries.

The objectives of this section are as follows:

- a. protect *mineral aggregate resources*;
- b. protect existing *mineral aggregate operations*;
- c. provide for efficient extraction of *mineral aggregate resources*;
- d. minimize negative impacts of proposed *mineral aggregate operations*;
- e. define haul routes and manage aggregate truck traffic;
- f. ensure compatible and sustainable rehabilitation;
- g. conserve and recycle aggregates and manage *excess soil*;
- h. facilitate temporary *mineral aggregate operations*;
- i. locate *mineral aggregate operations* to minimize impacts on other significant resources and features;
- j. coordinate with the Niagara Escarpment Commission on applications within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area; and
- k. provide an efficient, comprehensive planning review.

### Importance of Mineral Aggregate Resources

*Mineral aggregate resources* are used in the construction of homes, roads, highways, railways, bridges, and airports. They are also used to manufacture products like glass, coated paper, paint, fertilizers, health care products, and pharmaceuticals.

## 4.3.1 Mineral Aggregate Resources

- 4.3.1.1 Schedule H of this Plan identifies where known *deposits of mineral aggregate resources* are located in the Region based on Provincial mapping.
- 4.3.1.2 Updates to Schedule H based on new *mineral aggregate resource* mapping from the Province will not require an amendment to this Plan.
- 4.3.1.3 Proposed new *development* in areas located on, or within 300 metres (sand and gravel) or 500 metres (bedrock) of known *deposits of mineral aggregate resources*, which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new *mineral aggregate operations* or access to the resources, is not permitted, except where it can be demonstrated by the applicant that:
- resource use would not be feasible;
  - the proposed land use or *development* serves a greater long-term public interest; and
  - issues of public health, public safety and environmental impacts are addressed.

### Aggregate Resources Act vs. Planning Act

In Ontario, two major pieces of Provincial legislation inform decisions related to *mineral aggregate resources* and *mineral aggregate operations*:

- the Aggregate Resources Act (ARA) is implemented by the Province and provides the framework for licensing *mineral aggregate operations*. The operational aspects and rehabilitation of a *mineral aggregate operation* are addressed through the licensing process. Where the ARA applies, only processes under the ARA shall address the depth of extraction of new or existing *mineral aggregate operations*.
- the Planning Act is implemented by municipalities and provides the framework for municipal land use approvals through official plans and zoning by-laws. The ARA requires appropriate municipal land use designations to be in place prior to granting a license.

In addition, the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act applies to land within the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) Area. Different policies or processes may apply. The Niagara Escarpment Commission should be consulted regarding lands within the NEP area.

## 4.3.2 Mineral Aggregate Operations

- 4.3.2.1 Existing *mineral aggregate operations* are identified on Schedule H of this Plan.
- 4.3.2.2 Proposed new *development* or other activities in areas located within 500 metres (sand and gravel) and 1000 metres (bedrock) of existing *mineral aggregate operations* is not permitted, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that satisfactory mitigation measures can be put in place to ensure that the ongoing operation or expansion of the existing *mineral aggregate operation* will not be hindered. The cost and responsibility for any required mitigation measures shall be borne by the applicant.
- 4.3.2.3 Existing licensed *mineral aggregate operations*, as identified on Schedule H, shall be permitted to continue without the need for an official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment or other approval under the Planning Act. When a license for a *mineral aggregate operation* ceases to exist, policies which protect *deposits of mineral aggregate resources* will continue to apply where deposits are still present.
- 4.3.2.4 All of the licenses shown on Schedule H pre-date the policies of this Plan. Accordingly, the majority of the licensed areas do not include site specific policies (except for site specific policies for existing *mineral aggregate operations* within the municipalities of Niagara Falls and Wainfleet referenced in Chapter 8). Additional site specific policies may be included where a *mineral aggregate operation* is approved through amendment to this Plan. Site specific policies and their associated licensed area shown on Schedule H shall be removed once the *mineral aggregate operation* land is rehabilitated and the license is surrendered to the Provincial Ministry with jurisdiction.
- 4.3.2.5 An amendment to this Plan is required for expansions of existing *mineral aggregate operations* beyond the limits of the site identified on Schedule H.
- 4.3.2.6 Asphalt plants, concrete plants, brick manufacturing plants and other similar manufacturing uses shall not be permitted in the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area.

### Pits and Quarries in Niagara

*Mineral aggregate operations* include pits and quarries as well as facilities to transport, process and, recycle *mineral aggregate resources*.

Loose material, such as sand and gravel, is extracted from pits, whereas solid bedrock, such as limestone and granite, is extracted from quarries.

### 4.3.3 Extraction of Mineral Aggregate Resources

- 4.3.3.1 An application to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall not be required to demonstrate the need for the resource.
- 4.3.3.2 The Region will consider applications for a *mineral aggregate operation* within the *deposits of mineral aggregate resources*, which are identified on Schedule H, and outside known *deposits of mineral aggregate resources* where the applicant has demonstrated that there is a sufficient quantity and quality of resources to warrant extraction.
- 4.3.3.3 Where two or more *mineral aggregate operations* are separated by a Regional Road, the Region will work with the aggregate producers to maximize the extraction in the vicinity of Regional Roads.
- 4.3.3.4 In the case of adjacent *mineral aggregate operations*, the Region will, wherever practical, encourage the removal of all economically viable material between the operations, and require continuous and *comprehensive rehabilitation*.

### 4.3.4 Proposed Mineral Aggregate Operations

- 4.3.4.1 New *mineral aggregate operations* are not permitted within *settlement areas*. The removal of economically viable material on site within a *settlement area* in advance of other approved *development* shall be considered on a site-specific basis.
- 4.3.4.2 An application to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall require a site specific amendment to this Plan.
- 4.3.4.3 Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall:
- be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement;
  - conform to the Provincial Plans, Regional and Local official plans;
  - consider policies of the *Conservation Authority*; and
  - give due regard for other policies or guidelines that are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and in conformity with Provincial Plan policies and the requirements under the Aggregate Resources Act and its regulations.

#### Aggregate Operations

Aggregates are a finite resource. While most operations will be active for decades, they are temporary uses. The site specific approach used in this Plan recognizes the underlying land use is intended to continue once the *mineral aggregate operation* is closed and lands are rehabilitated.

- 4.3.4.4** Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall consider the following:
- a. potential for negative impacts on existing and future adjacent and surrounding land uses;
  - b. potential for negative impact on views and vistas;
  - c. potential for negative air quality, noise, vibration, social, and health impacts;
  - d. potential for negative impacts on *significant* built heritage resources, *significant cultural heritage landscapes*, and *archaeological resources* or *areas of archaeological potential*;
  - e. potential for *negative impacts* on the *natural environment system*;
  - f. proposed manner of operation and rehabilitation;
  - g. proposed haulage routes and the potential negative impacts on roads and other users of the *infrastructure*;
  - h. potential for impacts on Regional *infrastructure* and services;
  - i. potential economic and financial impacts/benefits;
  - j. potential for negative impacts on agricultural operations in *prime agricultural areas*;
  - k. potential geotechnical considerations as appropriate; and
  - l. other potential impacts which may be specific to a proposed operation or site.
- 4.3.4.5** The establishment of new *mineral aggregate operations* and new *wayside pits and quarries*, or any ancillary or accessory use within a *Provincial natural heritage system* is not permitted in the following *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*:
- a. *provincially significant wetlands*;
  - b. *habitat of endangered species and threatened species*; and
  - c. *significant woodlands* unless the woodland is occupied by young plantation or early successional habitat, as defined by the Province, in which case, the application must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the approval authority that Provincial policies have been addressed.
- 4.3.4.6** Any application for a new *mineral aggregate operation* within a *Provincial natural heritage system* will be required to demonstrate how:
- a. *connectivity* between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* will be maintained before, during, and after the extraction of *mineral aggregate resources*;
  - b. the operator could replace *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* that would be lost from the site with equivalent features on another part of the site or on *adjacent lands*;



- c. the *water resource system* will be protected or enhanced; and
- d. any *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* not identified in Policy 4.3.4.5 will be addressed in accordance with Provincial policy and the policies of this Plan.

**4.3.4.7** An application to permit the expansion of an existing *mineral aggregate operation* within a *Provincial natural heritage system* may be permitted, including in *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* and any associated *vegetation protection zones*, if the related decision and rehabilitation is consistent with the policies of this Plan, Provincial, and Local Municipal policies.

**4.3.4.8** Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall implement the Provincial guidelines and industry best practices in regards to managing and mitigating potential impacts related to noise, dust, and vibration.

**4.3.4.9** Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall demonstrate how potential *negative impacts* to ground and surface water resources will be minimized. Where extraction is proposed below the water table, applicants shall demonstrate how impacts on both water quality and quantity are avoided first and mitigated where avoidance is not possible.

**4.3.4.10** In *prime agricultural areas*, applications to permit a new *mineral aggregate operation* shall be supported by an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* in accordance with Provincial guidance. The *Agricultural Impact Assessment* shall provide guidance on how to maintain or improve connectivity of the *agricultural system* and be completed by a qualified professional.

### **What is the difference between a new or expanding mineral aggregate operation?**

Under the Aggregate Resource Act there is no difference between establishing a new aggregate operation and expanding an existing operation - where a licence is required.

However, the policies of this Plan recognize that there can be differences in evaluating the impact of a new operation in comparison to an expansion based on the policies of Provincial plans.

Unless specific clarification is provided, all policies should be assumed to apply to both a new and expanding *mineral aggregate operation*.

- 4.3.4.11** Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* within *source water intake protection zones* (IPZ) shall demonstrate how potential threats to *source water* are avoided first and mitigated where avoidance is not possible. Applications within IPZs shall be considered in the context of the following conditions:
- a. impact on *source water* features;
  - b. proposed *source water* mitigation and monitoring; and
  - c. proposed type of licence, ARA site plan conditions, rehabilitation, and proposed after use of the site.

## **4.3.5 Haul Routes and Aggregate Truck Traffic**

- 4.3.5.1** Mineral aggregate truck traffic shall be directed away from *settlement areas* to the maximum extent feasible and make use of existing Provincial and Regional road networks. Local road networks should be used as local access routes only. In general, each *mineral aggregate operation* should have a defined haul route.
- 4.3.5.2** Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall demonstrate how adverse impacts associated with mineral aggregate truck traffic will be mitigated and shall consider:
- a. options for delivery of resources to the market, including alternative modes of transportation and alternative routes;
  - b. impacts on the road network and potential mitigation measures;
  - c. safety mitigation measures in all circumstances, with particular attention required where mineral aggregate truck traffic has the potential to mix with residential traffic, school buses, agricultural vehicles, pedestrian, cyclists, and other sensitive road users; and
  - d. social and environmental impacts and any mitigation measures.
- 4.3.5.3** The Region may require applicants to enter into Haul Route Agreements as part of the process to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* to ensure haul routes are defined and utilized; to secure for improvements and additional maintenance in accordance with the ARA; and to outline the formula for the method of payment by a licence-holder, where required. Improvements required to a Regional or Local road due to a new or expanded *mineral aggregate operation* shall not be at the public expense.

- 4.3.5.4** Haul routes for existing *mineral aggregate operations* are not currently strictly defined. As haul routes for new *mineral aggregate operations* are established, the Region will prepare and maintain a map indicating approved haul routes as an Appendix to this Plan.
- 4.3.5.5** Over time there may be changes that provide opportunities for more suitable haul routes, such as haulage patterns, highway and road improvements, measures to manage dust, and changes in municipal development patterns. Changes to defined haul routes may be permitted through a formal amendment to Haul Route Agreements and shall not require an amendment to this Plan.
- 4.3.5.6** *Mineral aggregate resources* are generally transported using trucks to access the market. The Region also encourages and supports opportunities for alternative ways to transport *mineral aggregate resources* to the market, including the use of railways and shipping routes.

## **4.3.6 Compatible and Sustainable Rehabilitation**

- 4.3.6.1** Applications to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* shall include a rehabilitation plan to satisfy the requirements of the Province, the Region, *Conservation Authority*, and the Local Area Municipality.
- 4.3.6.2** Progressive and final rehabilitation for *mineral aggregate operations* is required. Rehabilitation plans must achieve the following:
- a. accommodate subsequent land uses;
  - b. promote compatibility with surrounding land uses and approved land use designations;
  - c. recognize the interim nature of extraction; and
  - d. mitigate *negative impacts* to the extent possible.
- 4.3.6.3** *Comprehensive rehabilitation* planning is required where there is a concentration of *mineral aggregate operations*.
- 4.3.6.4** For rehabilitation of new *mineral aggregate operation* sites, the following apply:
- a. the disturbed area of a site shall be rehabilitated to a state of equal or greater *ecological value* and, for the entire site, long-term *ecological integrity* shall be maintained or enhanced;

- b. if there are *natural heritage features and areas*, *key natural heritage features* or *key hydrologic features* on the site, or if such features existed on the site at the time of an application:
  - i. the health, diversity and size of these *natural heritage features and areas*, *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* shall be maintained or enhanced; and
  - ii. any areas where extraction of mineral aggregates was permitted within a natural heritage feature and area, key natural heritage feature or key hydrologic feature shall be rehabilitated as early as possible in the life of the operation.
- c. aquatic areas remaining after extraction shall be rehabilitated to an aquatic environment representative of the natural ecosystem in that particular setting or ecodistrict, and the combined terrestrial and aquatic rehabilitation will meet the intent of Policy 4.3.6.4 b); and
- d. outside a *Provincial natural heritage system*, final rehabilitation shall appropriately reflect the long-term land use of the general area and the policies of this Plan. In *prime agricultural areas*, the site shall be rehabilitated in accordance with Provincial policy and the requirements of this Plan.

**4.3.6.5** Final rehabilitation for new and expanding *mineral aggregate operations* in a *Provincial natural heritage system* shall meet the following additional criteria:

- a. where there is no extraction below the water table, an amount of land equal to that under natural vegetated cover prior to extraction, and no less than 35 per cent of the land subject to each licence in the *Provincial natural heritage system*, shall be rehabilitated to forest cover, which will be representative of the natural ecosystem in that particular setting or ecodistrict. If the site is also in a *prime agricultural area*, the remainder of the land subject to the licence shall be rehabilitated back to an *agricultural condition*;
- b. where there is extraction below the water table, no less than 35 per cent of the non-aquatic portion of the land subject to each licence in the *Provincial natural heritage system* shall be rehabilitated to forest cover, which will be representative of the natural ecosystem in that particular setting or ecodistrict. If the site is also in a *prime agricultural area*, the remainder of the land subject to the licence shall be rehabilitated in accordance with Provincial policy and the policies of this Plan; and
- c. rehabilitation shall maintain or enhance *connectivity* of *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* on the site and on *adjacent lands*.

- 4.3.6.6** In *prime agricultural areas* on *prime agricultural lands*, extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* is permitted as an interim use provided that the site will be rehabilitated back to an *agricultural condition*. Complete rehabilitation to an *agricultural condition* is not required if:
- a. outside of a *specialty crop area*, there is a substantial quantity of *mineral aggregate resources* below the water table warranting extraction, or the depth of planned extraction in a quarry makes restoration of pre-extraction agricultural capability unfeasible;
  - b. in a *specialty crop area*, there is a substantial quantity of high quality *mineral aggregate resources* below the water table warranting extraction, and the depth of planned extraction makes restoration of pre-extraction agricultural capability unfeasible;
  - c. other alternatives have been considered by the applicant and found unsuitable to the satisfaction of the Region. The consideration of other alternatives shall include resources in areas of Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through seven lands, resources on lands identified as *designated growth areas*, and resources on *prime agricultural lands* where rehabilitation is feasible. Where no other alternatives are found, *prime agricultural lands* shall be protected in this order of priority: *specialty crop areas*, Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2 and 3 lands; and
  - d. agricultural rehabilitation in remaining areas is maximized.
- 4.3.6.7** Where the after-use of a *mineral aggregate operation* is proposed to be recreation, natural area, or an open space use, the Region supports opportunities for public access and/or ownership.
- 4.3.6.8** Post extraction land uses after rehabilitation of a *mineral aggregate operation* shall be consistent with the Niagara Source Protection Plan, any relevant *watershed* or *subwatershed plan*, relevant Provincial plans, and other applicable plans and policies.

## 4.3.7 Recycle Aggregates and Manage Excess Soil

4.3.7.1 The Region supports conservation through the use of recycled aggregates on Regional *infrastructure* projects, where performance and life expectancy of Regional assets can be maintained or enhanced while utilizing recycled products.

4.3.7.2 The Region supports the wise use of *mineral aggregate resources* including utilization or extraction of on-site *mineral aggregate resources* prior to other *development* occurring.

4.3.7.3 *Excess soil* from a *mineral aggregate operation* should be reused on-site or locally to the maximum extent possible. A plan for the reuse of *excess soil*, meeting Provincial requirements shall be prepared as part of the Planning Act application process.

### Aggregate Recycling Facilities

Aggregate recycling facilities are permitted within a *mineral aggregate operation* in accordance with Provincial policy, and are licenced through the Aggregate Resource Act (ARA).

The Region and Local Area Municipalities will provide comments through the ARA site plan process, to ensure the siting and use of aggregate recycling facilities includes appropriate mitigation measures to minimize any potential *adverse effects* on surrounding land uses and the natural environment.

## 4.3.8 Temporary Mineral Aggregate Operations

4.3.8.1 The use of *wayside pits and quarries*, *portable asphalt plants* and *portable concrete plants* on public authority contracts shall be permitted temporarily without the need for an amendment to this Plan. Such use shall not be permitted in areas of existing development or *natural heritage features and areas*, *key natural heritage features*, and *key hydrologic features* and areas as shown in this Plan which have been determined to be incompatible with extraction and associated activities.

## 4.3.9 Applications in the Greenbelt Plan Area

4.3.9.1 Extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* is permitted within the Protected Countryside area in the Provincial Greenbelt Plan, subject to all other applicable legislation, regulations and the policies of this Plan. Policies for the extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* within the Greenbelt Plan apply together with other policies of this Plan.



- 4.3.9.2** An application to permit a *mineral aggregate operation* or *wayside pit and quarry* within the Protected Countryside shall be required to ensure that:
- a. the rehabilitated area will be maximized and disturbed area minimized on an ongoing basis during the life cycle of an operation;
  - b. progressive and final rehabilitation efforts will contribute to the goals of the Provincial Greenbelt Plan;
  - c. any excess disturbed area above the maximum allowable disturbed area, as determined by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mining, Natural Resources and Forestry, will be rehabilitated. For new operations, the total disturbed area shall not exceed an established maximum allowable disturbed area; and
  - d. the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the approval authority that the quantity and quality of groundwater and surface water will be maintained as per Provincial standards under the Aggregate Resources Act.
- 4.3.9.3** Notwithstanding any provisions of this section to the contrary, within the *specialty crop area*, *mineral aggregate operations* are subject to the following requirements:
- a. no new *mineral aggregate operation*, *wayside pits and quarries* or any ancillary or accessory use thereto shall be permitted between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area;
  - b. a new *mineral aggregate operation* or *wayside pits and quarries* may only be considered on primary and secondary selected sand and gravel resources on the Fonthill Kame, in the Town of Pelham, as identified by Aggregate Resource Inventory Paper #4, if the applicant demonstrates that:
    - i. substantially the same land area shall be rehabilitated back to an *agricultural condition* which allows for the same range and productivity of specialty crops common in the area; and
    - ii. the microclimate on which the site and the surrounding area may be dependent for specialty crop production shall be maintained or restored;
  - c. a new *mineral aggregate operation* or *wayside pits and quarries* shall only be permitted in *specialty crop areas* not identified under Policies 4.3.9.3 a) and 4.3.9.3 b) where the applicant demonstrates the following:
    - i. the physical characteristics of the proposed site allow for the rehabilitation of the property back to an *agricultural condition*; or
    - ii. if the physical characteristics of the proposed site will not allow for the rehabilitation of the property back to an *agricultural condition*, the applicant has considered alternative locations; and

- iii. where other alternatives have been considered by the applicant and found unsuitable, and in situations where complete agricultural rehabilitation in the *specialty crop area* is not possible due to the depth of planned extraction or a substantial aggregate deposit below the water table warranting extraction, agricultural rehabilitation in the remaining licensed area shall be maximized as a first priority to allow production of specialty crops.

#### **4.3.10 Applications within the Niagara Escarpment Plan**

**4.3.10.1** The Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) is an agency of the Government of Ontario. It is responsible for administering the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), a Provincial land use plan which includes evaluating applications to amend the NEP and applications for development permits within the Area of Development Control. The NEP has detailed policies relating to the land use approvals required to permit new *mineral aggregate operations* within the NEP Area. The NEC should be consulted with respect to the application process to seek an Amendment to the NEP which is required for any new or expanded *mineral aggregate operation*. In the event of a conflict with NEP policy in the NEP area, the NEP shall prevail over any policy of this Plan.

#### **4.3.11 Comprehensive Planning Review**

- 4.3.11.1** The Region requires applicants to complete a pre-consultation meeting under the terms of Section 7.8.1 of this Plan prior to the submission of an application to permit a *mineral aggregate operation*.
- 4.3.11.2** To streamline the application process for a *mineral aggregate operation*, the Region, in coordination with the Local Area Municipality and *Conservation Authority*, may establish a Joint Agency Review Team (JART). The JART process will be periodically monitored by Regional staff over time to ensure that it continues to meet the intended purpose of a streamlined review.
- 4.3.11.3** The Region may develop and maintain a guideline document related to *mineral aggregate resource* applications. The purpose of the document will be to provide information related to the requirements for the preparation and review of applications and their associated technical studies. Regional guidelines shall be prepared in consideration of the requirements of the Aggregate Resources Act and Provincial standards where appropriate.

**4.3.11.4** The Region may require peer reviews of some or all of the technical studies in support of an application for a *mineral aggregate operation* at the cost of the applicant. The applicant will be required to enter a Cost Acknowledgement Agreement with the Region as part of a Complete Application. The Cost Acknowledgement Agreement will outline the conditions associated with the applicant's responsibility to pay for costs such as peer reviews of technical studies, the services of an Aggregate Advisor, and a facilitator to support the public consultation process, as required.

### **Joint Agency Review Team (JART)**

The JART process recognizes that aggregate applications are complex, that they typically involve multiple review agencies, and that they are required to consider a range of technical issues. The JART process allows for the establishment of a team of professional staff from interested agencies who are responsible for coordinating the technical review of all matters related to the application. The streamlined process allows for the sharing of resources and expertise while maintaining independent decision-making authority.

## 4.4 Petroleum and Mineral Resources

Known *petroleum resources* and *petroleum resource operations*, including wells, are located across areas of the Niagara region, and are protected for long-term use. Mineral resources are both metallic and non-metallic *minerals*, but are different from *mineral aggregate resources* identified in Section 4.3 of this Plan. *Mineral deposits* may occur in Niagara region and must be protected for potential extraction. There are no known *mineral mining operations* in Niagara.

**The objective of this section is as follows:**

- a. protect the Region's *mineral deposits* and *petroleum resources*.

### Petroleum Resource Operations

*Petroleum resource operations* is a term that encompasses wells, facilities, and other drilling operations associated with oil, gas, and salt resources.

Over 2000 wells are identified in Niagara region through Provincial mapping. These wells are classified by types, including natural gas wells, storage wells, and dry exploratory holes.

### 4.4.1 Mineral Deposits and Petroleum Resources

- 4.4.1.1 Schedule I of this Plan identifies where petroleum pools are located in Niagara region, according to Provincial mapping.
- 4.4.1.2 *Petroleum resource operations* and any future *mineral mining operations* shall be protected from *development* and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact.
- 4.4.1.3 No *development* shall occur within 75 metres of a *petroleum resource operation* unless the *petroleum resource operation* has been decommissioned and rehabilitated in accordance with applicable Provincial regulations and standards.
- 4.4.1.4 *Development* and activities in known *mineral deposits* or known *petroleum resources* or on *adjacent lands* which would preclude or hinder the establishment of new operations or access to the resources shall only be permitted if:
  - a. resource use would not be feasible; or
  - b. the proposed land use or *development* serves a greater long-term public interest; and
  - c. issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

**4.4.1.5** Petroleum and mineral resource extraction activities shall be conducted in accordance with the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act and its regulations and standards, as well as a licence from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

**4.4.1.6** Any proposal for a new *mineral mining operation* will require an amendment to this Plan.

### **Oil, Gas, and Salt Resources Act (OGSRA)**

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry regulates *petroleum resources* through the OGSRA and Provincial operating standards. This includes all licensing of new wells, and overseeing decommissioning of existing wells.

## 4.5 Economic Prosperity

Niagara has unique qualities that contribute to its vitality and economic prosperity. Land use planning is important to enhancing these strengths and facilitating new economic opportunities.

This section consolidates policy direction integrated throughout the Plan that supports economic prosperity. It recognizes the role of effective growth management and the provision of *affordable* housing to attracting employers and workers to the region. This includes proactively planning for *employment areas* and providing transportation *infrastructure* to facilitate the movement of goods and people across the region and internationally. It identifies the importance of supporting Niagara's agri-food sector through protection of the agricultural land base and promoting all types, sizes and intensities of *agricultural uses*. It also recognizes opportunities to support tourism through the protection of the region's *natural environment system*, parks and trails network and geological and *cultural heritage resources*.

The consolidated policy direction in this section must be read together with other policies of this Plan, which establish direction that is more detailed.

### The objectives of this section are as follows:

- a. align land use and economic goals through strategic partnerships; and
- b. facilitate economic prosperity through land use planning.

### 4.5.1 Land Use and Economic Goals

- 4.5.1.1 The Region will maintain an Economic Development Strategy that will inform alignment between Regional land use planning and economic development goals and strategies.
- 4.5.1.2 The Region will partner with Local Area Municipalities to deliver Regional employment-related grants and incentives programs, where available.
- 4.5.1.3 The Region will collaborate with educational institutions, research facilities and the business community on land use strategies for economic prosperity.
- 4.5.1.4 Opportunities shall be considered to attract employment investment that supports the diversification of Niagara's economic base, strengthens the skilled labour workforce, and enhances local, national and global competitiveness in planning for employment uses.
- 4.5.1.5 The Region encourages the extension of broadband *infrastructure* to underserved areas to improve access to high-speed internet and support economic resilience.



## 4.5.2 Economic Prosperity through Land Use Planning

4.5.2.1 This section consolidates policy direction integrated throughout this Plan that supports economic prosperity.

The Region will endeavour to:

- a. attract employers and workers to the region by:
  - i. planning for an adequate supply and mix of rental and ownership housing for all stages of life to support opportunities to live, work and study in Niagara;
  - ii. supporting the provision of *affordable* housing for workers across all sectors of Niagara's economy;
  - iii. protecting and proactively planning for *employment areas* and supporting *employment lands* to attract and retain investment; and
  - iv. maximizing the economic development potential of the *Niagara Economic Gateway*;
- b. improve the region's *infrastructure* to attract new investment, support existing businesses to grow, and build resiliency by:
  - i. planning for and expediting improvements to *major goods movement facilities and corridors* and *planned corridors* to support *freight-supportive* employment;
  - ii. establishing priority routes for goods movement, where feasible, to facilitate the movement of goods into and out of *employment areas* and other areas of significant commercial activity and to provide alternate routes connecting to the provincial network;
  - iii. collaborating on the completion of the Niagara-Hamilton Trade Corridor to improve people and goods movement regionally and internationally;
  - iv. prioritizing and expediting *higher order transit* connections to the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area to promote new employment markets;
  - v. protecting *airport* and *aerodrome* lands operational needs;
  - vi. integrating new technologies, where feasible, to manage Regional *infrastructure* more efficiently and sustainably in accordance with a Smart City Strategy;
  - vii. supporting economic opportunities associated with *climate change* such as development of green energy infrastructure that may facilitate job creation, skills development and economic diversification; and

- viii. undertaking *climate change* adaptation planning to support the creation of climate-resilient communities and reduce financial risks to governments, businesses and households;
- c. support the agri-food industry by:
  - i. promoting all types, sizes and intensities of *agricultural uses* and *normal farm practices*, including *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses*;
- d. support the local building sector of the economy by:
  - i. protecting *mineral aggregate resources* and existing *mineral aggregate operations* from incompatible uses and providing for efficient extraction;
- e. support opportunities for nature and culture-based tourism by:
  - i. protecting the Regional *natural environment system* and supporting the provision of parks, trails and open space for recreation and ecotourism;
  - ii. supporting efforts to designate Niagara region as a UNESCO Global Geopark to foster conservation, education and sustainable economic development;
  - iii. recognizing the importance of the Niagara Escarpment as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve;
  - iv. promoting excellence in urban design and requiring conservation of *significant cultural heritage resources* to foster a *sense of place*;
  - v. promoting the Welland Canal Cultural Heritage Landscape as a multi-faceted cultural heritage destination; and
  - vi. promoting revitalization and *redevelopment* within downtown and community cores to enhance their existing character.



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## A

### Active Transportation

Any form of self-propelled transportation that relies on the use of human energy such as walking, cycling, inline skating, jogging, or travel with the use of mobility aids, including motorized wheelchairs and other power-assisted devices at a comparable speed (Growth Plan, 2019).

### Additional Residential Units

Self-contained residential units with kitchen and bathroom facilities located within a primary dwelling or within an accessory structure that is detached from the primary dwelling, as provided for in Subsection 16 (3) of the Planning Act, 1990.

### Adjacent Lands

- a. For the purposes of Section 5.1, those lands contiguous to existing or *planned corridors* and transportation facilities where *development* would have a negative impact on the corridor or facility. The extent of the *adjacent lands* may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives;
- b. For the purposes of Section 3.1 and 3.2, those lands surrounding a *key natural heritage feature, natural heritage feature and area* and/or *key hydrologic feature* where it is likely that *development* or *site alteration* would have a negative impact on the feature;
- c. For the purposes of Section 4.4, those lands contiguous to lands on the surface of known *petroleum resources, mineral deposits, or deposits of mineral aggregate resources* where it is likely that *development* would constrain future access to the resources. The extent of the *adjacent lands* may be recommended by the Province; and
- d. For the purposes of section 6.4 and 6.5, those lands contiguous to a protected *heritage property* or as otherwise defined in the municipal official plan (PPS, 2020).



## Adverse Effects

As defined in the Environmental Protection Act, means one or more of:

- a. impairment of the quality of the natural environment for any use that can be made of it;
- b. injury or damage to property or plant or animal life;
- c. harm or material discomfort to any person;
- d. an adverse effect on the health of any person;
- e. impairment of the safety of any person;
- f. rendering any property or plant or animal life unfit for human use;
- g. loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; and
- h. interference with normal conduct of business (PPS, 2020).

## Aerodrome

For the purposes of this Plan, means the Niagara Central Airport.

## Affordable

In the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:

- a. housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for *low and moderate income households*;
- b. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 per cent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area;

In the case of rental housing, the least expensive of:

- c. a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for *low and moderate income households*; or
- d. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Agricultural Condition

- a. In regard to *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture are restored, the same range and productivity of specialty crops common in the area can be achieved, and, where applicable, the microclimate on which the site and surrounding area may be dependent for specialty crop production will be maintained or restored; and
- b. In regard to *prime agricultural land* outside of *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture are restored (PPS, 2020).

## Agricultural Impact Assessment

A study that evaluates the potential impacts of non-agricultural development on agricultural operations and the agriculture system and recommends ways to avoid, or, if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

## Agriculture-Related Uses

Those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity (PPS, 2020).

## Agricultural Source Material

Treated or untreated materials, as defined by the Nutrient Management Act, other than compost that meets the Compost Guidelines, or a commercial fertilizer, if they are capable of being applied to land as nutrients.

## Agricultural System

The system mapped and issued by the Province, comprised of a group of inter-connected elements that collectively create a viable, thriving agricultural sector. It has two components:

- a. an agricultural land base comprised of *prime agricultural areas*, including *specialty crop areas*, and *rural lands* that together create a continuous, productive land base for agriculture; and
- b. an *agri-food network*, which includes *infrastructure*, services and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).



## **Agricultural Uses**

The growing of crops, including nursery, biomass, and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including, but not limited to livestock facilities, manure storages, value-retaining facilities, and accommodation for full-time farm labour when the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment (PPS, 2020).

## **Agri-food Network**

Within the *agricultural system*, a network that includes elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector such as Regional *infrastructure* and transportation networks; on-farm buildings and *infrastructure*; agricultural services, farm markets, distributors, and primary processing; and vibrant, agriculture-supportive communities (PPS, 2020).

## **Agri-Tourism Uses**

Those farm-related tourism uses, including limited accommodation such as a bed and breakfast, that promote the enjoyment, education or activities related to the farm operation (PPS, 2020).

## **Airport**

For the purposes of this Plan, means the Niagara District Airport.

## **Alternative Energy Systems**

A system that uses sources of energy or energy conversion processes to produce power, heat and/or cooling that significantly reduces the amount of harmful emissions to the environment (air, earth and water) when compared to conventional energy systems (PPS, 2020).

## **Archaeological Resources**

Includes *artifacts*, *archaeological sites*, marine *archaeological sites*, as defined under the Ontario Heritage Act. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon archaeological fieldwork undertaken in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

## Archaeological Site

Any property that contains an *artifact* or any other physical evidence of past human use or activity that is of cultural heritage value or interest.

## Areas of Archaeological Potential

Areas with the likelihood to contain *archaeological resources*. Criteria to identify archaeological potential are established by the Province. The Ontario Heritage Act requires archaeological potential to be confirmed by a licensed archaeologist.

## Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

Areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education (PPS, 2020).

Life Science ANSI means an area identified as being high quality example(s) of ecological form and function in each Ecodistrict in the province (provincially significant) and the region (regionally significant) and are generally defined by *natural heritage features* (e.g., a *woodland*, valley top of bank, etc.) and generally exclude anthropogenic land uses (e.g., residential areas / properties). Life Science ANSIs include areas identified as provincially significant and regionally significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

Earth Science ANSI means an area that represent the best examples of geologic and geomorphic landforms and areas (e.g., a moraine) in each Ecodistrict in the province (provincially significant) and the region (regionally significant). They may encompass a single feature or a group of related features (e.g., a drumlin field). As geologic / geomorphic landforms, the overlying land use may include a composite of natural and anthropogenic uses (e.g., woodland, agricultural, rural residential, etc.). Earth Science ANSIs include areas identified as provincially significant and regionally significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

## Artifact

Any object, material or substance that is made, modified, used, deposited or affected by human action and is of cultural heritage value or interest.

## Attainable Housing

Rental or ownership housing provided by the market for *moderate income households* that are generally within the fifth and sixth income decile of the *regional market area*. *Attainable housing* can include dwelling types of various sizes, densities, and *built forms*, and is intended to provide individuals with the opportunity to access housing more suitable to their needs.

# B

## Bicycle Infrastructure

All *infrastructure* and facilities used for cycling, including bicycle routes (dedicated, buffered, and separated bike lanes, multi-use paths, and off-road trails), and trip end facilities such as bicycle parking and storage (e.g. bicycle racks and lockers).

## Brownfields

Undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant (PPS, 2020).

## Buffer

An area of land located adjacent to *natural heritage features and areas, other wetlands*, and watercourses and usually bordering lands that are subject to *development* or *site alteration*. The purpose of a *buffer* is to protect the features and areas and their *ecological functions* by mitigating impacts of the proposed *development* or *site alteration*. *Buffers* shall consist of *natural self-sustaining vegetation* as a condition of *development* (except where certain agricultural uses are exempt from the requirement of a *buffer*).

## Built Form

The function, shape, and configuration of buildings, as well as their relationship to streets and open spaces.

## Built-Up Areas

The limits of the developed urban areas as defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of measuring the minimum intensification target in this Plan. *Built-up areas* are delineated in Schedule B.

# C

## Centreline

The centre of a right-of-way based on the original survey of the right-of-way.

## Climate Change

Long-term changes in weather patterns at local and regional levels, including extreme weather events and increased climate variability.

## Coastal Wetland

- a. Any wetland that is located on one of the Great Lakes or their connecting channels; or
- b. Any other *wetland* that is on a tributary to any of the above-specified water bodies and lies, either wholly or in part, downstream of a line located 2 km upstream of the 1:100 year floodline (plus wave run-up) of the large water body to which the tributary is connected (PPS, 2020).

## Combined Sewers

A sewer designed to convey both sanitary sewage and storm water through a single pipe to a sewage treatment plant.

## Community Housing

Housing owned and operated by non-profit housing corporations, housing co-operatives and municipal governments, or district social services administration boards. *Community housing* providers offer subsidized or low-end-of market rents.

## Community Hubs

Locations that serve as central access points, which offer services in collaboration with different community agencies and service providers, reduce administrative duplication, and improve services for residents and are responsive to the needs of their communities.

## Community Infrastructure

Lands, buildings, and structures that support the quality of life for people and communities by providing public services for health, education, recreation, socio-cultural activities, security and safety, and affordable housing.

## Compact Built Form

A land-use pattern that encourages the efficient use of land, walkable neighbourhoods, mixed land uses (residential, retail, workplace and institutional) all within one neighbourhood, *active transportation*, proximity to transit and reduced need for *infrastructure*. *Compact built form* can include detached and semi-detached houses on small lots as well as townhouses and walk-up apartments, multi-storey commercial developments, and apartments or offices above retail. Walkable neighbourhoods can be characterized by roads laid out in a well-connected network, destinations that are easily accessible by transit and *active transportation*, sidewalks with minimal interruptions for vehicle access, and a pedestrian-friendly environment along roads to encourage active transportation.

## Compatible

A *development*, building and/or land use that can co-exist or occur without conflict with surrounding land uses and activities in terms of its uses, scale, height, massing and relative location.

## **Complete Communities**

Places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within cities, towns, and *settlement areas* that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores, and services, a full range of housing, transportation options and *public service facilities*. *Complete communities* are age-friendly and may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts (Growth Plan, 2019).

## **Complete Streets**

Streets that are planned to balance the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit-users, and motorists, and are designed for the safety of people of all ages and abilities.

## **Comprehensive Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation of land from which *mineral aggregate resources* have been extracted that is coordinated and complementary, to the extent possible, with the rehabilitation of other sites in an area where there is a high concentration of *mineral aggregate operations* (PPS, 2020).

## **Connectivity**

The degree to which *key natural heritage features, natural heritage features and areas* and/or *key hydrologic features* are connected to one another by links such as plant and animal movement corridors, hydrologic and nutrient cycling, genetic transfer and energy flow through food webs.

## **Conservation Authority**

Refers to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and/or Hamilton Conservation Authority.



## Conserved

The identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological assessment, and/or heritage impact assessment that has been approved, accepted or adopted by the relevant planning authority and/or decision maker. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches can be included in these plans and assessments.

## Core Areas

An individual natural features and areas, or a group of features and areas in close proximity to each other (i.e., less than or equal to 30 m distance in *settlement areas*, less than or equal to 60 m distance outside of *settlement areas*) that have functional ecological connectivity (i.e., their proximity to each other supports *ecological functions*, such as *wildlife habitat*, exchange of genetic material, etc.).

## Corporate Facilities

Facilities owned by the Region, such as administrative offices and related facilities. For the purpose of Section 3.5 of this Plan, corporate *facilities* does not include *water and wastewater facilities*.

## Cultural and Regenerating Woodland

*Woodlands* where the *ecological functions* of the site are substantially compromised as a result of prior land use activity and would be difficult to restore and/or manage as a native *woodland* and which provide limited *ecological function* and ecosystem services.

## Cultural Heritage Landscapes

A defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. The area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, *archaeological sites* or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. *Cultural heritage* landscapes may be properties that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest under the Ontario Heritage Act or have been included on federal and/or international registers, and/or protected through official plan, zoning by-law, or other land use planning mechanisms (PPS, 2020).

## Cultural Heritage Resources

Built heritage resources, *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people. While some *cultural heritage resources* may already be identified and inventoried by official sources, the significance of others can only be determined after evaluation (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

## D

### Defined Portions of the Flooding Hazard Along Connecting Channels

Those areas which are critical to the conveyance of the flows associated with the one hundred year flood level along the St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers, where *development* or *site alteration* will create *flooding hazards*, cause updrift and/or downdrift impacts and/or cause adverse environmental impacts.

### Demand-Responsive Transit Service

Door-to-door transportation service which has flexible routing and scheduling, and can operate either as an “on-demand” service or a “fixed-schedule” service, such as airport shuttles or paratransit services for people with disabilities and older adults.

### Deposits of Mineral Aggregate Resources

An area of identified *mineral aggregate resources*, as delineated in Aggregate Resource Inventory Papers or comprehensive studies prepared using evaluation procedures established by the Province for surficial and bedrock resources, as amended from time to time, that has a sufficient quantity and quality to warrant present or future extraction (PPS, 2020).

### Designated Greenfield Areas

Lands within *urban areas* but outside of *built-up areas* that have been designated in an official plan for development and are required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. *Designated greenfield areas* do not include *excess lands*, and are identified in Schedule B.

## Designated Growth Areas

Lands within *settlement areas* designated in an official plan for growth over the long-term planning horizon provided in policy 1.1.2, but which have not yet been fully developed. *Designated growth areas* include lands which are designated and available for residential growth in accordance with policy 1.4.1(a), as well as lands required for employment and other uses (PPS, 2020).

## Development

The creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the construction of buildings and structures requiring approval under the Planning Act but does not include:

- a. activities that create or maintain *infrastructure* authorized under an environmental assessment process, including a Class Environmental Assessment, with the exception of lands designated as being within an Area of Development Control under the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act; or
- b. works subject to the *Drainage Act*.

(Based on PPS, 2020 and modified for the Growth Plan, 2019).

## Dynamic Beach Hazard

Areas of inherently unstable accumulations of shoreline sediments along *large inland lakes*, as identified by provincial standards, as amended from time to time. The *dynamic beach hazard* limit consists of the *flooding hazard* limit plus a dynamic beach allowance.

# E

## Ecological Function

The natural processes, products or services that living and non-living environments provide or perform within or between species, ecosystems and landscapes. These may include biological, physical and socio-economic interactions (PPS, 2020).

## **Ecological Integrity**

Includes *hydrological integrity*, and means a condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region and likely to persist, including abiotic components and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes.

## **Ecological Value**

The value of *ecological functions* performed by *natural heritage features and areas*, *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas* to the native biodiversity and *wildlife habitats*. These functions include, but are not limited to, providing cover and refuge; breeding, nesting, denning, and nursery areas; corridors for wildlife movement; food chain support; and natural water storage, natural flow attenuation, and water quality improvement, which enhances habitat for wildlife and biodiversity.

## **Employment Areas**

Areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities (PPS, 2020).

## **Employment Land**

Lands that are designated in Local official plans or zoning by-laws for employment uses. *Employment lands* may be within and outside of *employment areas*.

## **Endangered Species**

A species that is classified as “Endangered Species” on the Species at Risk in Ontario List, as updated and amended from time to time.

## Enhancement Areas

Ecologically supporting areas adjacent to *natural heritage features and areas*, *key natural heritage features*, and *key hydrologic features*. *Enhancement areas* can also be measures internal to features that increase the ecological *resilience* and function of individual features or groups of natural features and areas. *Enhancements areas* are identified where they:

- connect natural features and areas to create larger contiguous natural areas;
- reduce edge habitat and increase proportion of interior conditions (greater than 100 m from edge); and
- include critical function zones and important catchment areas critical to sustaining *ecological functions*.

## Environmental Impact Study

A science-based study of ecological features and functions, and impacts to those features and functions resulting from *development* and/or *site alteration*, prepared in accordance with the Region's *environmental impact study* guidelines.

The purpose of an *environmental impact study* is to:

- collect and evaluate the appropriate information in order to have a complete understanding of the boundaries, attributes, and functions of components of the *Natural Environment System*;
- determine whether there are any additional components;
- undertake a comprehensive impact analysis;
- propose appropriate mitigation measures;
- clearly articulate any impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated;
- where appropriate, recommend monitoring provisions;
- consider *climate change*, cumulative and/or watershed impacts where possible; and
- demonstrate that ecological enhancement to the *Natural Environment System* is achieved.

## **Erosion Hazard**

The loss of land, due to human or natural processes, that poses a threat to life and property. The *erosion hazard* limit is determined using considerations that include the 100 year erosion rate (the average annual rate of recession extended over a one hundred year time span), an allowance for slope stability, and an erosion/erosion access allowance.

## **Essential Emergency Services**

Services that would be impaired during an emergency as a result of flooding, the failure of floodproofing measures and/or protection works, and/or erosion.

## **Excess Lands**

Vacant, unbuilt but developable lands within *settlement areas* but outside of *built-up areas* that have been designated in an official plan for development but are in excess of what is needed to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan (Growth Plan, 2019).

## **Excess Soil**

Soil, or soil mixed with rock that has been excavated as part of a project and removed from the project area for the project as defined under O.Reg. 406/19 under the Environmental Protection Act.

## **Existing Uses**

(Greenbelt Plan Area only): uses legally established prior to the date that the Greenbelt Plan came into force on December 16, 2004; or for the purposes of lands added to the Greenbelt Plan after December 16, 2004, uses legally established prior to the date the Greenbelt Plan came into force in respect of the land on which the uses are established.

(Niagara Escarpment Plan Area Only): shall have the same definition as “existing uses” in the Niagara Escarpment Plan.



# F

## Fish

As defined in the Fisheries Act, includes fish, shellfish, crustaceans, and marine animals, at all stages of their life cycles.

## Fish Habitat

As defined in the Fisheries Act, means spawning grounds and any other areas, including nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which ‘fish’ depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes (PPS, 2020).

## Flood Fringe

For *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means the outer portion of the *floodplain* between the *floodway* and the *flooding hazard* limit. Depths and velocities of flooding are generally less severe in the *flood fringe* than those experienced in the *floodway*.

## Flooding Hazards

The inundation, under the conditions specified below, of areas adjacent to a shoreline or a river or stream system and not ordinarily covered by water:

- a. along the shorelines of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System and *large inland lakes*, the *flooding hazard* limit is based on the *one hundred year flood level* plus an allowance for *wave uprush* and *other water-related hazards*;
- b. along *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, the *flooding hazard* limit is the greater of:
  - i. the flood resulting from the rainfall actually experienced during a major storm such as the Hurricane Hazel storm (1954) or the Timmins storm (1961), transposed over a specific *watershed* and combined with the local conditions, where evidence suggests that the storm event could have potentially occurred over *watersheds* in the general area;
  - ii. the *one hundred year flood*; and

- iii. a flood which is greater than one or two. which was actually experienced in a particular *watershed* or portion thereof as a result of ice jams and which has been approved as the standard for that specific area by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry;

except where the use of the *one hundred year flood* or the actually experienced event has been approved by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry as the standard for a specific *watershed* (where the past history of flooding supports the lowering of the standard) (PPS, 2020).

## Floodplains

For *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means the area, usually low lands adjoining a *watercourse*, which has been or may be subject to *flooding hazards* (PPS, 2020).

## Floodproofing Standard

The combination of measures incorporated into the basic design and/or construction of buildings, structures, or properties to reduce or eliminate *flooding hazards, wave uprush* and *other water-related hazards* along the shorelines of *large inland lakes*, and *flooding hazards* along *river, stream and small inland lake systems*.

## Floodway

For *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means the portion of the *floodplain* where *development* and *site alteration* would cause a danger to public health and safety or property damage. Where the *one zone concept* is applied, the *floodway* is the entire contiguous *floodplain*. Where the *two zone concept* is applied, the *floodway* is the contiguous inner portion of the *floodplain*, representing that area required for the safe passage of flood flow and/or that area where flood depths and/or velocities are considered to be such that they pose a potential threat to life and/or property damage. Where the *two zone concept* applies, the outer portion of the *floodplain* is called the *flood fringe* (PPS, 2020).

## Freight-Supportive

In regard to land use patterns, means *transportation systems* and facilities that facilitate the movement of goods. This includes policies or programs intended to support efficient freight movement through the planning, design and operation of land use and *transportation systems*. Approaches may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives (PPS, 2020).

## Frequent Transit Service

A public transit service that runs at least every 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and into the evening every day of the week.

## Fringe Lands

The area between the agricultural/rural countryside and the built-up city/suburbs. It can further be described as the edge of the urban region where patterns of building development and non-development interweave. The urban fringe is often an area with contrasting land uses and compatibility conflicts.

# G

## Green Infrastructure

Natural and human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes. *Green infrastructure* can include components such as *natural heritage features and systems*, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs.

## Greenbelt Plan Natural Heritage System

The *natural heritage system* mapped and issued by the Province in accordance with the Greenbelt Plan.

## Greyfield Sites

Previously developed properties that are not contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict, or vacant (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Groundwater Feature

Water-related features in the earth's subsurface including recharge/discharge areas, water tables, aquifers and unsaturated zones that can be defined by surface and subsurface hydrogeological investigations (PPS, 2020).

# H

## Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species

Habitat within the meaning of Section 2 of the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* (PPS, 2020).

## Hazardous Forest Types for Wildland Fire

Forest types assessed as being associated with the risk of high to extreme wildland fire using risk assessment tools established by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

## Hazardous Lands

Property or lands that could be unsafe for *development* due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River System, this means the land, including that covered by water, between the international boundary, where applicable, and the furthest landward limit of the *flooding hazard*, *erosion hazard* or *dynamic beach hazard* limits. Along the shorelines of *large inland lakes*, this means the land, including that covered by water, between a defined offshore distance or depth and the furthest landward limit of the *flooding hazard*, *erosion hazard* or *dynamic beach hazard* limits. Along *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, this means the land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the *flooding hazard* or *erosion hazard limits* (PPS, 2020).

## Hazardous Sites

Property or lands that could be unsafe for *development* and *site alteration* due to naturally occurring hazards. These may include unstable soils (sensitive marine clays [leda], organic soils) or unstable bedrock (karst topography).

## Hazardous Substances

Substances which, individually, or in combination with other substances, are normally considered to pose a danger to public health, safety and the environment. These substances generally include a wide array of materials that are toxic, ignitable, corrosive, reactive, radioactive or pathological.

## Heritage Attributes

The principal features or elements that contribute to a *protected heritage property's* cultural heritage value or interest, and may include the property's built, constructed, or manufactured elements, as well as natural landforms, vegetation, water features, and its visual setting (e.g. significant views or vistas to or from a *protected heritage property*) (PPS 2020).

## Higher Order Transit

Transit that generally operates in partially or completely dedicated rights-of-way, outside of mixed traffic, and therefore can achieve levels of speed and reliability greater than mixed-traffic transit. *Higher order transit* can include heavy rail (such as subways and inter-city rail), light rail, and buses in dedicated rights-of-way (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Highly Vulnerable Aquifers

Aquifers, including lands above the aquifers, on which external sources have or are likely to have a significant adverse effect (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

## Hydrological Evaluation

A science-based study of hydrologic features and areas, and impacts to those features and hydrologic functions resulting from *development* and/or *site alteration*.

The purpose of a *hydrologic evaluation* is to:

- collect and evaluate the appropriate information in order to have a complete understanding of the boundaries, attributes of permanent and *intermittent streams, inland lakes and their littoral zones, seepage areas and springs, wetlands, groundwater features, surface water features, floodplains, flooding hazards, floodways, shoreline areas, and related hydrologic functions*;
- determine whether there are any additional *hydrologic features* and areas;

- assess the significance and sensitivity of hydrologic features and their *hydrologic functions*;
- undertake a comprehensive impact analysis;
- propose appropriate mitigation measures;
- identify planning, design and construction practices that will maintain and, where possible, enhance or restore the health, diversity and size of the *hydrologic feature and functions* and its connectivity with other hydrologic features, *natural heritage features and areas* and *key natural heritage features*;
- clearly articulate any impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated;
- where appropriate, recommend monitoring provisions to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the identified mitigation measures; and
- consider *climate change*, cumulative and/or *watershed* impacts where possible

## Hydrologic Functions

The functions of the hydrological cycle that include the occurrence, circulation, distribution and chemical and physical properties of water on the surface of the land, in the soil and underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere, and water's interaction with the environment including its relation to living things (PPS, 2020).

## Individual On-Site Sewage Service

Sewage systems, as defined in O. Reg. 332/12 under the Building Code Act, that are owned, operated and managed by the owner of the property upon which the system is located.

## Individual On-Site Water Service

Individual, autonomous water supply systems that are owned, operated and managed by the owner of the property upon which the system is located.



## Industrial Effluent System

Systems which convey and discharge the by-product from an industrial process that can contain contaminants from non-domestic wastes.

## Infrastructure

Physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for development.

*Infrastructure* includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, stormwater management systems, *waste management systems*, electricity generation facilities, electricity transmission and distribution systems, communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

## Inland Lakes and their Littoral Zones

Any inland body of permanently standing water larger than a pool or pond or a body of water filling a depression in the earth's surface, where their water levels and hydrologic functions are not directly influenced by either Lake Erie or Lake Ontario.

*Inland lakes* do not include storm water management ponds, ponds constructed for irrigation purposes, such as those on a golf course or used for agriculture, lakes that have been constructed and managed with the sole purpose of supporting essential infrastructure, and where their *ecological function* is not a consideration in their management.

## Institutional Use

Include uses such as government buildings, hospital, schools, churches, cemetery uses.

For the purposes of Section 3.1 of this Plan, means land uses where there is a threat to the safe evacuation of vulnerable populations such as older persons, persons with disabilities, and those who are sick or young, during an emergency as a result of flooding, failure of floodproofing measures or protection works, or erosion.

## Intake Protection Zone

An area as delineated in Schedule E of this Plan and in the Source Protection Plan for the Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Area that surrounds a municipal surface water intake and within which it is desirable to regulate or monitor drinking water threats. Where a conflict in mapping arises, the Source Protection Plan shall prevail.

## Intensification

The *development* of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a. *redevelopment*, including the reuse of brownfields;
- b. the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c. *infill development*; and
- d. the expansion or conversion of existing buildings. (PPS, 2020)

## Interface

The physical relationship between two or more uses, such as, a building and street. It is the intent of urban design to reinforce this relationship and increase its impacts positively on the *public realm*.

## Intermittent Stream

Stream-related watercourses that contain water or are dry at times of the year that are more or less predictable, generally flowing during wet seasons of the year but not the entire year, and where the water table is above the stream bottom during parts of the year (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

# K

## Key Hydrologic Areas

*Significant groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers, and significant surface water contribution areas* that are necessary for the ecological and hydrologic integrity of a *watershed* (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Key Hydrologic Features

*Permanent streams, intermittent streams, inland lakes and their littoral zones, seepage areas and springs, and wetlands* (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Key Natural Heritage Features

*Habitat of endangered species and threatened species; fish habitat; wetlands; life science areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs), significant valleylands, significant woodlands; significant wildlife habitat (including habitat of special concern species); sand barrens, savannahs, and tallgrass prairies; and alvars (Growth Plan, 2019).*

## L

### Lake

Any inland body of standing water, usually fresh water, larger than a pool or pond or a body of water filling a depression in the earth's surface.

### Landform Features

Distinctive physical attributes of land such as slope, shape, elevation and relief.

### Large Inland Lakes

Those waterbodies having a surface area of equal to or greater than 100 square kilometres where there is not a measurable or predictable response to a single runoff event.

### Lateral Connection

The point at which a sewer or water line coming out from homes and businesses connects to the municipal sewer or water line.

### Legal or Technical Reasons

Severances for purposes such as easements, corrections of deeds, quit claims, and minor boundary adjustments, which do not result in the creation of a new lot (PPS, 2020).

## Linkages

An area, that may or may not be associated with the presence of existing natural features and areas, that provides and maintains ecological connectivity between core areas consisting of natural features and areas, and supports a range of community and ecosystem processes enabling plants and animals to move among *natural heritage features*, in some cases over multiple generations, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of the overall *natural environment system*.

## Local Growth Centres and Corridors

Established areas, outside of *strategic growth areas*, that will be the focus for growth within Area Municipalities and the preferred location for public and private investment. *Local growth centres and corridors* will vary in size, nature and character, and may include traditional downtown cores and key mixed use areas and areas of *intensification* along transit corridors.

## Low and Moderate Income Households

In the case of ownership housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 per cent of the income distribution for the *regional market area*; or in the case of rental housing, households with incomes in the lowest 60 per cent of the income distribution for renter households for the *regional market area* (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Low Impact Development

An approach to stormwater management that seeks to manage rain and other precipitation as close as possible to where it falls to mitigate the impacts of increased runoff and stormwater pollution. It typically includes a set of site design strategies and distributed, small-scale structural practices to mimic the natural hydrology to the greatest extent possible through infiltration, evapotranspiration, harvesting, filtration, and detention of stormwater. *Low impact development* can include, for example: bio-swales, vegetated areas at the edge of paved surfaces, permeable pavement, rain gardens, green roofs, and exfiltration systems. *Low impact development* often employs vegetation and soil in its design, however, that does not always have to be the case and the specific form may vary considering local conditions and community character (Growth Plan, 2019).

# M

## Major Facilities

Facilities which may require separation from sensitive land uses, including but not limited to airports, manufacturing uses, transportation *infrastructure* and corridors, *rail facilities*, *marine facilities*, sewage treatment facilities, *waste management systems*, oil and gas pipelines, industries, energy generation facilities and transmission systems, and resource extraction activities (PPS, 2020).

## Major Goods Movement Facilities and Corridors

Transportation facilities and corridors associated with the inter- and intra-provincial movement of goods. Examples include: inter-modal facilities, ports, airports, *rail facilities*, truck terminals, freight corridors, freight facilities, and haul routes and primary transportation corridors used for the movement of goods. Approaches that are freight-supportive may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province or based on municipal approaches that achieve the same objectives (PPS, 2020).

## Major Institutional Uses

Major trip generators that provide essential services for every stage of life and benefit from being close to urban services and amenities. Generally, *major institutional uses* are considered post-secondary institutions (i.e., colleges, universities, and trade schools), health care facilities and research centres (i.e., hospitals); and corporate government headquarters.

## Major Office Use

Freestanding office buildings of approximately 4,000 square metres of floor space or greater, or with 200 jobs or more (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Major Recreational Use

(Greenbelt Plan area only): a recreational use that requires large-scale modification of terrain, vegetation or both and usually also requires large-scale buildings or structures, including but not limited to the following: golf courses; serviced playing fields; serviced campgrounds; and ski hills.

## Major Retail / Major Commercial Uses

Large-scale or large-format stand-alone retail stores or retail centres that have the primary purpose of commercial activities.

## Major Transit Station Areas

The area including and around any existing or planned *higher order transit station* or stop within a *settlement area*; or the area including and around a major bus depot in an urban core. *Major transit station areas* generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk, and include protected *major transit station areas* (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Major Trip Generators

Origins and destinations with high population densities or concentrated activities which generate many trips (e.g., *urban growth centres* and other downtowns, *major office* and *office parks*, *major retail / major commercial*, *employment areas*, *community hubs*, large parks and recreational destinations, post-secondary institutions and other *public service facilities*, and other mixed-use areas).

## Marine Facilities

Ferries, harbours, ports, ferry terminals, canals and associated uses, including designated lands for future *marine facilities* (PPS, 2020).

## Mine Hazards

Any feature of a mine as defined under the Mining Act, or any related disturbance of the ground that has not been rehabilitated (PPS 2020).

## Minerals

Metallic minerals and non-metallic minerals as herein defined, but does not include *mineral aggregate resources* or *petroleum resources*.

Metallic minerals means those minerals from which metals (e.g. copper, nickel, gold) are derived.



Non-metallic minerals means those minerals that are of value for intrinsic properties of the minerals themselves and not as a source of metal. They are generally synonymous with industrial minerals (e.g. asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, and wollastonite) (PPS, 2020).

## Mineral Aggregate Operation

- a. Lands under license or permit, other than for wayside pits and quarries, issued in accordance with the *Aggregate Resources Act*;
- b. For lands not designated under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, established pits and quarries that are not in contravention of municipal zoning by-laws and including adjacent land under agreement with or owned by the operator, to permit continuation of the operation; and
- c. Associated facilities used in extraction, transport, beneficiation, processing or recycling of *mineral aggregate resources* and derived products such as asphalt and concrete, or the production of secondary related products (PPS, 2020).

## Mineral Aggregate Resources

Gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the *Aggregate Resources Act* suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but does not include metallic ores, asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the *Mining Act* (PPS, 2020).

## Mineral Deposits

Areas of identified *minerals* that have sufficient quantity and quality based on specific geological evidence to warrant present or future extraction (PPS, 2020).

## Mineral Mining Operation

Mining operations and associated facilities, or, past producing mines with remaining mineral development potential that have not been permanently rehabilitated to another use (PPS, 2020).

## Minimum Distance Separation Formulae

The formulae and guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time, to separate uses so as to reduce incompatibility concerns about odour from livestock facilities. (PPS, 2020).

## Multimodal

The availability or use of more than one form of transportation, such as automobiles, walking, cycling, buses, rapid transit, rail (such as commuter and freight), trucks, air, and marine (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Multimodal Transportation System

*A transportation system* which may include several forms of transportation such as automobiles, walking, trucks, cycling, buses, rapid transit, rail (such as commuter and freight), air and marine (PPS, 2020).

## Municipal Comprehensive Review

A new official plan, or an official plan amendment, initiated by the Region under Section 26 of the Planning Act, 1990 that comprehensively applies Provincial policies and plans and the applicable policies of this Plan.

## Municipal Water and Wastewater Systems/Services

Municipal water systems/services are all or part of a drinking-water system:

- a. that is owned by a municipality or by a municipal service board established under section 195 of the Municipal Act, 2001;
- b. that is owned by a corporation established under section 203 of the Municipal Act, 2001;
- c. from which a municipality obtains or will obtain water under the terms of a contract between the municipality and the owner of the system; or
- d. that is in a prescribed class of municipal drinking-water systems as defined in regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002.

And, municipal wastewater systems/services are any sewage works owned or operated by a municipality.

# N

## Natural Environment System

An ecologically integrated system made up of the *Provincial natural heritage systems, natural heritage features and areas, other wetlands, key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features, key hydrologic areas, shoreline areas, hydrologic functions, supporting features and areas, hazardous lands, and linkages* intended to provide connectivity and support natural processes which are necessary to maintain biological and hydrological diversity, *ecological functions*, ecosystem services, viable populations of indigenous species, and ecosystems.

## Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Features and areas, including *significant wetlands, significant coastal wetlands, other coastal wetlands, fish habitat, significant woodlands, significant valleylands, habitat of endangered species and threatened species, significant wildlife habitat, and significant areas of natural and scientific interest*, which are important for their environmental and social values as a legacy of the natural landscapes of an area (modified from PPS, 2020). For the purposes of this definition, *natural heritage features and areas* includes *other woodlands, earth science areas of natural and scientific interest* (provincial and regional), and *life science areas of natural and scientific interest* (provincial and regional).

## Natural Heritage System

A system made up of *natural heritage features and areas, wetlands, and linkages* intended to provide connectivity (at the regional or site level) and support natural processes which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species, and ecosystems. These systems can include *key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features*, federal and provincial parks and conservation reserves, other natural heritage features and areas, lands that have been restored or have the potential to be restored to a natural state, associated areas that support *hydrologic functions*, and working landscapes that enable *ecological functions* to continue.

## Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan

The *natural heritage system* mapped and issued by the Province in accordance with the Growth Plan.

## Natural Self-Sustaining Vegetation

Vegetation dominated by native plant species that can grow and persist without direct human management, protection, or tending.

## Negative Impacts

- a. In regard to water, degradation to the quality or quantity of surface or groundwater, *key hydrologic features* or *vulnerable* areas and their related *hydrologic functions*, due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration activities*;
- b. In regard to *fish habitat*, any permanent alteration to, or destruction of *fish habitat*, except where, in conjunction with the appropriate authorities, it has been authorized under the *Fisheries Act*; and
- c. In regard to other *natural heritage features and areas*, degradation that threatens the health and integrity of the natural features or *ecological functions* for which an area is identified due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

## Net-Zero

Either emitting no greenhouse gas emissions or offsetting emissions through actions such as tree planting that capture carbon before it is released into the air.

## Niagara Economic Centre

*Settlement areas* conceptually depicted on Schedules 2, 5, and 6 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019 that, due to their proximity to major international border crossings, have unique economic importance to the region and Ontario.

## Niagara Economic Gateway

The total geographic area of the local municipalities a part of the *Niagara Economic Centre* or *Niagara Economic Zone*.

## Niagara Economic Zone

*Settlement areas* within the zone that is conceptually depicted on Schedules 2, 5, and 6 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019, that, due to their proximity to major international border crossings, have unique economic importance to the region and Ontario.

## Normal Farm Practices

A practice, as defined in the Farming and Food Production Protection Act, 1998, that is conducted in a manner consistent with proper and acceptable customs and standards as established and followed by similar agricultural operations under similar circumstances; or makes use of innovative technology in a manner consistent with proper advanced farm management practices. *Normal farm* practices shall be consistent with the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 and regulations made under that Act (PPS, 2020).

# O

## Office Parks

*Employment areas* or areas where there are significant concentrations of offices with high employment densities (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Oil, Gas, and Salt Hazards

Any feature of a well or work as defined under the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act, or any related disturbance of the ground that has not been rehabilitated (PPS, 2020).

## One Hundred Year Flood

For *river, stream and small inland lake systems*, means that flood, based on an analysis of precipitation, snow melt, or a combination thereof, having a return period of 100 years on average, or having a one percent chance of occurring or being exceeded in any given year.

## One Hundred Year Flood Level

- a. For the shorelines of the Great Lakes, the peak instantaneous stillwater level, resulting from combinations of mean monthly *lake* levels and wind setups, which has a one per cent chance of being equalled or exceeded in any given year;
- b. In the connecting channels (St. Mary's, St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers), the peak instantaneous stillwater level which has a one per cent chance of being equalled or exceeded in any given year; and
- c. For large *inland lakes*, *lake* levels and wind setups that have a one per cent chance of being equalled or exceeded in any given year, except that, where sufficient water level records do not exist, the *one hundred year flood level* is based on the highest known water level and wind setups.

## On-Farm Diversified Uses

On a farm; secondary use; limited in area; includes, but is not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses and value-added uses; compatible with surrounding agricultural operations.

## Other Water-Related Hazards

Water-associated phenomena other than *flooding hazards* and *wave uprush* which act on shorelines. This includes, but is not limited to ship-generated waves, ice piling and ice jamming.

## Other Wetlands

Lands that meet the definition of a *wetland*, and which have not been evaluated as a *provincially significant wetland*.

## Other Woodlands

*Woodlands* determined to be ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation, or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or *natural heritage system*. *Other woodlands* include all terrestrial treed vegetation communities where the percent tree cover is greater than 25 per cent. *Other woodlands* would not include *woodlands* meeting the criteria as *significant woodlands*.



# P

## Permanent Streams

Watercourses that contain water during all times of the year.

## Petroleum Resource Operation

Oil, gas and salt wells and associated facilities and other drilling operations, oil field fluid disposal wells and associated facilities, and wells and facilities for the underground storage of natural gas and other hydrocarbons (PPS, 2020).

## Petroleum Resources

Oil, gas, and salt (extracted by solution mining method) and formation water resources which have been identified through exploration and verified by preliminary drilling or other forms of investigation. This may include sites of former operations where resources are still present or former sites that may be converted to underground storage for natural gas or other hydrocarbons (PPS, 2020).

## Place-Making

The purposeful planning, and design of buildings, *public realm*, and *transportation systems* to achieve attachment to a place.

## Planned Corridors

Corridors or future corridors which are required to meet projected needs, and are identified through this Plan, preferred alignment(s) determined through the Environmental Assessment Act process, or identified through planning studies where the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, Metrolinx, or Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) or any successor to those Ministries or entities, is actively pursuing the identification of a corridor. Approaches for the protection of *planned corridors* may be recommended in guidelines developed by the Province (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Portable Asphalt Plant

A facility:

- a. with equipment designed to heat and dry aggregate and to mix aggregate with bituminous asphalt to produce asphalt paving material, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process; and
- b. which is not of permanent construction, but which is to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project (PPS, 2020).

## Portable Concrete Plant

A building or structure:

- a. with equipment designed to mix cementing materials, aggregate, water and admixtures to produce concrete, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process; and
- b. which is not of permanent construction, but which is designed to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project (PPS, 2020).

## Prime Agricultural Area

Areas where *prime agricultural lands* predominate. This includes areas of *prime agricultural lands* and associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through seven lands, and additional areas where there is a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. *Prime agricultural areas* may be identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food using guidelines developed by the Province as amended from time to time. A *prime agricultural area* may also be identified through an alternative agricultural land evaluation system approved by the Province (PPS, 2020).

## Prime Agricultural Land

*Specialty crop areas* and/or Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 lands, as amended from time to time, in this order of priority for protection (PPS, 2020).

## Protected Heritage Property

Property designated under Parts IV, V or VI of the Ontario Heritage Act; property subject to a heritage conservation easement under Parts II or IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; property identified by the Province and prescribed public bodies as provincial heritage property under the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties; property protected under federal legislation, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites (PPS, 2020).

## Protected Major Transit Station Area

The area surrounding and including an existing or planned *higher order transit* station or stop as identified on Schedule B to this Plan.

## Provincial and Federal Requirements

- a. In regard to Section 3.1.12 of this Plan, legislation and policies administered by the federal or provincial governments for the purpose of fisheries protection (including *fish* and *fish habitat*), and related, scientifically established standards such as water quality criteria for protecting lake trout populations; and
- b. In regard to Section 3.1.13 of this Plan, legislation and policies administered by the provincial government or federal government, where applicable, for the purpose of protecting species at risk and their habitat.

## Provincial Natural Heritage System

Collectively the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan Natural Heritage system*.

## Provincially Significant Employment Zones

Areas defined by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of long-term planning for job creation and economic development. Provincially *significant employment zones* can consist of *employment areas* as well as mixed-use areas that contain a significant number of jobs (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Provincially Significant Wetlands

Those *wetlands* identified as provincially significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time (PPS, 2020).

## Public Realm

The publicly owned places and spaces that are accessible by everyone. These can include municipal streets, lanes, squares, plazas, sidewalks, trails, parks, open spaces, waterfronts, public transit systems, conservation areas, and civic buildings and institutions.

## Public Service Facilities

Lands, buildings and structures for the provision of programs and services provided or subsidized by a government or other body, such as social assistance, recreation, police and fire protection, health and educational programs, long-term care services, and cultural services. *Public service facilities* do not include *infrastructure* (PPS, 2020).

## Public Works Projects

Construction projects, such as roads, highways or dams, bridges and waterworks financed by public funds and constructed by or under contract with the Region or Local municipality for the benefit or use of the public.

## Q

## Quality and Quantity of Water

Measured by indicators associated with hydrologic function such as minimum base flow, depth to water table, aquifer pressure, oxygen levels, suspended solids, temperature, bacteria, nutrients and hazardous contaminants, and hydrologic regime

## Quaternary Watershed

A watershed with a drainage area that is between 62 km<sup>2</sup> and 870 km<sup>2</sup> that drains into a *tertiary watershed*. There are 12 quaternary watersheds in Niagara:

- Fifteen and Sixteen Mile Creeks
- Four Mile Creek and NOTL
- Jordan Harbour -Twenty Mile Creek
- Twelve Mile Creek
- Welland Canal North
- Welland Canal South
- West Lake Ontario Shoreline
- Niagara River North
- Niagara River South
- Welland River East
- Welland River West
- Northeast Lake Erie Shoreline

## R

### Rail Facilities

Rail corridors, rail sidings, train stations, inter-modal facilities, rail yards and associated uses, including designated lands for future rail facilities (PPS, 2020).

### Redevelopment

The creation of new units, uses or lots on previously developed land in existing communities, including *brownfield sites*.

## **Regional Market Area**

An area that has a high degree of social and economic interaction. The boundaries of the Niagara Region will serve as the *regional market area* for the purposes of assessing housing market conditions.

## **Renewable Energy System**

A system that generates electricity, heat and/or cooling from a renewable energy source.

For the purposes of this definition:

A renewable energy source is an energy source that is renewed by natural processes and includes wind, water, biomass, biogas, biofuel, solar energy, geothermal energy and tidal forces (PPS, 2020).

## **Residence Surplus to a Farming Operation**

An existing habitable farm residence that is rendered surplus as a result of farm consolidation (the acquisition of additional farm parcels to be operated as one farm operation) (PPS, 2020).

## **Resilience**

The ability to withstand, adapt to, or efficiently recover from, exposure to the negative effects of exogenous and endogenous shocks.

## **Risk Management Official**

A person appointed under Part IV of the Clean Water Act, 2006, by the Council of a municipality that has authority to pass by-laws respecting water production, treatment, and storage under the Municipal Act, 2001 (Source Protection Plan for the Niagara Source Protection Area).

## **River, Stream and Small Inland Lake Systems**

All watercourses, rivers, streams, and small *inland lakes* or waterbodies that have a measurable or predictable response to a single runoff event.

## Rural Areas

A system of lands within local municipalities that may include *rural settlements*, *rural lands*, *prime agricultural areas*, *natural heritage features and areas*, and resource areas (PPS, 2020).

## Rural Lands

Lands which are located outside *settlement areas* and which are outside *prime agricultural areas* (PPS, 2020).

## Rural Settlements

Communities located in *rural areas*, as delineated on Schedule B of the Niagara Official Plan, that are serviced by individual private on-site water and/or private wastewater systems, contain a limited amount of undeveloped lands that are designated for development, and are to accommodate limited growth. All *settlement areas* that are identified as hamlets in the Greenbelt Plan, or as minor urban centres in the Niagara Escarpment Plan are considered *rural settlements* for the purposes of this Plan, including those that would not otherwise meet this definition.

# S

## Seepage Areas and Springs

Sites of emergence of groundwater where the water table is present at the ground surface (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

## Sense of Place

The emotional attachments, meanings and identities people develop or experience in particular locations and environments. It is also used to describe the distinctiveness or unique character of a place.



## Sensitive

In regard to *surface water features* and *groundwater features*, means areas that are particularly susceptible to impacts from activities or events including, but not limited to, water withdrawals, and additions of pollutants (PPS, 2020).

## Sensitive Land Uses

Buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by a nearby *major facility*. *Sensitive land uses* may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to: residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities (PPS, 2020).

## Setback

A physical separation that forms a boundary by establishing an exact distance from a fixed point, such as a property line, an adjacent structure, or a natural feature, within which *development* and/or *site alteration* is prohibited in accordance with the policies of the Conservation Authority.

## Settlement Areas

*Urban areas* and *rural settlements* within local municipalities (such as cities, towns, villages and hamlets) that are:

- a. built up areas where development is concentrated and which have a mix of land uses; and
- b. lands which have been designated in an Official Plan for development in accordance with the policies of this Plan. Where there are no lands that have been designated for development, the *settlement area* may be no larger than the area where development is concentrated.

## Sewage Works

Any works for the collection, transmission, treatment and disposal of sewage or any part of such works but does not include plumbing to which the *Building Code Act*, 1992 applies. For the purposes of this definition: Sewage includes, but is not limited to drainage, storm water, residential wastes, commercial wastes and industrial wastes.

## Shoreline Areas

The interface between terrestrial and aquatic environments, allowing for interactions between them, providing: specialized habitats (e.g., natural beach, overhanging cover, bird stopover or nesting, etc.), natural cover, areas of shoreline erosion or accretion, nutrient and sediment filtration / buffering, shading, foraging opportunities.

## Significant

In regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest. Processes and criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest are established by the Province under the authority of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest

Those *areas of natural and scientific interest* identified as provincially significant and regionally significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time.

## Significant Coastal Wetlands

Those *coastal wetlands* identified as provincially significant by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry using evaluation procedures established by the Province, as amended from time to time (PPS, 2020).

## Significant Drinking Water Threats or Significant Threat

A threat that, according to a risk assessment, poses or has the potential to pose a significant risk to the quality of municipal drinking water (Based on the Source Protection Plan for the Niagara Source Protection Area).

## Significant Groundwater Recharge Area

An area that has been identified as:

- a. a *significant groundwater recharge area* by any public body for the purposes of implementing the PPS;

- b. a *significant groundwater recharge area* in the assessment report required under the Clean Water Act, 2006; or
- c. an ecologically *significant groundwater recharge area* delineated in a *subwatershed study* or equivalent in accordance with provincial guidelines.

For the purposes of this definition, ecologically *significant groundwater recharge areas* are areas of land that are responsible for replenishing groundwater systems that directly support *sensitive* areas like cold water streams and wetlands (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

Groundwater recharge areas are also classified as “significant” where they supply more water to an aquifer than the surrounding area (NPCA, 2013). In other words, a recharge area is considered significant when it helps to maintain the water level in an aquifer that supplies a community with drinking water, or supplies groundwater recharge to a coldwater ecosystem that is dependent on this recharge to maintain its *ecological function* (N.V.C.A., 2015b).

## **Significant Surface Water Contribution Areas**

Areas, generally associated with headwater catchments that contribute to baseflow volumes which are significant to the overall surface water flow volumes within a *watershed* (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

*Significant surface water contribution areas* include headwater drainage features classified as protection, conservation and mitigation.

## **Significant Valleylands**

Valleyland which is ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province (Growth Plan, 2019).

## **Significant Wildlife Habitat**

Wildlife habitat that is ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation, or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province (PPS, 2020).

## Significant Woodlands

*Woodlands* that are ecologically important in terms of features such as species composition, age of trees and stand history; functionally important due to its contribution to the broader landscape because of its location, size or due to the amount of forest cover in the planning area; or economically important due to site quality, species composition, or past management history (PPS, 2020).

## Site Alteration

Activities, such as grading, excavation and the placement of fill that would change the landform and natural vegetative characteristics of a site (PPS, 2020).

## Soil Management Plan

A plan completed by a professional engineer or geoscientist that outlines the condition of soil at a source site where soil is excavated (Best Management Practices for Excess Soil and modified for this Plan).

## Source Protection Plan

A drinking water source protection plan prepared under of the Clean Water Act, 2006 (Source Protection Plan for the Niagara Source Protection Area).

## Source Water

Water in its natural or raw state, prior to being drawn into a municipal drinking water system (Source Protection Plan for the Niagara Source Protection Area).

## Special Policy Area

An area within a community that has historically existed in the *floodplain* and where site specific policies, approved by both the Ministers of Natural Resources and Forestry and Municipal Affairs and Housing, are intended to provide for the continued viability of *existing uses* (which are generally on a small scale) and address the significant social and economic hardships to the community that would result from strict adherence to provincial policies concerning *development*. The criteria and procedures for approval are established by the Province. A Special Policy Area is not intended to allow for new or intensified *development* and *site alteration*, if a community has feasible opportunities for *development* outside the *floodplain*.

## Specialized Housing Needs

Any housing, including dedicated facilities, in whole or in part, that is used by people who have specific needs beyond economic needs, including but not limited to, needs such as mobility requirements or support functions required for daily living. Examples include, but are not limited to, long-term care homes, adaptable and accessible housing, and housing for persons with disabilities such as physical, sensory or mental health disabilities, and housing for older persons.

## Specialty Crop Area

Areas designated using guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time. In these areas, specialty crops are predominantly grown such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil, usually resulting from:

- a. soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both;
- b. farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops; and
- c. a long-term investment of capital in areas such as crops, drainage, *infrastructure* and related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops (PPS, 2020).

## Specialty Crop Guidelines

Guidelines developed by the Region or Province, as amended from time to time.

## Standards and Guidelines for Consulting Archaeologists

The 2011 Standards and Guidelines for Consultants Archaeologists, or as superseded, and any bulletins that clarify and expand on the requirements in the Standards and Guidelines, compliance to which is mandatory for all consultant archaeologists who carry out archaeology in Ontario.

## Stormwater Management Facility

A facility for the treatment, retention, infiltration or control of stormwater.

## Stormwater Master Plan

A long-range plan that assesses existing and planned stormwater facilities and systems and outlines stormwater *infrastructure* requirements for new and existing *development* within a *settlement area*. *Stormwater master plans* are informed by *watershed planning* and are completed in accordance with the environmental assessment processes under the Environmental Assessment Act, 1990, as amended.

## Strategic Growth Areas

Within *settlement areas*, nodes, corridors, and other areas that have been identified in Schedule B to be the focus for accommodating *intensification* and higher-density mixed uses in a more *compact built form*. *Strategic growth areas* include *urban growth centres*, regional growth centres, *major transit station areas*, and other major opportunities that may include infill, *redevelopment*, *brownfield* sites, the expansion or conversion of existing buildings, or *greyfields*. Lands along major roads, arterials, or other areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or higher order transit corridors may also be identified as *strategic growth areas* (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Subwatershed

An area that is drained by a tributary or some defined portion of a stream. A *subwatershed* is smaller nested drainage area within a quaternary watershed. There are over 200 *subwatersheds* in Niagara Region.

## Subwatershed Planning

Planning that reflects and refines the goals, objectives, targets, and assessments of *watershed planning*, as available at the time *subwatershed planning* is completed, for smaller drainage areas, is tailored to *subwatershed* needs and addresses local issues.

*Subwatershed planning* typically includes: the consideration of existing development and the evaluation of the impacts of any potential or proposed land uses and development; the identification hydrologic features, areas, *linkages*, and functions; the identification of natural features, areas, and related *hydrologic functions*; and a plan for protecting, improving, or restoring the quality and quantity of water within a *subwatershed*.

*Subwatershed planning* is based on pre-development monitoring and evaluation; is integrated with natural heritage protection; and identifies specific criteria, objectives, actions, thresholds, targets, and best management practices for development, for water and wastewater servicing, for stormwater management, for managing and minimizing impacts related to severe weather events, and to support ecological needs.

## Subwatershed Study

The plan or outcome from a *subwatershed* planning exercise.

## Supporting Features and Areas

Lands that have been restored or have the potential of being restored. *Supporting features and areas* include grasslands, meadows, and thickets (defined in accordance with Ecological Land Classification for Southern Ontario); other *valleylands*; and other *wildlife habitat*; and *enhancement areas* where they are determined to contribute to the biodiversity and *ecological function* of the *natural environment system*.

## Surface Water Feature

Water-related features on the earth's surface, including headwaters, rivers, stream channels, *inland lakes*, *seepage areas*, recharge/discharge areas, springs, *wetlands*, and associated riparian lands that can be defined by their soil moisture, soil type, vegetation, or topographic characteristics (PPS, 2020).

## Sustainable

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

## Sustainable Design

The design of the urban environment that mitigates and adapts to *climate change* and reduces or eliminates other negative environmental impacts.



# T

## **Tallgrass Prairie**

Land (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits *tallgrass prairie* characteristics) that:

- a. has vegetation dominated by non-woody plants, including *tallgrass prairie* species that are maintained by seasonal drought, periodic disturbances such as fire, or both;
- b. has less than 25 per cent tree cover;
- c. has mineral soils; and
- d. has been further identified, by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

## **Temporary Storage Site**

Sites owned or controlled by the owner/operator of a source site or receiving site, at which *excess soil* is temporarily stored for two years or less. Includes sites to treat, remediate and transfer *excess soil* to other sites for final placement or disposal (Best Management Practices for Excess Soil and modified for this Plan).

## **Tertiary Watershed**

A *watershed* that drains and discharges into a large water body. There are three *tertiary watersheds* in Niagara, Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and Niagara River.

## **Threatened Species**

A species that is classified as “Threatened Species” on the Species at Risk in Ontario List, as updated and amended from time to time.

## **Total Developable Area**

The total area of the property less the area occupied by key natural heritage features, *key hydrologic features* and any related *vegetation protection zone*.

## Transit Priority Corridors

Transportation corridors that aim to improve transit reliability, speed and capacity through roadway treatments, such as: transit only lanes that allow buses to bypass general traffic, dedicated bus lanes, and queue jump traffic signals that allow buses to go before the general traffic green light.

## Transit Service Integration

The coordinated planning or operation of transit service between two or more agencies or services that contributes to the goal of seamless service for riders and could include considerations of service schedules, service routes, information, fare policy, and fare payment (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Transit-Supportive

Relating to *development* that makes transit viable and improves the quality of the experience of using transit. It often refers to compact, mixed-use development that has a high level of employment and residential densities. Transit-supportive development will be consistent with Ontario's Transit Supportive Guidelines (Growth Plan, 2019).

## Transport Pathway

In respect of an *intake protection zone*, means works or any other thing that reduces the time it takes for a contaminant to reach a surface water intake and may include storm sewers, discharge pipes, utility trenches, ditches, swales, drainage works or any other types of drain (2017 Technical Rules under the Clean Water Act).

## Transportation System

A system consisting of facilities, corridors and rights-of-way for the movement of people and goods, and associated transportation facilities including transit stops and stations, sidewalks, cycle lanes, bus lanes, high occupancy vehicle lanes, *rail facilities*, parking facilities, park-and-ride lots, service centres, rest stops, vehicle inspection stations, inter-modal facilities, harbours, airports, *marine facilities*, ferries, canals and associated facilities such as storage and maintenance (PPS, 2020).

## Two Zone Concept

An approach to *floodplain* management where the *floodplain* is differentiated in two parts: the *floodway* and the *flood fringe*.

# U

## Universal Design

The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

## Urban Agriculture

Within *urban areas*, agricultural production of food and non-food products accessory to the principle use of a property. Examples of *urban agriculture* include community, school, and rooftop gardens, ground-based outdoor community and urban market gardens, urban livestock, and hydroponic farms.

## Urban Areas

Lands located within a defined boundary as identified in Schedule B. Urban areas are made up of *built-up areas*, *designated greenfield areas* and *excess lands* and does not include hamlets.

## Urban Growth Centre

Existing or emerging downtown areas shown in Schedule 4 of A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Horseshoe and as further identified by the Minister on April 2, 2008 (Growth Plan, 2019). For the purposes of this Plan, downtown St. Catharines is identified on Schedule B of this Plan.

## Utility

Any system, works, plant, pipeline, or equipment providing a service necessary to the public interest including but not limited to electric power generation and transmission, stormwater management, water supply, sewage treatment and disposal, waste management, communications and telecommunications, and oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

## V

### Valleylands

A natural area that occurs in a valley or other landform depression that has water flowing through or standing for some period of the year (PPS, 2020).

### Vegetation Protection Zone

A vegetated *buffer* area surrounding a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature* (Greenbelt Plan, 2017).

### Vulnerable

Surface and/or groundwater that can be easily changed or impacted.

## W

### Waste Disposal Sites

The application of untreated septage, the storage, treatment, and discharge of tailings from mines and waste *disposal sites* as defined under Part V of the *Ontario Environmental Protection Act*, 1990 with respect to Source Water Protection.

## **Waste Management**

The activities and actions required to manage waste from its inception to its final disposal. This includes the collection, transport, treatment, and disposal of waste, together with monitoring and regulation of the waste *management* process.

## **Wastewater Services**

Any works provided by the municipality for the collection, *lateral connection*, transmission, and treatment of sewage that are connected to a centralized *wastewater treatment facility*.

## **Wastewater Treatment Plant/Facility**

The part of a *sewage works* that treats or disposes of sewage but does not include the part of the *sewage works* that collects or transmits sewage.

## **Water Budget**

An accounting of the inflow to, outflow from, and storage changes of water in a hydrologic unit.

## **Water Resource System**

A system consisting of *groundwater features and areas* and *surface water features* (including *shoreline areas*), and *hydrologic functions*, which provide the water resources necessary to sustain healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and human water consumption. The *water resource system* comprises of *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas* (Growth Plan, 2019).

## **Water Services**

Any works provided by the municipality for the distribution, *lateral connection*, transmission, and treatment of drinking water.

## **Watershed**

An area that is drained by a river and its tributaries.

## Watershed Plan

The plan our outcome from a *watershed planning* exercise either at the *tertiary* or *quaternary* level.

## Watershed Planning

Planning that provides a framework for establishing goals, objectives, and direction for the protection of water resources, the management of human activities, land, water, aquatic life, and resources within a watershed and for the assessment of cumulative, cross-jurisdictional, and *cross-watershed* impacts.

*Watershed planning* typically includes: watershed characterization, a *water budget*, and conservation plan; nutrient loading assessments; consideration of the impacts of a changing climate and severe weather events; land and water use management objectives and strategies; scenario modelling to evaluate the impacts of forecasted growth and servicing options, and mitigation measures; an environmental monitoring plan; requirements for the use of environmental best management practices, programs, and performance measures; criteria for evaluating the protection of *quality and quantity of water*; the identification and protection of *hydrologic features*, areas, and functions and the inter-relationships between or among them; and targets for the protection and restoration of riparian areas.

## Wave Uprush

The rush of water up onto a shoreline or structure following the breaking of a wave; the limit of *wave uprush* is the point of furthest landward rush of water onto the shoreline.

## Wayside Pits and Quarries

A temporary pit or quarry opened and used by or for a public authority solely for the purpose of a particular project or contract of road construction and not located on the road right-of-way (PPS, 2020).

## Wellhead Protection Areas

The surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or well field that supplies a public water system and through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move so as eventually to reach the water well or well field.

## Wetlands

Lands that are seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water, as well as lands where the water table is close to or at the surface. In either case the presence of abundant water has caused the formation of hydric soils and has favoured the dominance of either hydrophytic plants or water tolerant plants. The four major types of *wetlands* are swamps, marshes, bogs and fens. Periodically soaked or wet lands being used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibit *wetland* characteristics are not considered to be *wetlands* for the purposes of this definition (PPS, 2020).

## Wildland Fire Assessment and Mitigation Standards

The combination of risk assessment tools and environmentally appropriate mitigation measures identified by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to be incorporated into the design, construction and/or modification of buildings, structures, properties and/or communities to reduce the risk to public safety, *infrastructure* and property from wildland fire.

## Wildlife Habitat

Areas where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter, and space needed to sustain their populations. Specific *wildlife habitats* of concern may include areas where species concentrate at a vulnerable point in their annual or life cycle; and areas which are important to migratory or non-migratory species (PPS, 2020).

## Woodlands

Treed areas that provide environmental and economic benefits to both the private landowner and the general public, such as erosion prevention, hydrological and nutrient cycling, provision of clean air and the long-term storage of carbon, provision of *wildlife habitat*, outdoor recreational opportunities, and the *sustainable* harvest of a wide range of woodland products. *Woodlands* include treed areas, woodlots or forested areas and vary in their level of significance at the local, regional and provincial levels. *Woodlands* will be delineated according to the Province's Ecological Land Classification system definition for forest (PPS, 2020). For the purposes of this definition, forests include terrestrial vegetation communities as defined in accordance with the Ecological Land Classification (ELC) system, where the tree cover is greater than 60 per cent.



## Woodland Enhancement Plan

A study that is carried out when a proponent proposes to remove a *woodland* or portion of a *woodland*, including cultural and regenerating *woodlands* where the purpose of the *woodland* enhancement is to increase *woodland* cover in the region as part of a longer term perspective. The *woodland enhancement plan* must be prepared to the satisfaction of the Region, in consultation with other agencies as the Region sees fit. As part of requirement for a *woodland enhancement plan* the following should be taken into consideration:

- a. if the removal occurs within the *Urban Area* that the enhancement also be provided in the *Urban Area*;
- b. that the enhancement be in the form of a *woodland* and not just the planting of individual trees, i.e., street planting or ornamental tree planting in a park setting is not considered *woodland* enhancement;
- c. the goal of the *woodland* enhancement is it so create a native *woodland* of equal or greater size;
- d. landscape ecology principles including size, patch shape, connectivity, edge to area ratio should be considered;
- e. responsibilities will be determined for who will undertake the restoration of the woodland and the schedule for implementing the plan;
- f. the *woodland enhancement plan* includes a program for the long-term maintenance and management of the restoration woodland until such time as it is deemed to be self-sufficient or when a public agency assumes responsibility for it; and
- g. the plan includes a monitoring plan and periodic reporting to determine if the woodland is progressing toward the approved goal(s) and objectives of the plan.