

**From:** [Making Our Mark](#)  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 8, 2022 12:53:42 PM

Good Afternoon Mike,

Thank you for attending the session on the 26<sup>th</sup>, and for submitting the detailed comments below.

Your comments will be shared with several of our planning staff and considered as part of our current consultation program for the new Regional Official Plan.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

**From:** Niagara Region Website  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 6, 2022 3:34 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

### Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

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

Name

Mike Cushman

Email

[REDACTED]

Phone

[REDACTED]

Organization or Affiliation

three amigos environmental group

Address

[REDACTED]

City

Niagara Falls

Specify City

Niagara Falls

Postal Code



Province

Ontario

Topics of Interest

Urban Structure, Housing Strategy, Employment Lands Strategy, Land Budget, Natural Environment, Agriculture, Climate Change, Aggregates

Other Topics of Interest

Area urban Boundary Expansion

Comments

Niagara Official Plan, Settlement Area Boundary Expansions: I attended the, Niagara Official Plan, Settlement Area Boundary Expansions virtual meeting. My name is Mike Cushman. I became an environmentalist long ago when three generations of cancer took three members of my family and my sister lost her breasts from Breast cancer. I grew up in an Industrial neighborhood. I learned that the Niagara Regional health department ordered air monitoring tests for all the big polluting companies. From 1972-1992 they did air monitoring of the Niagara Region knowing there were huge health problems in the region from air pollution and buried ground pollution. They did air monitoring, phyto toxic studies water and wet lands studies... The Niagara River Toxics Committee: By 1979 the International Joint Commission (IJC) had already placed the Niagara River on a list of 42 of the most heavily polluted waters in the entire Great Lakes Basin. That same year, residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake, a picturesque, tourist town on the Ontario side of the river, were frequently found in the community centre, expressing their fears that their drinking water, drawn from the river's mouth, would be poisoned by the millions of litres of "treated" chemical wastes proposed to be discharged by an American firm upstream. On the American side of the river, in Niagara Falls, N.Y., there was headline after headline about a neighbourhood called Love Canal, where a mysterious oily substance from a nearby dump had oozed through the ground and turned the American dream into a nightmare for hundreds of working-class families. It was as if the "strange blight [that] crept over the area," described 17 years earlier by Rachel Carson in her book Silent Spring, was now coming to pass in and around one of the world's most majestic waterways. Also in 1979, a milestone document released by The Interagency Task Force on Hazardous Wastes in Niagara and Erie counties, N.Y. revealed that, in more than 200 dumpsites on the American side of the river, millions of tonnes of hazardous wastes were lingering in the ground. At least two of these dumps — Love Canal and the mammoth Hyde Park site in Niagara Falls, N.Y. — were

found to be sources of 2,3,7,8-Tetra-chlorodibenzo-paradioxin (2,3,7,8-TCDD), a highly potent dioxin discovered to be accumulating in the flesh of Lake Ontario fish. The last straw that year was a proposal by the American company SCA Chemical Services Inc. to discharge millions of litres of treated chemical waste into the river. This became the catalyst that finally brought Canadians and Americans together in a concerted effort to turn the tide on the flow of poisons from literally hundreds of sources along the 58-kilometre waterway. Twenty years later, on June 16, 1999, Environment Canada, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) met in Niagara Falls, Ontario to report on "some of the most significant accomplishments" that had been made since the four agencies first signed an agreement in 1987 to purge the Niagara River of toxic pollution. Among the successes, data collected by these agencies showed that concentrations of some of the worst chemicals have fallen by more than 50 per cent in the waters off Niagara-on-the-Lake, and by 80 per cent in the eggs of herring gulls nesting on a small island in the river above the Horseshoe Falls. Results like this are a tribute to every individual and organization that helped turn the corner on a century of reckless disregard for a resource of vital interest to millions of Canadian and American citizens. They also lend hope that natural systems as degraded as was the Niagara River 20 or 30 years ago can make a comeback. One of the purposes of this paper is to chronicle the efforts of individuals, organizations like Pollution Probe and Operation Clean Niagara, and government agencies such as Environment Canada and the Ontario MOE to restore this great waterway to health. It should be noted that efforts in Canada could not have succeeded to the extent that they have without the cooperation of individuals and organizations on the American side of the waterway. It is hoped that by telling the story of the work that has already been done to restore the river, others will be inspired to follow suit. Fast forward to today and we see that Environmental policy is thrown out the window. Niagara Region in conjunction with the Ontario Government and mayors of surrounding cities in the Niagara Region, pressure is being put on the Regional governments to allow the proposed urban expansions through the Niagara Region. Today's new gold rush (real estate) is the most important thing on the venue. Mayors and political people of all kinds can boast about the taxes they have created and so called affordable housing. Building housing on the very toxic lands mentioned in the Niagara River Toxics Committee, with out doing extensive clean ups. As a matter of fact the bare minimal clean ups. But before we talk about brown field redevelopment we must address the urban boundary expansions that are on the venue. All the Urban boundary expansions are flawed where the proposal is to expand outwards instead of the logical solutions of staying in the current boundaries and expand up, where possible. Smart growth programs that were suggested before stated we cannot afford to expand out and single housing units should not be the main idea. Apartments building up are the only solution for affordable housing as single detached homes cost way too much as do town houses and condos, to be a solution. So

cities that have come up with better ideas than taking away woodlands, wetlands, agricultural lands, wild life corridors, and use current boundaries where old decrepit buildings and land where old buildings were taken down, can be used. Many studies followed the NRTC report, this was the catalyst for many contaminated areas to be looked at but today most have been cleaned up minimally. The development of new natural heritage policies should proceed with caution. The biggest problem to date has not been with the policies themselves, but in the refusal of lower-tier municipalities to carefully adopt them. Cities have inherited contaminated properties left behind from the industrial revolution. Neighborhoods and cities built around these old factories so the lands left behind are large and in prime locations. Today risk assessments and record of site conditions are done by private labs hired by the polluting companies or developers. There is minimal clean up done and then they down grade pollutions and cherry pick data for so called bore samples. Risk assessments and record of site condition should be done by government and government labs to verify the environment and hence people's health are protected. Record of site condition should be: old studies done, old accidents on the property, leans or law suites against property, environmental impact on surrounding properties, wet lands or environmental sensitive lands. Today they are done with reckless abandonment towards environmental protections. least amount of clean up, build away. Love canal was a mere 2 miles from Niagara Falls Canada on the other side of the border and we have learned nothing from this. In conjunction with the recent Auditor General's report where it is stated the MECP is inept today because of the way our protection policies are written. They receive third class information to determine out environment and hence health are being protected. they have no funding and are basically, do not have the ability to do there job. So environmental assessments, risk assessments, record of site condition, all being done by the private corporations working for , the polluters or developers. That is the environmental protections in place to day, it is unacceptable. The Ford government had gutted environmental policies to enabled development, and destruction of protected lands. You the regional government are the last line of defense. You have region housing, environmental protections of the canopy and wetlands, regional health, these three things should be tied together when making such important decisions. You the Regional Government have that say. So since the provincial governments have abandoned the protections, the municipal governments are just interested in their legacy of greedy real estate profits and reuse of contaminated lands with reckless abandonment. You the region have the ability to tell the municipalities to go back to the drawing board and come up with better plans then this. Using the smart growth programs not the gold rush of today, real estate, as reasons to move forwards with any expansions. There are no penalties for you to say no to these ideas as there are no time limits here. So I ask that you make this an election item. We can ask candidates running what their belief is for the proposed urban expansions. In telling the municipalities to go back to the drawing board it can become an election issue in the up and coming municipal election and you as region

government have saved us the people from environmental disasters that are being proposed as segmented water sheds, streams and ecosystems, will only contribute to the mass extinctions happening today. Thank You Mike Cushman

