

Millar, Chris

From: Heyworth, David
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 10:50 AM
To: Millar, Chris
Cc: Morreale, Diana
Subject: FW: Re. Niagara Official Plan: Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

From: Livable Chippawa <livablechippawa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 7, 2022 5:07 PM
To: Heyworth, David <david.heyworth@niagararegion.ca>; clerk@niagarafalls.ca; Gale, Bob <Bob.Gale@niagararegion.ca>; Greenwood, Barbara <Barbara.Greenwood@niagararegion.ca>; Nicholson, Peter <Peter.Nicholson@niagararegion.ca>; Bradley, Jim <Jim.Bradley@niagararegion.ca>
Cc: Redekop, Wayne <Wayne.Redekop@niagararegion.ca>; Insinna, Tom <Tom.Insinna@niagararegion.ca>; Jordan, Jeff <Jeff.Jordan@niagararegion.ca>; Fertich, Wayne <Wayne.Fertich@niagararegion.ca>; Campion, Frank <Frank.Campion@niagararegion.ca>; Chiocchio, Pat <Pat.Chiocchio@niagararegion.ca>; Villella, Leanna <Leanna.Villella@niagararegion.ca>; Diodati, Jim <Jim.Diodati@niagararegion.ca>; Easton, Sandra <Sandra.Easton@niagararegion.ca>; Foster, Robert <Robert.Foster@niagararegion.ca>; Sendzik, Walter <Walter.Sendzik@niagararegion.ca>; Heit, Brian <brian.heit@niagararegion.ca>; Darte, George <George.Darte@niagararegion.ca>; Ip, Laura <Laura.Ip@niagararegion.ca>; Ugulini, Terry <Terry.Ugulini@niagararegion.ca>; Whalen, Tim <Tim.Whalen@niagararegion.ca>; Disero, Betty <Betty.Disero@niagararegion.ca>; Zalepa, Gary <Gary.Zalepa@niagararegion.ca>; Junkin, Marvin <Marvin.Junkin@niagararegion.ca>; Huson, Diana <Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca>; Steele, Bill <Bill.Steele@niagararegion.ca>; Butters, Barbara <Barbara.Butters@niagararegion.ca>; Gibson, Kevin <Kevin.Gibson@niagararegion.ca>; Bylsma, Dave <Dave.Bylsma@niagararegion.ca>; Witteveen, Albert <Albert.Witteveen@niagararegion.ca>; Edgar, Kelly <Kelly.Edgar@niagararegion.ca>; matt.siscoe@niagararegion.ca
Subject: Re. Niagara Official Plan: Settlement Area Boundary Expansions

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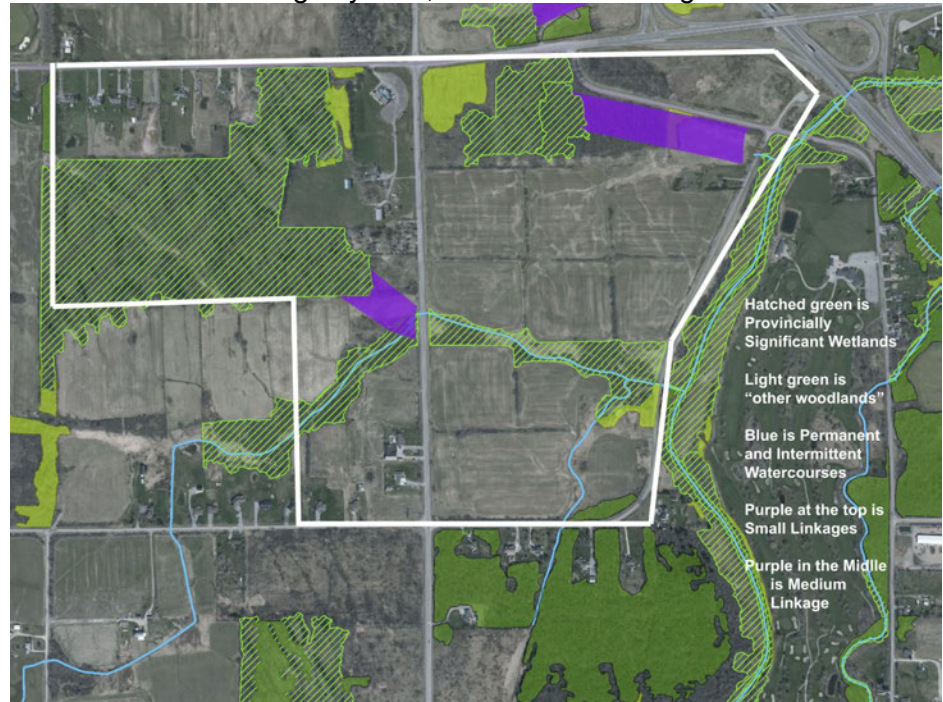
Dear Official Planning Staff, City of Niagara Falls Planning, Mayor and Council Members,

Livable Chippawa is writing on behalf of many resident's concerns for the proposed and under review urban boundary expansions in Niagara Falls.

The first and most concerning question: Why did Niagara Falls Council turn down staff recommended plans to build within the urban boundary? This decision will cost taxpayers and the Niagara Falls City more. Niagara Falls planning staff had proposed a plan that would have accommodated 65% of growth within the existing urban area, centered around four transit nodes. This plan would have saved about 200 ha of agricultural and natural areas from being urbanized and would have provided more housing options and more affordable housing in areas where transportation and infrastructure already existed.

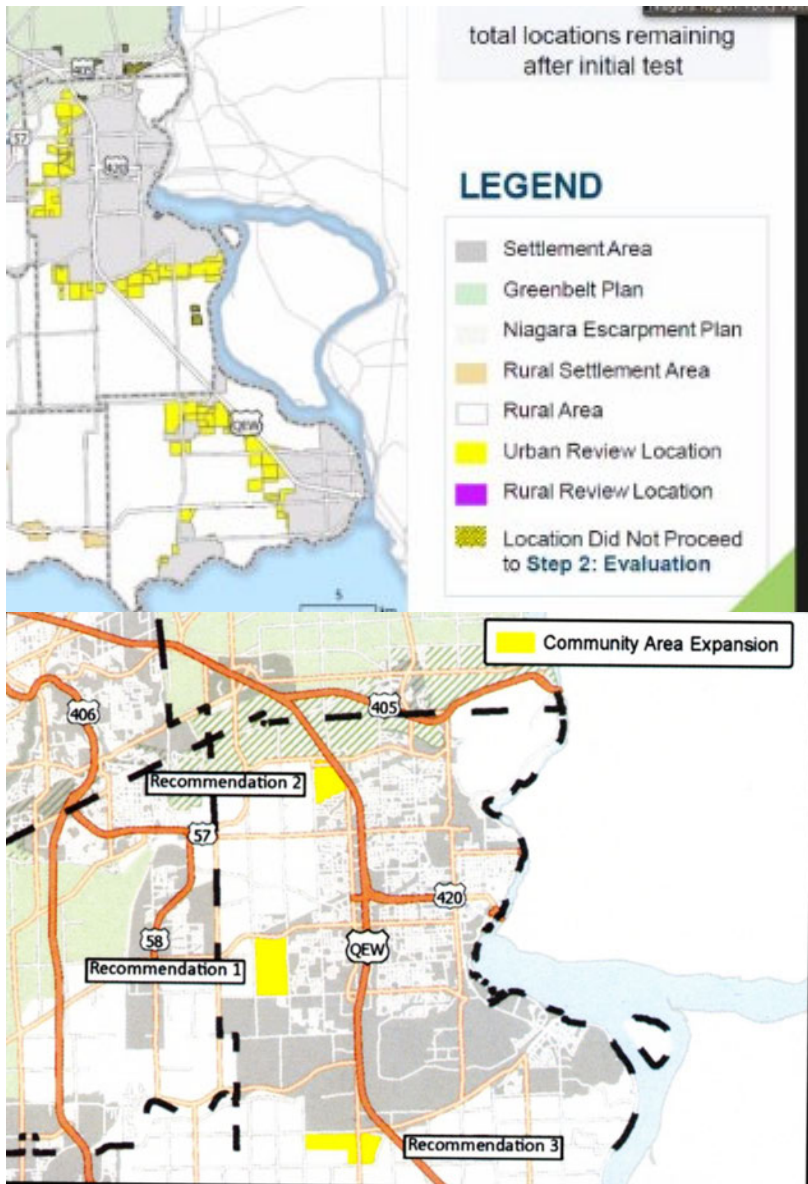
Altogether, they will add 310 ha to the urban area. Rec. #3, south of the new hospital site, is most concerning from an environmental point of view. While Provincially Significant Wetland and woodlands on the site should

be protected as part of the Region's new natural heritage system, core natural heritage features on the new



hospital site were not protected.

The other concern we share is for the other urban review locations specifically in Niagara South. In future when other areas are considered we ask areas along waterways be avoided for urban expansion. Niagara South has the most biodiverse land along waterways that provide critical habitat. Options to build within the urban boundary should be enforced and only the least ecosensitive areas should be considered for expansion.



We are here to share knowledge to empower you to make better planning decisions. We support sustainable development and see the **dire need to maintain biodiversity and protect fragile natural ecosystems.**

Consider the following:

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- Infill development is more affordable for cities than adding new subdivisions. City of Ottawa staff have shared estimates for
- how much the municipality saves — and spends — depending on where development happens.
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The city had Hemson Consulting Ltd. review a major study it had done and update some numbers from 2012 to reflect how city costs and tax bills have changed over nine years.

Hemson found it now costs the City of Ottawa \$465 per person each year to serve new low-density homes built on undeveloped land, over and above what it receives from property taxes and water bills. That's up \$56 from eight years ago.

On the other hand, high-density infill development, such as apartment buildings, pays for itself and leaves the city with an extra \$606 per capita each year, a financial benefit that has grown by \$151. [Source](#)

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- Niagara Region has 17.5% forest cover when 30% is the minimum required by Environmental Canada.
- **Niagara Falls has less than 14%.**
- Objective environmental planning is not happening and we are not meeting federal targets for a healthy environment.
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- According to Environment Canada and biologists: the area we live in (known as the Carolinian Zone) has more endangered and rare
- species than any other ecoregion in Canada. **Better data and methods are needed to**
- **verify species wildlife habitat use.**
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- Areas along waterways are even more diverse and development here
- **will result in a decline in unique biodiversity.**
- In the Niagara Region, 95.4% of the wetlands are in Niagara South where most
- **remaining species at risk exist and new development is focused.**
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- Only 5% of Canada's entire land base is suitable for growing food. Only .5% of that is Class 1 or 2 soils — the kind of farmland
- that you can grow almost anything in. Most of that is here in Southern Ontario where we are losing 175 acres a day to development according to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.
- **More evaluation of functions in the rural-agricultural areas is needed.**
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- Natural Heritage maps and wetland maps used by the city for planning are not necessarily reflective of the actual site. Many
- mapped Natural Heritage Sites are insignificant while areas not mapped are very biodiverse. Proper onsite assessment by biologists and ecologists (not review of outdated maps by review agencies) is necessary to identify ecological cores to be protected and
- regenerated lands that require restoration - **More Comprehensive and unbiased EIS**
- **planning evaluate ecological systems in areas changing from rural-agriculture to urban is required especially near existing waterways, woodlands and wetlands. Insist on policy change to have the city pay for comprehensive EIS prior to developmental plans**
- **then incorporate costs in developmental charges.**
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Take pride in knowing you live in one of the most biodiverse areas in Canada. Embrace the idea of comprehensively documenting the biodiversity that exists here, do what is right to protect it and build sustainably around it for future generations.

If you do not implement alternative solutions and better planning for biodiversity you are leading species to extinction and ecosystem collapse in this area.

Concepts to advocate:

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- Wet engineered stormwater ponds are ecological traps for wildlife. Support dry stormwater ponds (MOE 2003) and enhanced grassed
- swales to mitigate stormwater impacts as they are the preferred ecological solutions.
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- Decrease Fragmentation and isolation, include natural corridors for terrestrial passageway
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- Preserve habitat and improve connectivity
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- Decrease mortality factors incorporate semi-terrestrial channels under roadways
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- Increase setbacks and restore natural vegetation communities where needed
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Considering the above points and reviewing maps below it is clear how the urban review location for Niagara South is extremely concerning. The areas selected support habitat for immense biodiversity and contain precious agricultural land.

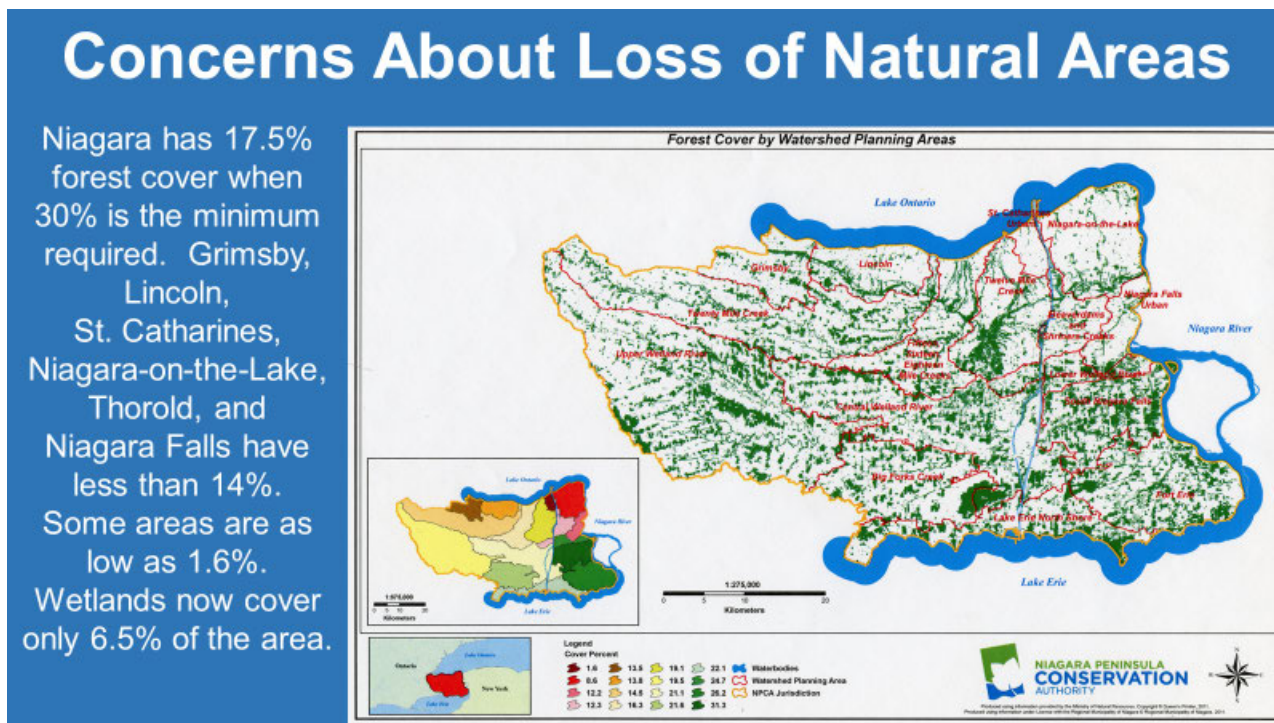
Experts are trying to share knowledge so decision makers like you can understand what is at stake. Insist on development within urban boundaries that can be justified with less costs to the city. Hold decision makers accountable and insist on integrity. Incorporate knowledge from multiple biologists, ecologists and environmentalists to protect the most biodiverse areas and insist on policies that protect biodiversity we cannot replace.

When people come together, share knowledge, great things happen.

We are not "anti development". We advocate good planning solutions for sustainable development that maintains biodiversity while supporting those that recognize that self interest is for the past and the common interest is for the future.

Regards,
Livable Chippawa

sustainable development + maintaining biodiversity = socially conscious neighborhoods that thrive



Niagara Region Proposed Housing Growth (2016-2041) with Green Belt Boundary

Niagara Region's Biodiversity lies within Rural Agricultural Land Use

Biodiversity and presence of wetlands are highly correlated.

