

From: [Niagara Region Website](#)
To: [Making Our Mark](#)
Subject: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request
Date: Wednesday, January 12, 2022 11:45:09 AM

Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

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Desmond Sequeira

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Organization or Affiliation

Supporter of Extinction Rebellion(XR), Member of XR Niagara

Address

[REDACTED]

City

St. Catharines

Specify City

St. Catharines

Postal Code

[REDACTED]

Province

Ontario

Topics of Interest

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

Comments

Dear Members of the Niagara Regional Council (NRC) Hopefully my comments below, also previously offered to you, will inform any decisions being made. This will hopefully be brief, not least because I am currently considerably indisposed but also because not much more needs to be said re. the matter being considered. It may also appear naive of me to bother writing in the first place except because of my faith in you The unanimous decision to support Option 3C re. the Niagara Environmental System (NES) did much to restore the faith of thousands in the NRC. Now, I believe, this occasion to vote on the Expansions in Smithville (400 hectares) Two expansions on northern and southern fringe of Niagara Falls (150 hectares) Expansion in Fort Erie centered on former CMS lands (286 hectares.) presents each of you with an opportunity to take the kind of radical decision that can make history - that will no doubt affect the immediate decision but, even more, set the precedent, the template, to affect all future decisions. This in turn will affect all our future generations (you have heard this plenty) and will signal that the NRC is not made up of just run of the mill politicians interested in immediate financial expediency but of enlightened selfless visionaries who can make this Council a real Beacon for Ontario, Canada and the World. My dear Members (for some of whom I voted), this is my appeal and challenge to you (based on well known existential environmental science that does not need to be reiterated): Re. all future growth in our precious region of Niagara (which has already had over 90% of its NES destroyed by so called "development") to Reject ALL further horizontal so called "development" that encroaches on any pristine or currently agricultural land and is thereby actually unconscionably destructive. It will be even more enlightened and desirable for the NRC to aim at restoring the NES to at least the 30% tree canopy that is considered the minimum needed and that is the goal proposed for forward looking cities/regions such as our very own neighbouring City of Hamilton ON (<https://ward8hamilton.ca/hamilton-urban-forest-strategy-released/>). This will go some way towards resurrecting the NES from its "ICU condition" referred to by Dahlia Steinberg in her delegation re. the NES Option 3C. Meet ALL new commercial and residential needs by building VERTICALLY within existing urban boundaries. Re. this proposal, I think that Ms. Stenberg also has some attractive incentives for would-be developers (Please refer to Appendix # 2 below) Re-structure transportation, commercial, recreational and energy infra-structure accordingly. Of special interest would be incorporating natural recreational and greening spaces within building structures. As you know, of course, Canada's premier City has already set the precedent for this, which is being followed by other cities including New York, as can be inferred from the links also provided by Ms Steinberg in Appendix # 3 below. We would, of course, depend on creative non-compromised engineers/planners to believe enough

and to want enough to make this happen vs. taking the easy route of ongoing destruction of nature which is diametrically opposed to the call of science. Such growth is actually happening around the world. I am sure I do not need to find examples for professional persons who are in the field. As each of you knows, there are literally thousands of functional commercial and residential spaces and at least hundreds of currently non-functional commercial spaces littering, inundating Niagara which are evidently being ignored and which should NOT be ignored any more by those who have the real interests of future Niagara at heart. Along with thousands of others, I continue to put my faith in you, Desmond Sequeira St. Catharines ON L2N 5T3 Appendices: 1. Some random links below may be useful (I am pretty sure you can find many more instructive ones)

<https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>

https://books.google.ca/books/about/The_Vertical_City.html?id=pTlpDwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

<https://www.planetizen.com/blogs/101788-vertical-cities-can-mega-skyscrapers-solve-urban-population-overload> Btw. I am personally not in support of "skyscrapers" but have lived long in countries where low and medium rise buildings have produced healthy neighbourhoods and community-minded communities (I believe I am currently living in one that is trying to be such a community) vs.

individualistically-minded brainwashed ("avoid my neighbour as much as possible" while mouthing niceties) persons whose insecurities/insistences have led to our current environmental mess. 2. From Dahlia Steinberg: Implement a policy whereby developers who choose to refurbish/re-use existing building structures and/or build on brown lands are awarded contracts first, while encouraging builds that provide sustainable, affordable housing through government grants and incentives. (These should even be outsourced if no one in Niagara chooses to offer such services). Those with the most innovative ideas need to win these contracts, and be **PRIORITIZED** for them, not the companies who continually build with their own profit as the highest aim – and where they typically already have the resources to underbid in order to win a contract because it's the least expensive, while the cost of that is the further littering of our region with unsustainable, inappropriate design for the future. 3. Precedent-setting examples:

<https://www.canadianarchitect.com/canadian-precedent-spurs-green-roof-legislation-for-new-york-city/> <https://sustainablebiz.ca/green-roof-revolution-taking-root-canada/> 4. Growing Toronto's Tree Canopy:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2016/pe/bgrd/backgroundfile-97019.pdf>

<https://www.jayerobinson.ca/blog/2020/1/30/every-tree-counts-an-update-on-torontos-growing-tree-canopy>

