



employment

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## 3. Employment

### 3.A Niagara Economic Gateway

#### 3.A.1 General

The Niagara Economic Gateway comprises:

- a) The Gateway Economic Zone which includes all Settlement Areas within Niagara Falls and Fort Erie;
- b) The Gateway Economic Centre which includes all Settlement Areas within Thorold, Welland and Port Colborne;
- c) Existing port infrastructure, particularly in the Cities of Port Colborne, Welland and Thorold;
- d) The five border crossings to the US including the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, the Whirlpool Bridge, the Rainbow Bridge, the Peace Bridge and the rail crossing between Fort Erie and Buffalo;
- e) The Queen Elizabeth Way Corridor between Fort Erie and Niagara Falls;
- f) The Welland Canal including linkages between the Urban Growth Centre in St Catharines and Thorold, Welland and Port Colborne;
- g) Highway 406 and Highway 140, including linkages between the Urban Growth Centre in St Catharines and Thorold, Welland and Port Colborne;
- h) The major road network including improvements that may be initiated from time to time, particularly to the Netherby Road corridor between Welland and the Queen Elizabeth Way, and the Niagara to GTA corridor;
- i) Major rail infrastructure in Thorold, Welland, and Port Colborne as well as rail infrastructure connections to the United States and other parts of Canada;
- j) Transit services including possible improvements such as creating new intercity transit corridors within Niagara and better GO and passenger rail links between the GTA and Niagara which could create nodes in the Region where both high density employment uses and housing could be established;
- k) Major tourist destinations; and,
- l) Major educational support facilities such as Brock University and Niagara College.

## **Location of the Niagara Economic Gateway**

The lands described above are depicted on Schedules G1 and G2 and constitute the lands within the Niagara Economic Gateway.

## **Location of Niagara Economic Gateway Employment Lands**

The lands located within the Niagara Economic Gateway, in the settlement areas, which are designated in local plans for employment land uses are depicted on Schedule G2. Generally, it is the vacant lands depicted on Schedule G2 which are the subject of this Amendment.

## **Niagara Economic Gateway Employment Lands Vision**

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

The employment lands within the Niagara Economic Gateway present a unique opportunity for development. The vacant lands cover an area of over 2,000 hectares spread across the five local municipalities. Generally, the inventory of lands are scattered and disconnected from one another but are concentrated in a number of smaller clusters. Each of these clusters has its own set of advantages: some of the clusters are adjacent to education centres, like Brock University and Niagara College; others maintain transportation advantages, such as close proximity to a border crossing or access to the Welland Canal, rail lines or one of the Gateway's 400 series highways; others have access to full municipal services and already have detailed secondary plans in-place; and still others are a collection of large, well configured greenfield properties with few constraints. At the same time, the clusters also have their own set of challenges: some areas are un-serviced and require upgrades to Regional and local infrastructure; other areas have a limited amount of planning direction and may have issues related to land use compatibility; other lands have environmental constraints which would need to be mitigated to facilitate development.

### **The Need for a Vision, Strategy and Action Plan**

Given the range of issues and challenges, the considerable opportunity and the fact that the inventory of vacant land is spread across five municipalities, there is a need for a comprehensive vision, strategy and action plan.

### **The Vision**

The vision for the Niagara Economic Gateway employment lands is to attract investment and promote employment growth in strategic locations. By addressing the challenges in a strategic and coordinated manner and by taking advantage of the unique locational opportunities and linking them with Niagara's market opportunities, Niagara will attract new investment to support its existing employment base and further develop its emerging employment clusters. The vision is to transform the collection of vacant lands into a diversified mix of vibrant, attractively designed, accessible and sustainable employment areas.

### 3.A.2 Objectives for the Niagara Economic Gateway

- Objective 3.A.2.1** To implement Provincial, Regional and local plans and policies;
- Objective 3.A.2.2** To strengthen Niagara's economy through strategic long range planning and economic diversification;
- Objective 3.A.2.3** To support local municipal planning and economic development efforts through leadership and coordination;
- Objective 3.A.2.4** To attract private sector investment in Niagara's existing and emerging economic clusters;
- Objective 3.A.2.5** To promote cross border trade and the efficient movement of goods.
- Objective 3.A.2.6** To promote the efficient use of infrastructure.
- Objective 3.A.2.7** To protect strategic employment lands from unwarranted conversion to incompatible land uses.
- Objective 3.A.2.8** To promote planned, orderly, efficient development of employment lands that balances development with natural heritage.
- Objective 3.A.2.9** To promote attractive urban design and sustainable development on the Gateway's designated employment lands.
- Objective 3.A.2.10** To promote employment land intensification and brownfield redevelopment.
- Objective 3.A.2.11** To support appropriately located tourism facilities while maintaining the broader employment land focus of the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre.
- Objective 3.A.2.12** To provide a framework for implementation.

### 3.A.3 Policies for the Niagara Economic Gateway

**Policy 3.A.3.1** The Niagara Economic Gateway Zone and Centre consists of those employment lands within the settlement areas of the Cities of Thorold, Welland, Port Colborne, Niagara Falls, and the Town of Fort Erie. The Niagara Economic Gateway Zone and Centre also includes Strategic Locations for Investment, generally shown on Appendix “I” to this Amendment. Employment land investment is to be concentrated in Strategic Locations for Investment, which are illustrated generally on Appendix I and are described as:

- a) Lands within the Brock Business Park in Thorold;
- b) Lands adjacent to Highway 406 in Welland;
- c) Lands adjacent to the Welland Canal in Thorold and lands adjacent to the Welland Canal and Highway 140 in Welland and Port Colborne;
- d) Lands within the Fort Erie Industrial Park in Fort Erie;
- e) Lands near the Whirlpool Bridge border crossing in Niagara Falls; and,
- f) Lands adjacent to the QEW in Niagara Falls.

**Policy 3.A.3.2** Lands within the Gateway municipalities and within settlement areas shall also be a focus for employment land and development. The Strategic Locations for Investment are a focus for financial incentives through Community Improvement Plans. Other areas of employment within local municipalities and their Official Plans that are within a settlement area shall be recognized as Gateway employment lands. The lands of the Canadian Motor Speedway, should the required Official Plan Amendment be approved by the Ontario Municipal Board, shall be considered part of the Gateway Economic Zone.

**Policy 3.A.3.3** The Region recognizes the St. Catharines Urban Growth Centre as the location for major office land uses. Office uses within the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre are to be limited in size and scope to ensure the major office function of the St. Catharines Urban Growth Centre is maintained and enhanced.

**Policy 3.A.3.4** The concept for the Brock Business Park Revitalization is to capitalize on market opportunities for research and development and the close proximity to Brock University and Highway 406 by transforming the area into an integrated, mixed use, campus-style setting which caters to incubators, innovator, limited office uses, and related uses.

In order to address the challenges, capitalize on opportunities and transform the concept into reality, the following tools will be utilized:

- a) Preparation of a joint secondary plan to coordinate development and refine the concept;

- b) Preparation of a public realm improvement program to re-energize the area and attract new investment;
- c) Preparation of supporting plans for servicing and transportation (including active transportation and transit);
- d) Preparation of urban design guidelines; and,
- e) Updating relevant local plans, policies, and zoning by-laws.

**Policy 3.A.3.5** The Concept for the Highway 406 Economic Gateway is to capitalize on proximity and access to Highways 140 and 406 by attracting industries in transportation, logistics, warehousing, food processing, advanced manufacturing and wholesale trade activities and other uses set out in the local official plan.

In order to address the challenges, capitalize on opportunities and transform the concept into reality, the following tools will be utilized:

- a) Preparation of a master plan or secondary plan to coordinate development and refine the concept;
- b) Preparation of supporting plans for servicing and transportation (including active transportation and transit);
- c) Preparation of urban design guidelines;
- d) Preparation of an investment strategy to attract target industries; and,
- e) Updating relevant local plans and policies.

**Policy 3.A.3.6** The concept for the Welland Canal Green Manufacturing and Assembly Zone is to capitalize on proximity and access to the Welland Canal and relative proximity to the 400 series highway network and rail lines by identifying a location for large scale green manufacturing and assembly industries and other heavy industries which require specialized transportation modes. Recognizing the servicing constraints, the Region is supportive of a transitional approach to development, which might include dry industrial development as an interim use.

Land use compatibility with planned residential development in the Dain City area of the City of Welland is to be achieved and will be assessed as part of specific applications for development of site(s) in the Welland Canal Green Manufacturing and Assembly Zone. The Land Use Compatibility Guidelines of the Ministry of Environment (Ontario) will be the basis for determining compatibility and required mitigative measures; land use compatibility studies will be required for lands in the vicinity of the Dain City community in the City of Welland.

In order to address the challenges, capitalize on opportunities and transform the concept into reality, the following tools will be utilized:

- a) Preparation of a master plan or secondary plan to coordinate development and refine the concept;
- b) Preparation of supporting plans for servicing and transportation including any Environmental Assessment to provide water and wastewater services to these lands and including active transportation and transit;
- c) Preparation of urban design guidelines;
- d) Preparation of an investment strategy to attract target industries; and,
- e) Updating relevant local plans and policies.

**Policy 3.A.3.7**

The concept for the Fort Erie Industrial Park is to capitalize on market opportunities for advanced manufacturing, cross border trade, transportation and warehousing industries. In order to address the challenges, capitalize on opportunities and transform the concept into reality, the following tools will be utilized:

- a) Implementation of the Master Servicing and Development Strategy/Environmental Assessment for the Fort Erie Industrial Park and updating/preparation of the following as needed to implement the Development Strategy:
  - i. Preparation of a master plan or secondary plan to coordinate development and refine the concept;
  - ii. Preparation of supporting plans for servicing and transportation (including active transportation and transit);
  - iii. Preparation of urban design guidelines;
  - iv. Preparation of an investment strategy to attract target industries;
  - v. Preparation of a study area-wide environmental impact study to assess potential opportunities for wetland restoration, enhancement and compensation in coordination with development of the lands and the Environmental policies of this Plan; and,
  - vi. Updating relevant local plans, policies and zoning by-laws.

**Policy 3.A.3.8** The concept for the Niagara Falls Priority Investment Area is to capitalize on market opportunities for cross border trade by identifying a location for secure storage, warehousing and logistics facilities in close proximity to a border crossing. These lands include the areas within the Niagara Falls Community Improvement Plan Pilot Project Area.

In order to address the challenges, capitalize on opportunities and transform the concept into reality, the following tools will be utilized:

- a) Preparation of a master plan or secondary plan to coordinate development and refine the concept;
- b) Preparation of supporting plans for servicing and transportation (including active transportation and transit);
- c) Preparation of urban design guidelines;
- d) Preparation of an investment strategy to attract target industries;
- e) Updating relevant local plans, policies, and zoning by-laws.

**Policy 3.A.3.9** The concept for the Niagara Falls QEW Business Park is to capitalize on long-term opportunities for business and services in close proximity to 400 series highways focusing on manufacturing, warehousing and other employment land uses.

In order to address challenges, capitalize on opportunities and transform the concept into reality, the following tools will be utilized:

- a) Preparation of a master plan or secondary plan to coordinate development and refine the concept;
- b) Preparation of supporting plans for servicing and transportation (including active transportation and transit);
- c) Preparation of urban design guidelines;
- d) Preparation of an investment strategy to attract target industries;
- e) Updating relevant local plans, policies and zoning by-laws.

**Policy 3.A.3.10** Where appropriate, the Region encourages intensification on existing occupied employment lands through:

- a) Expansion to existing employment uses and/or land operations;
- b) Conversion or reuse of existing buildings into new employment uses;
- c) Infilling of vacant lots within employment areas;
- d) Severance or subdivision of larger employment properties to accommodate new employment uses.

- Policy 3.A.3.11** The Region recognizes the role that the market plays in determining where and how reinvestment on employment lands will occur. Accordingly, the Region will promote intensification of its employment lands by:
- a) Where possible, directing denser forms of development, including limited office type uses, into strategic nodes and corridors and revitalization areas;
  - b) Ensuring that employment-supportive uses remain accessory to the principle use and focus of an area as set out in this Plan;
  - c) Where appropriate, maintaining and protecting employment land designations on brownfield sites from inappropriate conversion;
  - d) Enhancing the attractiveness of existing employment lands through strategic improvements to regional infrastructure, transportation, urban design and the public realm; and,
  - e) Working with the local municipalities to develop strategies employment land development which includes policies for intensification.
- Policy 3.A.3.12** The principle tool for implementation shall be local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws. Local Official Plans shall be updated to reflect the vision, strategy and action plan articulated in this Amendment. It is expected that the Region and local municipalities will also undertake a variety of implementation items, including, but not limited to, Community Improvement Plans, secondary plans and master plans and infrastructure studies and plans.
- Policy 3.A.3.13** In most cases, more detailed secondary and master planning has been recommended to facilitate change and development. The Region will work with local municipalities and support secondary planning efforts within the Gateway. The terms of reference for new secondary plans or master plans should be prepared jointly, in a coordinated manner to ensure that key areas, including land use, urban design, the environment, phasing of development, infrastructure and transportation are adequately addressed.
- Policy 3.A.3.14** The Region will prepare a Gateway specific Community Improvement Plan to attract investment onto the employment lands within the Gateway. The Region encourages Local Area Municipalities to develop Community Improvement Plans in accordance with the Region's Community Improvement Plan to maximize incentives and provide consistent opportunities for investment.
- Policy 3.A.3.15** The Development Permit System is an additional implementation tool that may be used to achieve the Region's goals, objectives and policies of this Plan and the local municipal Official Plans. The Development Permit system is intended to be a flexible planning tool which combines zoning and site plan control and minor variance into one process and is

administered by the local municipality. Niagara Region supports the use of the development permit system in the Gateway and will develop local model development permit system policies for the Gateway.

**Policy 3.A.3.16** The Region recognizes the importance of all employment lands in the Region. Accordingly, the Region will prepare a similar strategy for employment lands outside of the Gateway lands.

**Policy 3.A.3.17** The conversion of Employment Areas lands shall only be considered through a municipal comprehensive review pursuant to the provisions of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. In the case of a downtown area or a regeneration area, conversions shall be considered through a comprehensive review pursuant to the provisions of the Provincial Policy Statement.

**Policy 3.A.3.18** The Region will identify transportation improvements and upgrades required to support the Niagara Gateway Employment Lands Strategy. Transportation improvements should be identified through a comprehensive Gateway-specific transportation plan which examines the needs for:

- a) Road and highway infrastructure;
- b) Rail infrastructure;
- c) Border and bridge crossing infrastructure;
- d) The major port as identified in the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe;
- e) The Welland Canal and port infrastructure;
- f) Transit; and,
- g) Active transportation.

**Policy 3.A.3.19** The Region will confirm the Regional infrastructure improvements and upgrades required to support the Niagara Gateway Employment Lands Strategy. Improvements to infrastructure were generally identified through the Gateway Employments Lands Study, but should be confirmed through the Region's Master Servicing Study and examine:

- a) Water supply;
- b) Regional water distribution network;
- c) Sanitary supply (wastewater);
- d) Regional sanitary sewer distribution network;
- e) Stormwater; and,
- f) Opportunities to apply sustainable and green infrastructure solutions.

- Policy 3.A.3.20** Local municipalities will develop phasing strategies for vacant, unserved employment lands. Phasing strategies should be prepared at the time of either local official plan reviews or infrastructure master plan updates and also be part of broader servicing strategies which examine phasing for development. Priority will be given in phasing plans for first, lands within the urban area that are fully or partially serviced, subject to full servicing being provided. The second priority will be for vacant, unserved lands within the urban area.
- Policy 3.A.3.21** The Region and local municipalities will align its capital planning for new infrastructure and transportation with the Strategic Locations for Investment identified in Amendment RPPA 1-2012. An acceptable financial strategy must be prepared and approved by Regional Council for the provision of Regional infrastructure.
- Policy 3.A.3.22** The Region will encourage cross border trade through:
- a) Strategic improvements to Regional infrastructure;
  - b) Working with the Province and the Federal governments to improve and upgrade border crossing infrastructure;
  - c) Preparation of a Regional Goods Movement Study;
  - d) Examining issues and opportunities for cross border trade with the US; and,
  - e) Examining issues and opportunities for a Niagara Free Trade Zone/Export Distribution Zone within the Niagara Economic Gateway.
- Policy 3.A.3.23** The Region will continue to work the Federal, Provincial and local governments, the private sector and other agencies to attract investment into Niagara's Economic Gateway.
- Policy 3.A.3.24** Tourism uses and tourism economic development is a priority for the Niagara Economic Gateway Zone and Centre. Tourism focused lands are not identified on a map as they are broadly through the Gateway Zone and Centre in such areas as the Niagara River Parkway, the Niagara Falls Tourist Area, tourism areas in Fort Erie, and along the Welland Canal. Transit opportunities for strengthening the tourism economy will be pursued.
- Policy 3.A.3.25** Land use compatibility within the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre is a primary focus of this Plan. Tourism uses within the Gateway municipalities shall be located to ensure the planned function of employment uses on employment lands shall be maintained and enhanced.

**Policy 3.A.3.26** The Region will monitor implementation of the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre and report on land development and job creation within the Gateway. Every five years, the Region will undertake a review of the Gateway policies to assess growth, development, land budget, and policy implementation.

## 3.B Rural Employment Lands

The Rural Employment Lands designation is intended for lands that by the nature of their existing development are outside the Urban Areas boundaries of the Region's settlement areas yet have existing employment uses or clusters of existing employment uses. Within the Niagara Economic Gateway Zone and Centre, strategic rural employment areas have been identified on the basis of existing local municipal Official Plans and land use designations.

### 3.B.1 Objectives for Rural Employment Lands

**Objective 3.B.1.1** To identify a strategy for rural employment lands that supports agriculture as the primary non-urban land use.

**Objective 3.B.1.2** To support the rural economy and the agricultural economy through limited rural employment lands that balance job creation across Niagara with sustaining the non-urban land base.

**Objective 3.B.1.3** To support sustainable private servicing of rural employment lands.

**Objective 3.B.1.4** To ensure that rural employment lands are limited in size and scale to maximize support for agricultural and rural lands in the long-term.

### 3.B.2 Policies for Rural Employment Lands

**Policy 3.B.2.1** Rural employment lands may only be identified through an Amendment to this Plan and must be specifically identified on a map as a Schedule to this Plan. Addition of new Rural Employment Lands shall only be considered as part of a municipally initiated comprehensive review of employment lands by Niagara Region and shall fulfill all requirements of this Plan with regard to comprehensive reviews.

**Policy 3.B.2.2** Rural employment lands shall be considered "dry industrial" and are to be serviced through sustainable private servicing only.

**Policy 3.B.2.3** Detailed land uses shall be identified in the Local Official Plan by way of amendment to the Local Official Plan. In all cases, uses shall be compatible with adjacent agricultural uses, planned agricultural uses and shall not negatively impact normal farm operations.

**Policy 3.B.2.4** Rural employment lands are not part of a Settlement Area.

**Policy 3.B.2.5** The environmental policies of this plan shall apply to the development of Rural Employment lands.

**Policy 3.B.2.6** The lands designated in the City of Port Colborne as "Rural Employment Lands - Gateway Special Policy Area" on Schedule G2 are subject to the following policies:

- a) The transportation infrastructure of Highway 140 is a unique characteristic of transportation service for these lands;
- b) Uses shall be only those which are considered to have minimal water and wastewater requirements. The lands may be eligible for future municipally provided water and wastewater services subject to the completion of the ongoing Environmental Assessment for the Welland Canal Green Manufacturing Zone area;
- c) Functional servicing reports and hydrogeological reports, at a minimum, shall be required to support these uses. Additional studies, as outlined in the Complete application policies of this Plan, shall also be required;
- d) The lands shall be subject to Site Plan Control and the Niagara Region will be circulated all Site Plan Control applications;
- e) The lands are in the vicinity of the Dain City area in the City of Welland and the applicable portions of Chapter 3.A regarding land use compatibility requirements shall apply;
- f) Lands that comprise the Babion Woodlot will be subject to an Environmental Impact Statement which will confirm the boundaries of the Woodlot and the Provincially Significant Wetland. Upon approval of the Environmental Impact Statement, the Woodlot and Wetland will be designated as “Environmental Protection Area” in this Plan without further amendment to this Plan. The balance of lands shall be designated “Rural Employment Lands – Gateway Special Policy Area” without further amendment to this Plan.
- g) Should the land budget completed as part of the Regional Comprehensive Review, at a future five year review of the Regional Official Plan, establish the need for additional urban employment land in the Gateway, priority will be given to the Gateway Special Policy area lands that are physically contiguous to urban employment lands in the Gateway to be included in the urban are and to be eligible for urban servicing.
- h) Should the lands immediately west of the Rural Employment Lands, in the vicinity of the Welland Canal, cease to be owned by the Government of Canada, the designation of “Rural Employment Lands” shall apply.

**Policy 3.B.2.7**

Lands shown on Schedule G2 of this Amendment as employment lands that are outside the Urban Area Boundary, located in the City of Thorold as well as Special Policy Area “8” as identified in the City of Niagara Falls Official Plan, shall be classified as “Rural Employment Lands”. In this regard, the following policies will apply:

- a) Uses shall be only those which are considered to have minimal water and wastewater requirements;
- b) Functional servicing reports and hydrogeological reports, at a minimum, shall be required to support these uses. Additional

studies, as outlined in the Complete Application Policies of this Plan, shall also be required;

- c) The lands shall be subject to Site Plan Control and the Niagara Region will be circulated all site Plan Control applications for Rural Employment Lands in the Gateway.

**Policy 3.B.2.8** New Rural Employment lands will only be added to this plan by way of an amendment to implement the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review.

**Policy 3.B.2.9** Should the land budget completed as part of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review, at a future five year review of the Regional Official Plan, establish the need for additional urban employment land in the Gateway, priority will be given to Rural Employment lands that are physically contiguous to urban employment lands in the Gateway may be considered to be included in the urban area subject to the policies of this Plan and appropriate Provincial Plans and the Provincial Policy Statement.

**Policy 3.B.2.10** Applications for new or the expansion of rural development that contribute to the Region's employment land base shall demonstrate that the use cannot be located within the urban area owing to the land use compatibility issues and/or specific locational requirements, including proximity to key transportation infrastructure, that cannot be accommodated within the urban area, and/or the proposed use is related to the management or use of a resource and is required to be in close proximity to it.

### 3.C Employment Lands

- Policy 3.C.1** The Region and the local municipalities will ensure economic competitiveness by:
- a) Providing an appropriate mix of employment uses, including industrial, commercial and institutional uses to meet long term needs.
  - b) Providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses.
  - c) Planning for, protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future use.
  - d) Incorporating employment area conversion policies implementing Chapter 4.E in local official plans.
  - e) Ensuring that the necessary infrastructure and services are provided to support current and forecasted employment needs including transit and active transportation facilities. This will include undertaking discussions with telecommunications providers regarding the feasibility of servicing existing and future employment areas with telecommunications services, including broadband technology, to attract knowledge-based industries and support the technological advancement and growth of existing businesses.
- Policy 3.C.2** Local municipalities should designate and preserve lands within Urban Areas which are adjacent to or in close proximity to existing major highway interchanges, ports or rail yards as employment areas providing for manufacturing, warehousing, transportation and associated retail, office and ancillary employment uses, where appropriate.
- Policy 3.C.3** Where new sensitive land uses are proposed adjacent to or in proximity to employment areas, analysis is required to assess any constraints the introduction of such uses will have on the types of uses which could locate within all or portions of the employment area and/or on any existing employment uses.
- Policy 3.C.4** The Region strongly supports local and regional efforts to develop clusters of associated economic activities.
- Policy 3.C.5** The Employment Land policies of Chapter 3.C should be read in conjunction with the Economic Gateway policies of this Plan.

### 3.D Commercial Areas

**Policy 3.D.1** The Region will undertake a regional commercial systems study to ensure that the overall supply of commercial space is sufficient to provide for healthy competition without endangering the quality and character of existing shopping facilities, particularly in the downtowns.

**Policy 3.D.2** Municipalities are encouraged to develop policies which carefully balance the supply of commercial space with the demand for commercial goods and services, placing a particular emphasis on commercial retail goods and services.

**Policy 3.D.3** The Region encourages the local municipalities to plan for commercial uses and commercial space on the basis of a hierarchy of commercial areas.

**Policy 3.D.4** Municipalities are encouraged to develop policies which support the use of market impact studies and peer reviews for major commercial applications. Market impact studies and peer reviews should consider:

- a) The need for the proposed use.
- b) The location, size and scale of the proposed development.
- c) The potential for compatibility issues.
- d) The potential market impacts on existing and planned commercial areas, including downtowns and other shopping nodes.
- e) The potential for negative impacts on the natural environment.
- f) The adequacy of the existing transportation infrastructure, including pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, serving the proposed use.
- g) The adequacy of the existing water and waste water infrastructure and other municipal services.
- h) The intent of the policies of this Plan.

Where the trade area for a market study extends beyond the boundary of the local municipality in which the proposed commercial facility would be located, the local municipality should consult with the other municipalities within the trade area.

**Policy 3.D.5** The Region promotes and will facilitate the revitalization of downtowns and the redevelopment of brownfields, greyfields and commercial areas into mixed-use areas that include a variety of employment, institutional, entertainment, recreational and residential uses..

**Policy 3.D.6** The Region encourages local municipalities to revise their planning policies and zoning by-laws to support the redevelopment of greyfield areas into mixed uses areas. The Region strongly supports such

redevelopment as an alternative to the establishment of new commercial areas.

- Policy 3.D.7** The Region promotes the “Main Street” form of commercial development, with building facades closer to the street, an efficient use of land, a mix of uses in both new and established areas, and support and access for active transportation.
- Policy 3.D.8** The Region recognizes neighbourhood commercial activities as an integral part of Niagara’s residential areas.
- Policy 3.D.9** The Region supports local food producers by encouraging farmers markets, urban agricultural projects and community vegetable gardens. Local municipalities are encouraged to revise official plans and zoning by-laws to make provision for the above-noted specialty uses.
- Policy 3.D.10** New commercial development or redevelopment should be assessed in relation to community character and be appropriately located to serve as part of the neighbourhood’s existing or proposed fabric. Assessment in relation to community character could include:
- a) The scale of the activity;
  - b) The orientation of the development to adjacent land uses; and,
  - c) The capacity of the development to operate compatibly with housing.
- Policy 3.D.11** Commercial development and redevelopment projects should be designed to be transit and active transportation friendly.
- Policy 3.D.12** Parking requirements for commercial uses should be carefully considered and evaluated to ensure that an adequate, but not excessive, amount of parking space is provided. Parking requirements should include provision for secure and sheltered bicycle parking and pedestrian walkways. Municipalities are encouraged to study, assess and develop updated parking standard for commercial areas.
- Policy 3.D.13** Phasing provisions for the retail outlet centre development permitted through Amendment 4-2011, located in the Glendale Community of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, shall be contained within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Official Plan. The developer shall pay for its proportionate share of all off-site infrastructure required for the development.

### 3.E Major Office

**Policy 3.E.1** Major office and appropriate major institutional uses should be located within the St. Catharines Urban Growth Centre or in other areas with frequent transit service or planned higher order transit service.