



transportation

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9. Transportation

The Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe identifies where and provides direction on how growth will occur amid its single- and upper-tier municipalities to a 2041 planning horizon. The Niagara Region is an upper-tier municipality located within the Provincial Growth Plan area and is responsible for the dissemination of its provincially-forecasted growth number amongst its local area municipalities. In order to appropriately accommodate forecasted growth, the Region must plan for and implement a sustainable *transportation system* that has the ability to withstand stresses associated with population growth.

This chapter provides for a safe and efficient *transportation system* for *multimodal* travel for all users. Objectives and policies reflect direction and recommendations outlined within the Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan. The Region is committed to improving social equity, protecting short- and long-term economic competitiveness, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by advancing initiatives which enable comprehensive *active transportation* networks, interconnected public transit systems, and efficient goods movement networks. The Niagara Region remains dedicated to working with its local area municipal partners, agencies, and other public entities on cross-jurisdictional transportation-related matters.

9.A General Objectives

- Objective 9.A.1** Promote and support for a *multimodal transportation system* to enable the movement of goods and people of all ages and abilities to jobs, housing, school, cultural destinations, *public service facilities*, recreational and tourist opportunities, and other *major trip generators*, especially in *strategic growth areas*.
- Objective 9.A.2** Reduce single-occupant vehicle trips by enhancing opportunities for residents, workers, and visitors of all ages and abilities to walk, cycle, take transit and carpool.
- Objective 9.A.3** Support a connected and convenient public transit network throughout the region.
- Objective 9.A.4** Create and enhance interconnected *active transportation* systems and programs.
- Objective 9.A.5** Support the implementation of *complete streets* at regional and local levels.

Objective 9.A.6 Encourage the most cost-effective and environmentally appropriate modes of sustainable transportation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Objective 9.A.7 Ensure that agricultural vehicles and equipment are accommodated within the *transportation system* where appropriate.

9.B Coordinated Transportation System Planning

Policy 9.B.1 The Niagara Region will encourage the implementation of a comprehensive *transportation system* through the co-ordination of land use planning and strategic investments in *infrastructure*.

Policy 9.B.2 The Niagara Region will work with the *Province*, agencies and local municipalities to plan for, improve, and protect the following *planned corridors* and facilities:

- a) Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) widenings from Hamilton to Highway 406 and from McLeod Road to Mountain Road;
- b) Interchanges at Highway 406 and Third Avenue Louth, the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) and Glendale Avenue, and Highway 405 and Concession 6/Mewburn Road;
- c) the Niagara Escarpment Crossing ;
- d) the Niagara-Hamilton Trade Corridor;
- e) the South Niagara East-West Arterial Road/Niagara Greater Toronto Area (NGTA) East Corridor;
- f) the Highway 406 extension to the South Niagara East-West Arterial Road/NGTA East Corridor; and
- g) The roads of the Niagara Parks Commission.

Policy 9.B.3 The Niagara Region, in consultation with local municipalities, will work with the Federal government, the *Province*, Metrolinx, and other stakeholders to improve linkages between the Niagara Regional Transit System and GO Transit.

Policy 9.B.4 The Niagara Region will work with Federal, Provincial and municipal governments to help strengthen the provision of an efficient and safe Provincial Highway network throughout the region.

Policy 9.B.5 The Niagara Region will ensure there is suitable transportation *infrastructure* to support the Region's growth and economic strategy.

Policy 9.B.6

The Niagara Region will ensure that transportation *infrastructure* within the boundaries of the Niagara Escarpment Plan are subject to the requirements of the Niagara Escarpment Plan policies and will be designed and located so that the least possible impact occurs on the Escarpment's scenic quality, landform, and existing environmental features.

Policy 9.B.7

The Niagara Region will work with the Niagara Parks Commission to improve linkages between the Niagara Region's *transportation system* and the Niagara Park Commission's *transportation system*.

9.C Public Transit

Policy 9.C.1 Public transit will be a priority for transportation *infrastructure* planning and major transportation investments.

Policy 9.C.2 The Niagara Region supports the expansion of public transit across the region through:

- a) Prioritizing investment in transit *infrastructure* to *strategic growth areas* to optimize return on investment and the efficiency and viability of existing and planned transit service levels;
- b) Permitting *infrastructure*, including *municipal water and wastewater systems*, on lands adjacent to or near *settlement areas* for uses principle or ancillary to *frequent transit* or *higher order transit* facilities;
- c) Improving linkages from nearby neighbourhoods to *major trip generators*, including: the Downtown St. Catharines *Urban Growth Centre*, locally designated *strategic growth areas*, *employment areas*, including tourism destinations, *public service facilities*, post-secondary institutions, and *major transit station areas*;
- d) Providing transit linkages within and between *settlement areas* in and outside of the Region to increase the *modal share* of transit;
- e) Improving accessibility to public transit;
- f) Providing park-and-ride facilities that support *multimodal* travel by offering linkages to pedestrian and transit routes, *bicycle infrastructure*, and priority spaces for carpool and car-share vehicles;
- g) Establishing fare and *transit service integration* between local agencies;
- h) Considering the role public transit plays in reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and
- i) Transit service(s) to areas that have achieved, or will be planned to achieve transit supportive residential, commercial, institutional and employment densities.

- Policy 9.C.3** The Niagara Region will leverage public transit to promote *transit-supportive development*.
- Policy 9.C.4** The Niagara Region will encourage the provision of *demand-responsive transit service*, where operationally and economically feasible, in local municipalities to serve low-density areas.
- Policy 9.C.5** The Niagara Region supports *transit service integration* of municipal transit agencies to provide *frequent transit service*.
- Policy 9.C.6** The Niagara Region will ensure *transit service integration* as part of the implementation of inter-municipal regional transit, and will work with transit operators, including the *Province* and *Metrolinx*, where applicable.
- Policy 9.C.7** The Niagara Region will support transit investment for improved services to provide *multimodal access to major transit station areas* and reduce *modal share* by single-occupant vehicles.
- Policy 9.C.8** The Niagara Region and its local municipalities should plan lands adjacent to or near existing and planned *frequent transit* or *higher order transit* facilities, including those within the *Greenbelt Area* where such lands have been approved through a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, and where such lands are located within the *settlement area* boundary to:
- a) provide *transit-supportive* uses that enable opportunities for improved *transit service integration*;
 - b) facilitate *multimodal* connections that encourage a more evenly distributed *modal share*; and
 - c) support *active transportation*.
- Policy 9.C.9** The Niagara Region will prioritize and expedite *higher order transit* connections to the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA), to promote *intensification* and new employment markets.
- Policy 9.C.10** The Niagara Region shall plan to ensure *higher order transit* facilities are supported by and serve adjacent *intensification areas* and new employment markets.

- Policy 9.C.11** The Niagara Region will examine the feasibility of establishing a West Niagara Transit Terminal in order to facilitate *multimodal* connections within the Niagara Region and to the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA).
- Policy 9.C.12** Local municipalities shall develop secondary plans, or undertake an equivalent planning exercise with reference to the Province’s Transit-Supportive Guidelines, to delineate *major transit station areas* for any confirmed or identified future potential *higher order transit* facility. These plans shall include policies that, where appropriate:
- a) support *transit service integration*;
 - b) support the implementation of *active transportation-friendly* facilities;
 - c) provide for a diverse mix of uses;
 - d) prohibit land uses and a built form that would adversely affect the achievement of *transit-supportive* densities; and,
 - e) provide *alternative development* standards that promote *transit-supportive* uses and redevelopment.
- Policy 9.C.13** The Niagara Region will work with the Province, local municipalities, and Metrolinx, where applicable, to support the integration of active transportation and public transit. Improvements may include: permitting bicycles on transit vehicles, providing bicycle racks on buses, and providing bicycle infrastructure at and to transit facilities, public and institutional areas, and employment areas.

9.D Active Transportation

- Policy 9.D.1** The Niagara Region and local municipalities will ensure that comprehensive *active transportation* networks are integrated into *transportation systems* to enable safe and convenient inter- and intra-municipal travel for *active transportation* users.
- Policy 9.D.2** The Niagara Region will prioritize the implementation of the Strategic Cycling Network as identified in the Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan to advance the implementation of the Niagara Bikeways Master Plan as shown in Schedule E2.
- Policy 9.D.3** The Niagara Region will fund the implementation of the Strategic Cycling Network along Regional Roads through the Niagara Region's *public works projects* and other funding or cost-sharing opportunities.
- Policy 9.D.4** The Niagara Region will support local municipalities in implementing sections of the Strategic Cycling Network that are within their jurisdiction.
- Policy 9.D.5** Local municipalities are encouraged to develop Official Plan policies which support *bicycle infrastructure* to ensure a connected and extended bicycle network within the region.
- Policy 9.D.6** Local municipalities are encouraged to establish *development* standards for *transit-supportive* uses within *strategic growth areas* that achieve *compact built forms* to promote *active transportation*.
- Policy 9.D.7** The Niagara Region supports the re-purpose of abandoned rail and other linear corridors, including hydro corridors, for off-road trails and recommends that local municipalities consider various means to protect and/or acquire such corridors. The Niagara Region will require early pre-consultation with relevant stakeholders, including TransCanada Pipeline or its designated representative, in the acquisition of abandoned rail and other linear corridors.
- Policy 9.D.8** The Niagara Region will work with the Ministry of Transportation and other stakeholders for the provision of *active transportation* infrastructure across the QEW, 400 Series Highways, and other highways.

- Policy 9.D.9** The Niagara Region will work with the Niagara Escarpment Commission, local municipalities, property owners, and other stakeholders, where applicable, to protect a continuous pedestrian route generally following the Bruce Trail along the Niagara Escarpment. The role and function of off-road-trails within the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area will be subject to the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan.
- Policy 9.D.10** The Niagara Region will implement the recommendations of the Transportation Demand Management Study with respect to *active-transportation friendly* facilities.
- Policy 9.D.11** The Niagara Region will have regard to the Niagara Region's Wayfinding Signage for Cyclists Guidelines as part of the design, refurbishment or reconstruction of Regional Roads.
- Policy 9.D.12** The Niagara Region will develop guidelines for local Official Plans and Zoning By-laws that outline minimum provisions for accommodating *active transportation-friendly* facilities in new *development*, redevelopment, and *public work projects*.

9.E Complete Streets

- Policy 9.E.1** The Niagara Region's *Complete Streets Design Guidelines* shall be used in the design, refurbishment, or reconstruction of the Niagara Region's *transportation system* to ensure the needs and safety of all road users are considered and appropriately accommodated.
- Policy 9.E.2** The Niagara Region shall ensure that the Niagara Region's *Complete Streets Design Guidelines* is included as a reference document within the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for Municipal Class Environmental Assessments.
- Policy 9.E.3** Local municipalities shall include policies within Official Plans that ensure that a *complete streets* approach is used in the design, refurbishment, or reconstruction of their planned or existing street network.
- Policy 9.E.4** In the absence of local *complete street* guidelines, local municipalities shall refer to the Niagara Region's *Complete Streets Design Guidelines* for the design, refurbishment or reconstruction of their existing and planned local street network.
- Policy 9.E.5** *Complete streets* elements within local jurisdiction shall be maintained by the *local municipality*.

9.F The Regional Road System

- Policy 9.F.1** As conditions of the approval of a *development* application:
- a) The Niagara Region may acquire from the landowner land required for the *road allowance* as identified in Table 9-1 at no cost to the Region free of all encumbrance, encroachments, and improvements unless otherwise agreed to by the Region; and,
 - b) The Niagara Region is to be provided with a certificate of an Ontario Land Surveyor noting that all legal survey documentation on the widened *road allowance* is in place.
- Policy 9.F.2** The Niagara Region shall require the conveyance of land, at no cost to the Region, as condition of the approval of a *development* application, beyond the designated *road allowance* widths identified in Table 9-1, to accommodate items such as sight triangles, turning lanes, channelization, grade separations, traffic control devices, rapid transit, public transit facilities and rights-of-way, *active transportation* facilities cuts, fills and storm drainage requirements, as required to meet accepted/current engineering design criteria/standards. These do not require an amendment to this Plan.
- Policy 9.F.3** Land for Regional Road widenings will be required equally from both sides of the centreline of the designated Regional Road unless existing land uses, topographic features or other physical or environmental constraints necessitate taking greater widening on one side than the other.
- Policy 9.F.4** The Niagara Region may acquire, at its own expense, additional land that exceeds the *road allowance* widths identified in Table 9-1, without an amendment to this Plan.
- Policy 9.F.5** The Niagara Region will consider the need for noise mitigation measures to address traffic noise from Regional Roads, where required, premised on noise study recommendations per Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks guidelines for the following situations:

- a) New *development* adjacent to a Regional Road; or,
- b) Impact of noise generated by increased traffic on Regional Roads adjacent to established *development*.

Policy 9.F.6 As part of the *development* application process, a *road allowance* not yet owned by the Niagara Region and identified in the Niagara Region’s Transportation Master Plan should be protected in the following cases:

- a) A local street that could be ultimately assumed by the Region; and,
- b) Plans for the extension of an existing *road allowance*.

Policy 9.F.7 The Niagara Region will have regard to the Niagara Region’s Model Urban Design Guidelines, *Complete Streets Design Guidelines*, and Wayfinding Signage for Cyclists Guidelines when providing comments on *development* applications located along Regional Roads.

Policy 9.F.8 The Niagara Region will plan and protect rights-of-way for the Niagara Region’s *transportation system, major goods movement facilities and corridors, active transportation corridors* and transit facilities to meet current and projected needs, while ensuring that *development* is not permitted in *planned corridors* that could preclude or negatively affect the purposes of the corridor.

Policy 9.F.9 Local municipalities, in consultation with the Niagara Region and the *Province*, shall develop official plan policies that provide protection for *planned corridors* to ensure that decisions on *development* applications will not preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified.

Policy 9.F.10 The Niagara Region will encourage the co-location of linear *infrastructure* along Regional Roads, where applicable.

Policy 9.F.11 The Niagara Region will consider the separation of transportation modes within corridors.

Policy 9.F.12 As part of the construction, optimization, or expansion of transportation *infrastructure* within the Niagara Region’s *agricultural area and natural heritage system*, the Niagara Region will require, where applicable:

- a) the preparation of an agricultural impact assessment, or equivalent analysis as part of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, that demonstrates that any impacts on the agricultural system have been avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized, and, to the extent feasible, mitigated; and/or
- b) the preparation of an environmental impact study, or equivalent analysis as part of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, that demonstrates that any impacts on the *natural heritage system*, key natural heritage features, key hydrologic features and key hydrologic areas have been avoided or, if avoidance is not possible, minimized, and to the extent feasible, mitigated.

Policy 9.F.13 The Niagara Region and local municipalities shall conform to National Energy Board regulations and provisions in relation to the requirements for *development* within proximity to its pipelines and corridors.

Policy 9.F.14 The Niagara Region's transportation system will be implemented as per the recommended actions and schedules of the Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan.

9.G Transportation Demand Management

- Policy 9.G.1** The Niagara Region will develop and implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Study that is consistent with the recommendations of the Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan and conforms to the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.
- Policy 9.G.2** Local municipalities shall develop and implement *TDM* policies to be incorporated into local official plans that are consistent with the future Niagara Region's TDM Study.

9.H Goods Movement

Policy 9.H.1 The Niagara Region, in partnership with local municipalities, will develop and implement a Goods Movement Study that is consistent with the recommendations of the Niagara Region's Transportation Master Plan and the Province's Freight-Supportive Guidelines. The Goods Movement Study will take advantage of cross-border trade opportunities, including the Foreign Free Trade Zone, support employment activity, and maximize the use of the Gateway Economic Zone and Gateway Economic Centre.

Policy 9.H.2 The Niagara Region and its local municipalities will ensure the protection of lands adjacent to or near major goods movement facilities and corridors, including those outside of *settlement areas* and/or within the *Greenbelt Area* for the expansion of *infrastructure* and uses ancillary to that of the principle major goods movement facility and/or corridor use while:

- a) requiring a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment to demonstrate the need and alternative options for the infrastructure required for the expansion;
- b) avoiding specialty crop areas, and other prime agricultural areas in that order of priority, unless need has been demonstrated and it has been established that there is no reasonable alternative for the location of the infrastructure as determined through the applicable Municipal Class Environment Assessment;
- c) avoiding, or where avoidance is not possible, minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts to the agricultural system or other sensitive land uses vulnerable to encroachment; and
- d) requiring an agricultural impact assessment during instances where infrastructure or uses are proposed within, adjacent to, or near the Greenbelt Area or agricultural system.

Policy 9.H.3 The Niagara Region and its local municipalities will ensure that *development* of lands adjacent to or near *major goods movement facilities and corridors* will be compatible with the

goods movement function of those facilities and be designed to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts on and from the facilities and corridors.

- Policy 9.H.4** The Niagara Region will support the implementation of a *multimodal transportation system*, which accommodates the movement of goods, where identified through the Goods Movement Study.
- Policy 9.H.5** The Niagara Region will work with the *Province*, local municipalities, agencies, and transportation service providers to implement a *transportation system* which is able to accommodate agricultural vehicles and equipment, where appropriate.
- Policy 9.H.6** The Niagara Region will continue to advocate for highway capacity improvements to address inter-regional and international trade related demands for the purposes of goods movement.
- Policy 9.H.7** The Niagara Region will consider, where possible, the protection of abandoned rail corridors for future *freight-supportive* activity.