

A network diagram background consisting of a grid of interconnected nodes and lines, with a dark grey upper section and an orange lower section.

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Welcome!

Public Information Centre #1

**Ontario Street (Regional Road 42) from Linwell Road to
Welland Avenue/ Fourth Avenue (Regional Road 77)**
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment

Tuesday April 16, 2024
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

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Please sign in when entering and provide your email if you would like to be notified about the project.



Review the display boards at your own pace.



Engage with the Study Team Members if you have any questions or comments.



Please fill out a comment sheet today OR email your comments by May 3, 2024.

Purpose of PIC #1

- To introduce the study to the public.
- To provide interested and/or potentially affected stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in the planning and decision-making process.
- To present and receive public input on:
 - Problem/Opportunity Statement.
 - Concerns and issues pertaining to the study area.



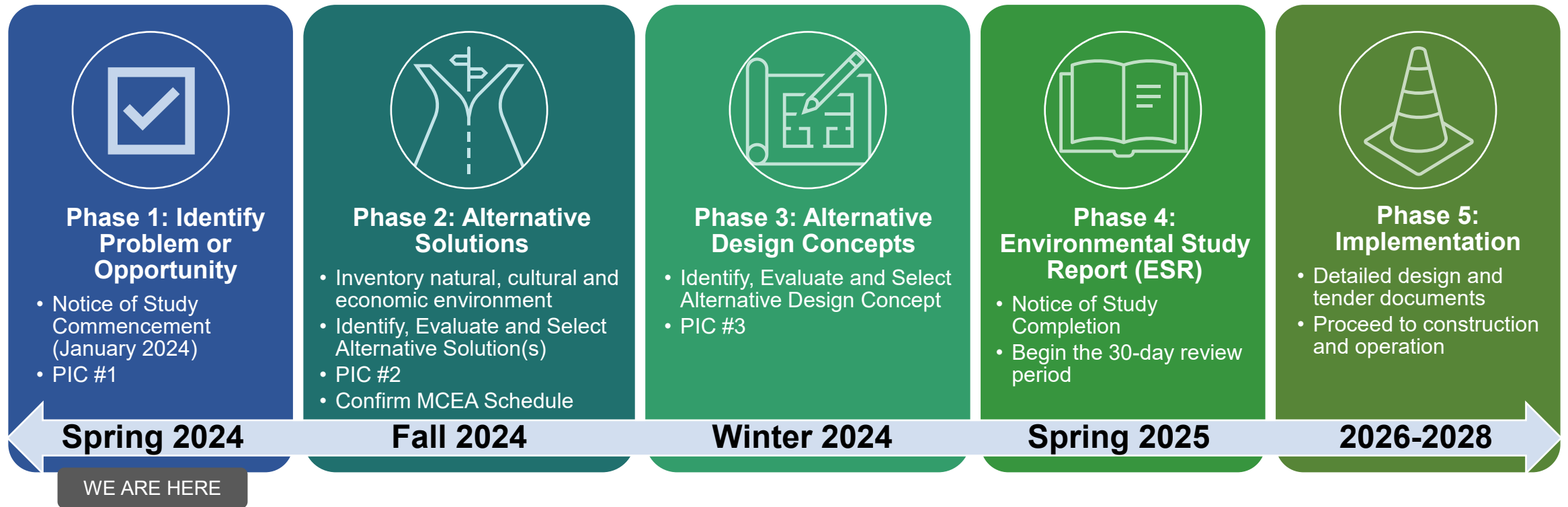
Looking south on Ontario Street, south of the QEW

Project Background

- Schedule 'C' Municipal Class Environmental Assessment
- Rehabilitation and/or improvement needs for Ontario Street (Regional Road 42) from Linwell Road to Welland Avenue/ Fourth Avenue (Regional Road 77) in the City of St. Catharines
- Considerations include:
 - Traffic capacity and intersection improvements
 - Road safety
 - Pavement condition
 - Access management
 - Active transportation
 - Adjacent Development



Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Process & Timeline



Public and Stakeholder Consultation Engagement

The study is following the consultation requirements of the MCEA process. This includes the following key consultation milestones:

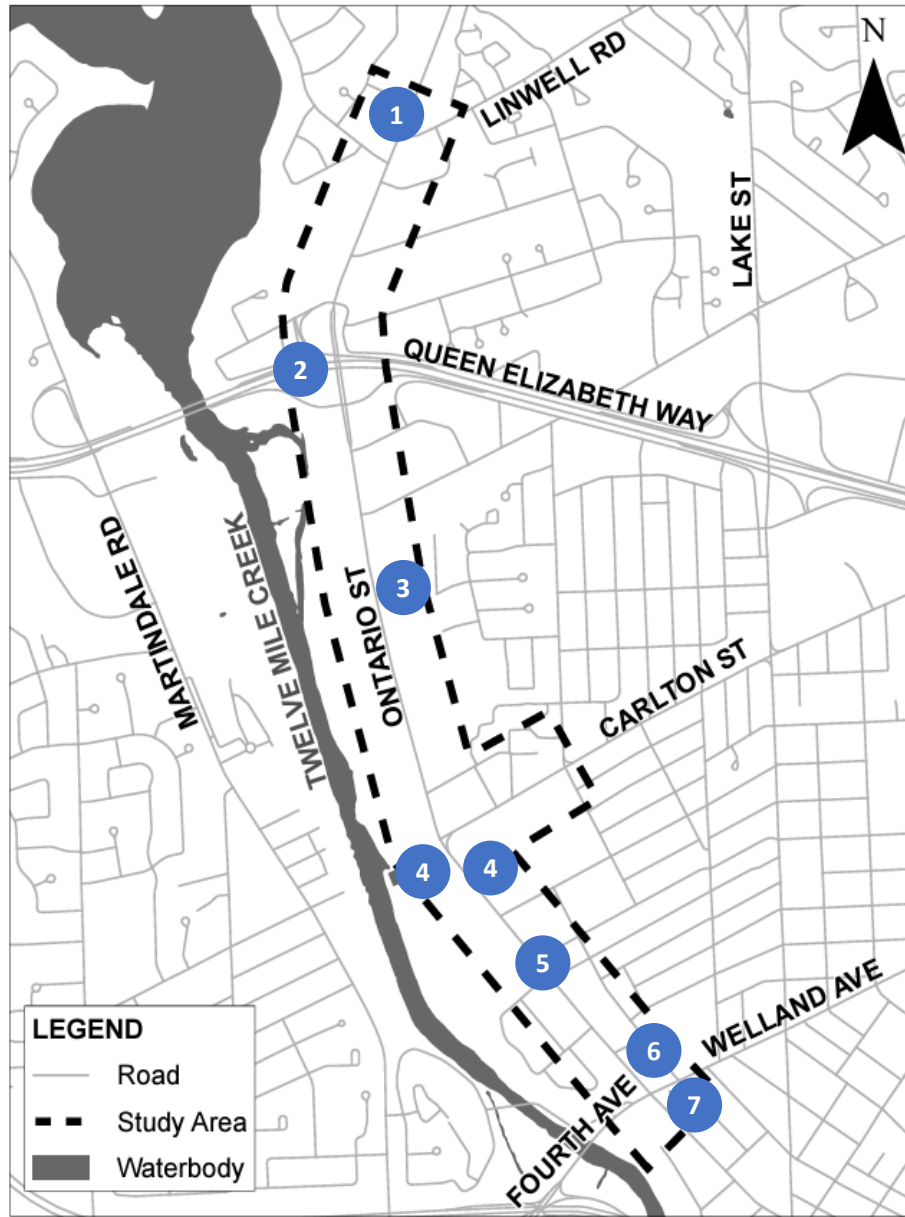
- Notice of Study Commencement (January 11, 2024)
- PIC #1 (April 16, 2024)
- PIC #2 (Fall 2024)
- PIC #3 (Early 2025)
- Notice of Study Completion (Spring 2025)

The Study Team is also engaging key stakeholders including:

- City of St. Catharines
- Ministry of Transportation,
- Relevant provincial agencies & utilities,
- Indigenous Communities, and
- local businesses, and members of the public.

Your comments are important to us and will be used to help the Study Team make informed decisions through the MCEA process.

Study Area Key Issues/Considerations



1. Tie into the current construction of Ontario Street to the north of the study area limits.
2. Coordinate with Ontario Ministry of Transportation for potential improvements that could impact the Queen Elizabeth Way highway interchange.
3. Commercial and Business Impacts – Impacts to adjacent businesses
4. GM Plant lands and future development being reviewed as part of the City's Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan.
5. Road becomes two lanes, south of Carlton Street, and in close proximity to residential properties/driveways.
6. Intersection improvements for capacity, operations and safety, as it relates to high frequency of collisions.
7. Several heritage properties including the Queen Street Heritage Conservation District.

Corridor-wide Issues:

- Active Transportation – Disconnected or sub-standard sidewalks, and lack of cycling infrastructure.
- Utility poles are close to the road on both sides of Ontario Street.
- Constrained road right-of-way
- Pavement condition

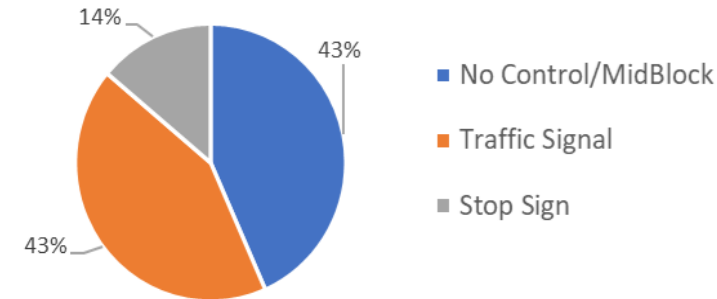
Transportation and Road Safety

A transportation study is being conducted to determine the existing transportation conditions in the study area. Key findings include:

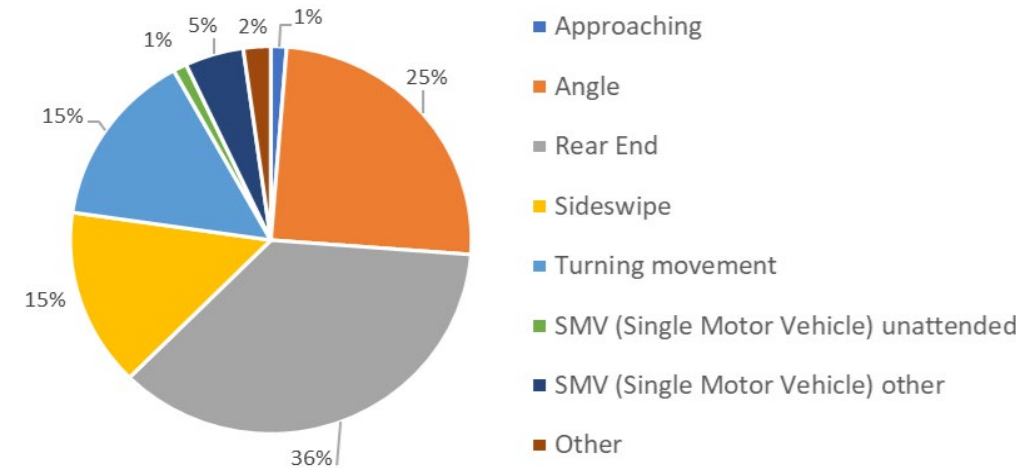
- Generally, traffic operates at an acceptable level of service, except for some movements at the Ontario Street / Welland Avenue intersection during peak hours.
- Niagara Region Transit operates Routes 302 and 402 on Ontario Street. This study will consider transit needs along the corridor.
- Collision data was analyzed based on records from 2016-2019, 2022 and up to July 2023.
 - Rear-end collisions were the most frequent (37% of collisions)
 - High frequency of collisions at mid-block locations (45%) mainly due to multiple closely spaced accesses in a short distance

Future traffic assessment findings will be shared in subsequent PICs.

Collisions by Control Type



Collisions by Impact Type



Existing Conditions - Key Findings

Technical studies are being undertaken to characterize and understand the existing conditions of the study area. These findings will determine the potential impacts of the proposed design and inform the mitigation measures required. Based on preliminary findings:

- There are **minimal natural heritage features** in the study corridor given its built-up, urban nature.
- Most of the study area is previously disturbed (**low potential for archaeological resources**), though some older neighbourhoods exhibit pockets of undisturbed soils and require further archaeological investigation, if impacted.
- **Cultural heritage resources** in the study area include one designated property at the north end of the study area and several listed and designated properties near Ontario Street/Fourth Avenue intersection, including the Queen Street Heritage Conservation District.

Technical Studies to be Undertaken:



Transportation Assessment



Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment



Built Heritage and Cultural Landscape Assessment



Hydrogeology and Geotechnical Investigations



Drainage and Stormwater Management

Additional studies will be completed if required.

Regional Plans and Policies



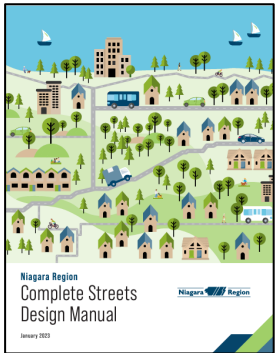
Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan (TMP)

The Region's TMP is a strategic planning document that lays out the programs, plans, and improvements required to address transportation needs in the Region from today through to 2041. The TMP looks at a variety of transportation needs including roads and highways for the movement of people and goods, pedestrians and cycling facilities, and transit.



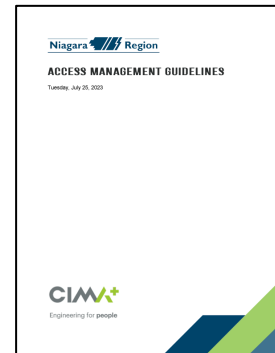
Niagara Region Official Plan (2022)

The Region's Official Plan (OP) is a long-range policy and planning document to help shape and manage growth in the Region. From a transportation perspective, the OP supports multimodal transportation systems and promotes modes of transport besides single-occupant vehicle trips, including active transportation, transit and complete streets.



Niagara Region Complete Streets Design Manual

The Complete Streets Design Manual (CSDM) provides guidance on how to design, implement and maintain Complete Streets in the Region. Design practices are based upon best practices and updated federal and provincial transportation standards.



Niagara Region Access Management Guidelines (2023)

Niagara Region aims to maintain safe and effective traffic flow on its roadways. A key element of this is providing safe access, consistent with the function of the road and the needs of adjacent land uses. Access Management Guidelines are intended to manage the provision of access to the public road system for new development or redevelopment, and proactively through corridor reconstruction.

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Provincial Plans and Policies



Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)

A consolidated statement on the Province's policies and direction on key land use planning issues that affect communities, including management of land, housing, protection of the environment, economic development and jobs, and public infrastructure.



A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

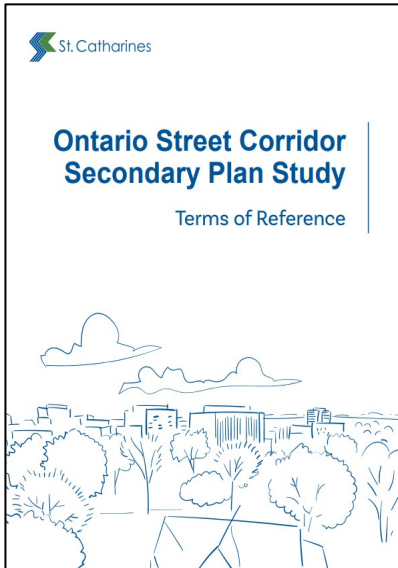
This document is the Province's plan to guide and manage growth and development anticipated for the Greater Golden Horseshoe including supporting economic prosperity, protecting the environment, and supporting communities.

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Local Plans and Policies



Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan Study (Underway)

The City of St. Catharines is undertaking a land-use study of the Ontario Street corridor from the QEW to Welland Avenue. The study will guide future decisions for land use in the Ontario Street corridor, which includes the long-standing industrial properties at 282 and 285 Ontario St. (former General Motors manufacturing site), which will be a central focus of the study and for future redevelopment opportunities.



Official Plan (The Garden City Plan)

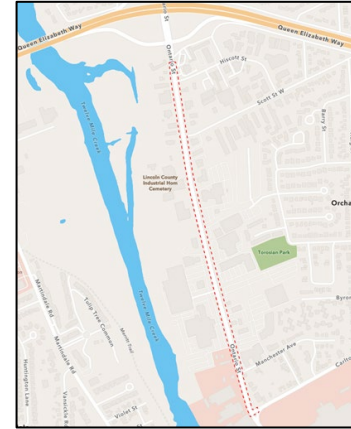
The Official Plan (The Garden City Plan) is the City of St. Catharines' long term land use plan. The Plan sets out policies for where and how lands can be used and developed within the community. It identifies permitted land uses and general policies to guide future development within the City.

Adjacent Projects



Ontario Street (Linwell Road to Lakeport Road) Reconstruction

In 2016, the Region completed a Schedule “B” MCEA for the reconstruction of Ontario Street between Linwell Road and Lakeport Road (Regional Road 87). The proposed design includes a three-lane cross section, with center two-way left-turn lane, and bike lanes. Construction for this project began in Fall 2023.



Ontario Street Watermain Replacement

The City of St. Catharines is completing a Schedule “A+” MCEA for the replacement of existing watermains on Ontario Street from Carlton Street to approximately 60m north of Hiscott Street, to improve the aging water and sewer infrastructure. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2024.



Twelve Mile Creek Crossing (Carlton Street to Martindale Road)

The Region’s Transportation Master Plan identified a Twelve Mile Creek crossing from Carlton Street to Martindale Road. The Region will be undertaking a feasibility study to assess the need/feasibility of the crossing and its potential impacts and benefits.

Study Area - Problem and Opportunities

Key Problems

- Potential road traffic capacity and operational concerns due to projected growth and development based on the City of St. Catharines' Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan, primarily associated with the former industrial lands of the former McKinnon Industries (GM Powertrain Plant).
- Deteriorating pavement conditions.
- Access issues at commercial plaza entrances in order to manage safety and future development needs.
- Inadequate active transportation facilities (e.g., sub-standard, in poor condition).
- Intersection improvements required to address safety and operational issues.
- Road safety concerns due to the high frequency of collisions in the corridor, as evidenced by the historical collision records.
- Constrained road right-of-way for corridor improvements.

Key Opportunities

- Support ongoing growth and development in St. Catharines by aligning the corridor with the Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan.
- Improve sub-standard infrastructure, including meeting accessibility guidelines.
- Improve road safety along the corridor (i.e., Vision Zero) for all users.
- Review and improve transit facilities, including bus stop spacing and design, as applicable.
- Active transportation improvements.
- Incorporate Niagara Region Complete Streets Design Manual, where possible.
- Improve the place-making and streetscaping of the corridor, including aesthetics, public spaces, and greenery, where possible.

Problem/Opportunity Statement

Based on the key problems and opportunities identified, the following Problem/Opportunity Statement was produced to guide the MCEA study going forward:

There is an opportunity to address existing problems on Ontario Street (Regional Road 42) that can lead to operational and safety improvements for those who use the corridor. Based on the ongoing City of St. Catharines' Ontario Street Corridor Secondary Plan, there is the potential for redevelopment and growth that may impact future road capacity and operations.

This MCEA study aims to identify improvements that accommodate the future traffic demand, improve traffic operations, address the deteriorating pavement condition, and enhance safety across the corridor for all modes of transportation, including at accesses, intersections, and areas of high collision rates. Where possible, the MCEA study will further take the opportunity to achieve the Complete Streets principle, such as improving transit facilities, streetscaping and placemaking features.

Next Steps

- Review PIC #1 comments and post PIC #1 summary report on Regional website
- Complete relevant technical studies
- Develop and evaluate Alternative Solutions
- Meet with interested stakeholders/agencies
- Present preferred Alternative Solution(s) at PIC #2 (Fall 2024)



Looking south on Ontario Street at Carlton Street

How You Can Get Involved



Ask questions or discuss issues with the Study Team today at the PIC.



Fill out a PIC comment form and return by May 3, 2024.



Request to be added to the study contact list to receive updates and future public notices about the study.



Visit the study website for more information.
(<https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/ontario-street-environmental-assessment/>).



The display boards will be made available electronically on the study website after the PIC.



Attend future Public Information Centres.

Key Team Member Contacts

Your comments are important. They will be reviewed as part of the study process. Please feel free to contact a Study Team Member, submit a comment sheet, or email/call us at:

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