

# Welcome to Public Information Centre #1 Highway 20 (Regional Road 20) Smithville Downtown Bypass Environmental Assessment

February 12, 2026

Public Information Centre: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Presentation: Starts at 5:30 p.m.

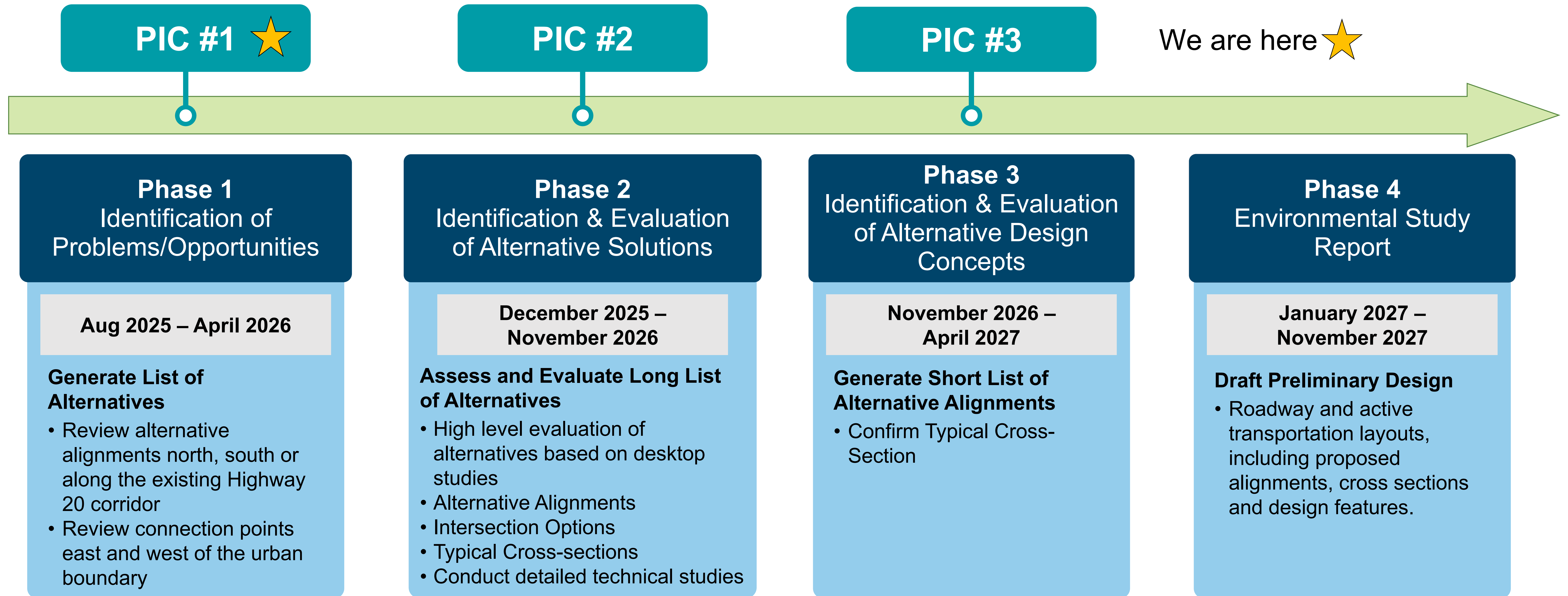
West Lincoln Community Centre

# Purpose of Public Information Centre #1

- Introduce the study to the public.
- Share the:
  - Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Process
  - Purpose of the study
  - Background work completed to date
  - Policy Background and Existing Conditions
  - Alternative Assessment Process
- Provide interested parties an opportunity to participate in the planning and decision-making process.
- Collect input and feedback from you on existing issues and potential opportunities.

# Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Process

This project is classified as a **Schedule 'C' Municipal Class EA** and will complete **Phases 1 through 4** of the MCEA Process.



Phases 2 and 3 includes technical studies to assess the impacts and benefits of design alternatives. These studies include (but are not limited to): archaeology, cultural heritage, ecology, traffic, noise, and vibration.

At the end of the study, an Environmental Study Report (ESR) will document the planning process and be available for a 30-day public review. A Notice of Completion will be issued at that time.

# Project Overview

The main objective of the study is to identify and evaluate alignment options for a Highway 20 bypass around Downtown Smithville.

In addition, a critical goal of the project is to improve safety for both pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

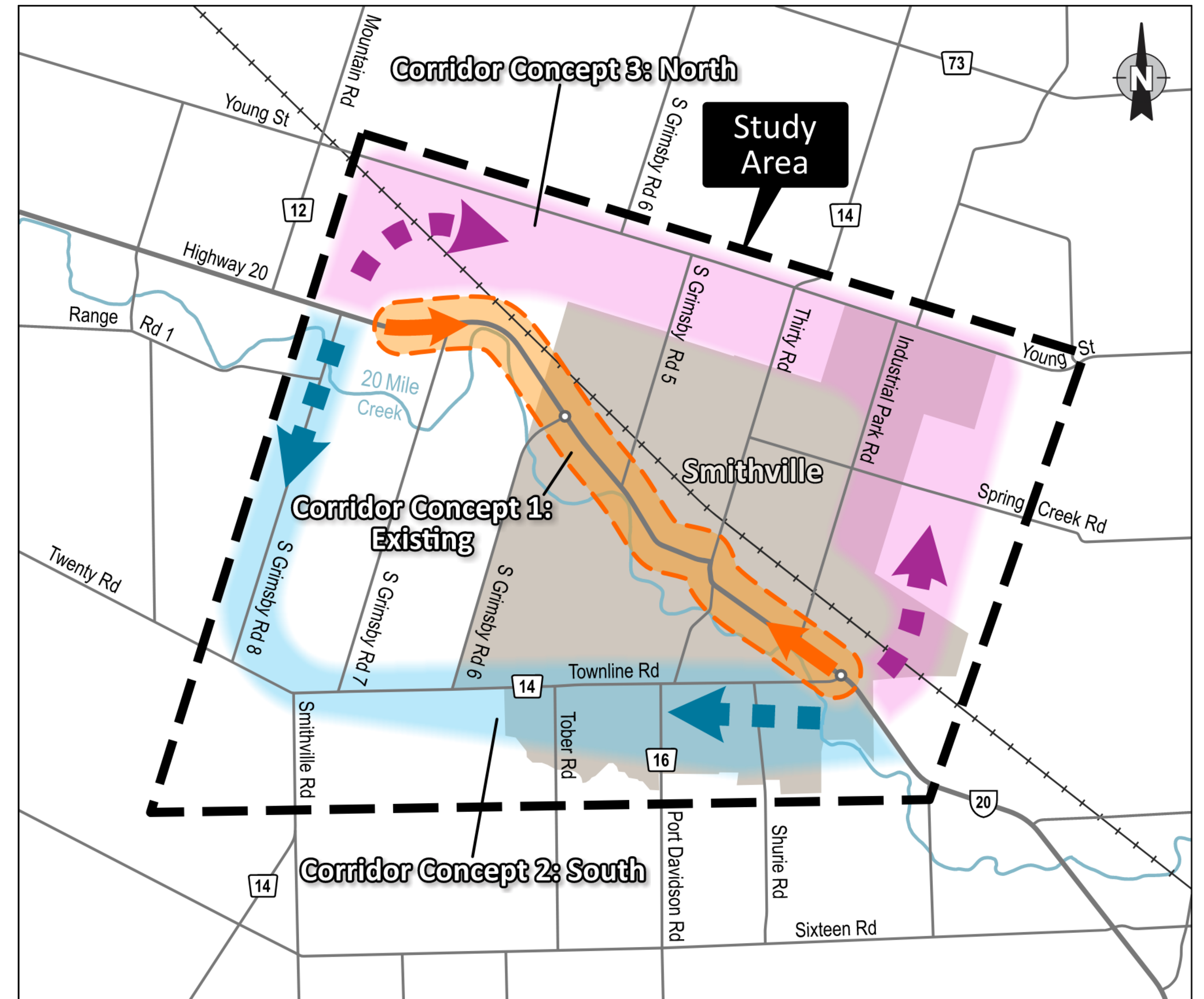
As part of the EA process, a reasonable set of alternatives needs to be considered, as well as a Do-Nothing scenario.

## Corridor Concepts Being Considered as Part of this EA:

1. Existing Highway 20 Improvements
2. South Bypass Corridor
3. North Bypass Corridor
4. Do Nothing

Once the corridor has been confirmed, alignment options and design alternatives will be generated and evaluated.

## Preliminary Corridor Concepts



# Goals of the Study

The goals of the study are to:

- Identify and assess bypass route options
- Reduce traffic congestion in downtown Smithville
- Support future growth in West Lincoln
- Improve safety and travel for all road users
- Enhance regional connections
- Promote sustainable transportation
- Support economic development by improving access and movement



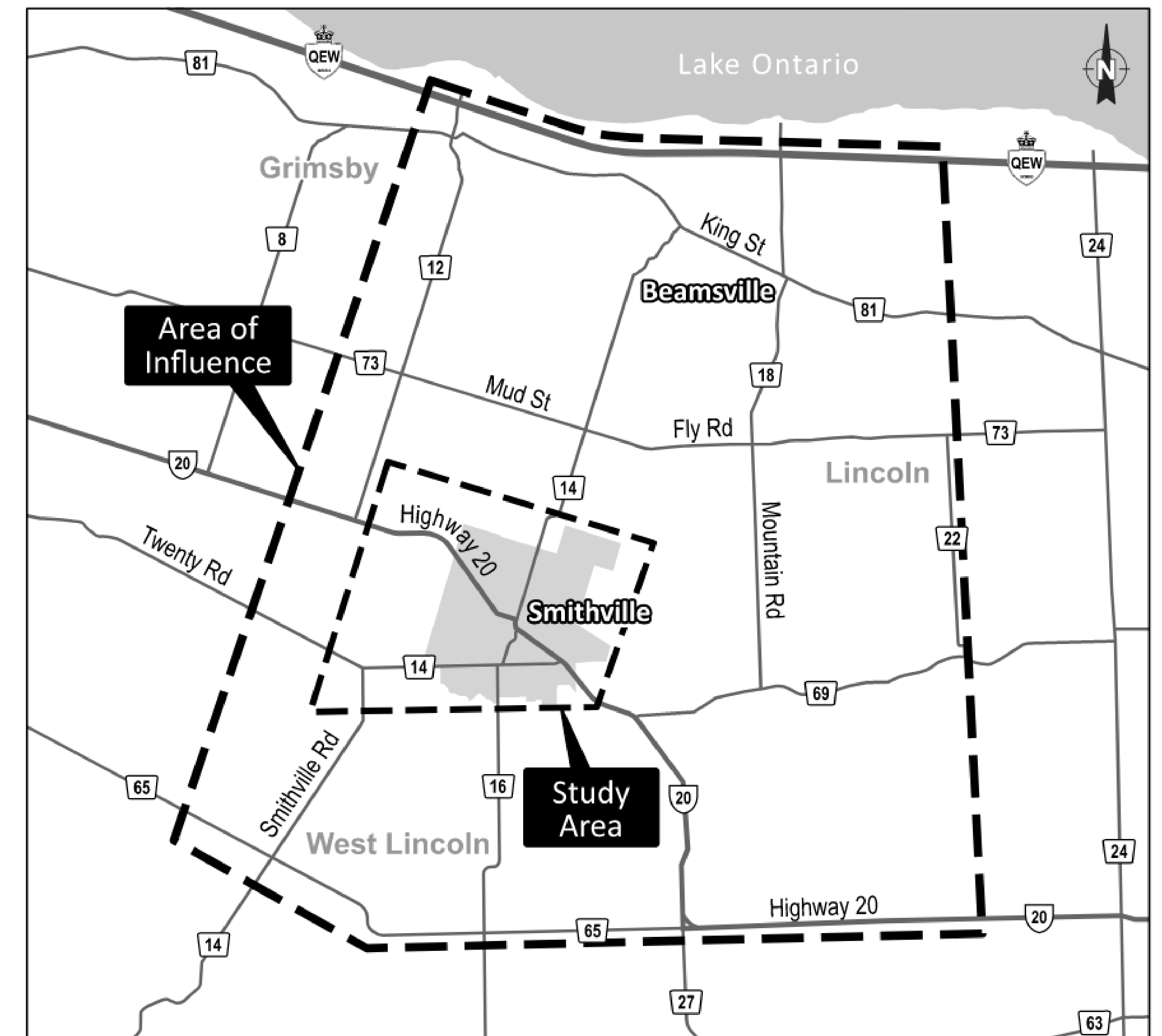
# Consultation and Engagement

There will be three rounds of engagement over the course of the project.

Key interested parties and rights holders of this project include:

- Indigenous Communities (Mississaugas of the Credit, Six Nations of the Grand River, Haudenosaunee Development Institute, and Métis Nation)
- Landowners Group
- Residents & General Public
- Interested Parties
- Local Agencies (NPCA, School Boards)
- Government & Agencies (Provincial, Regional, Township)
- Transportation & Transit Infrastructure, Railways, Water (water supply, wastewater, stormwater), Energy (electrical lines, natural gas pipelines), and Telecommunications.

**Your comments are important to us and will help the study team make informed decisions throughout the MCEA process.**



# Previous Studies and Policy Background

The Smithville Bypass EA builds upon policy directions from the Province and upon prior work and recommendations from both the Township and the Region. Land use and planning policy and direction is provided by:

- Township of West Lincoln Official Plan (2021);
- Niagara Official Plan (2024)
- Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP) (2023)
- Provincial Planning Statement (2024)
- Greenbelt Plan (2017)



The Smithville MCP (2023) forecasts that there will be 21,890 residents and 5,500 jobs in Smithville by 2051, an increase of 11,120 people and 2,640 jobs from 2026.

Transportation recommendations and direction are carried forward from:

- Smithville Transportation Master Plan (TMP) (2023)
- Niagara Region TMP (2017 – Currently being updated)

This project is a direct result of the recommendations from the 2017 Niagara TMP, and the Smithville MCP and TMP.

# Policy Background

The Smithville Bypass has previously been reviewed in:

- Smithville MCP & TMP
- Niagara Region 2017 TMP

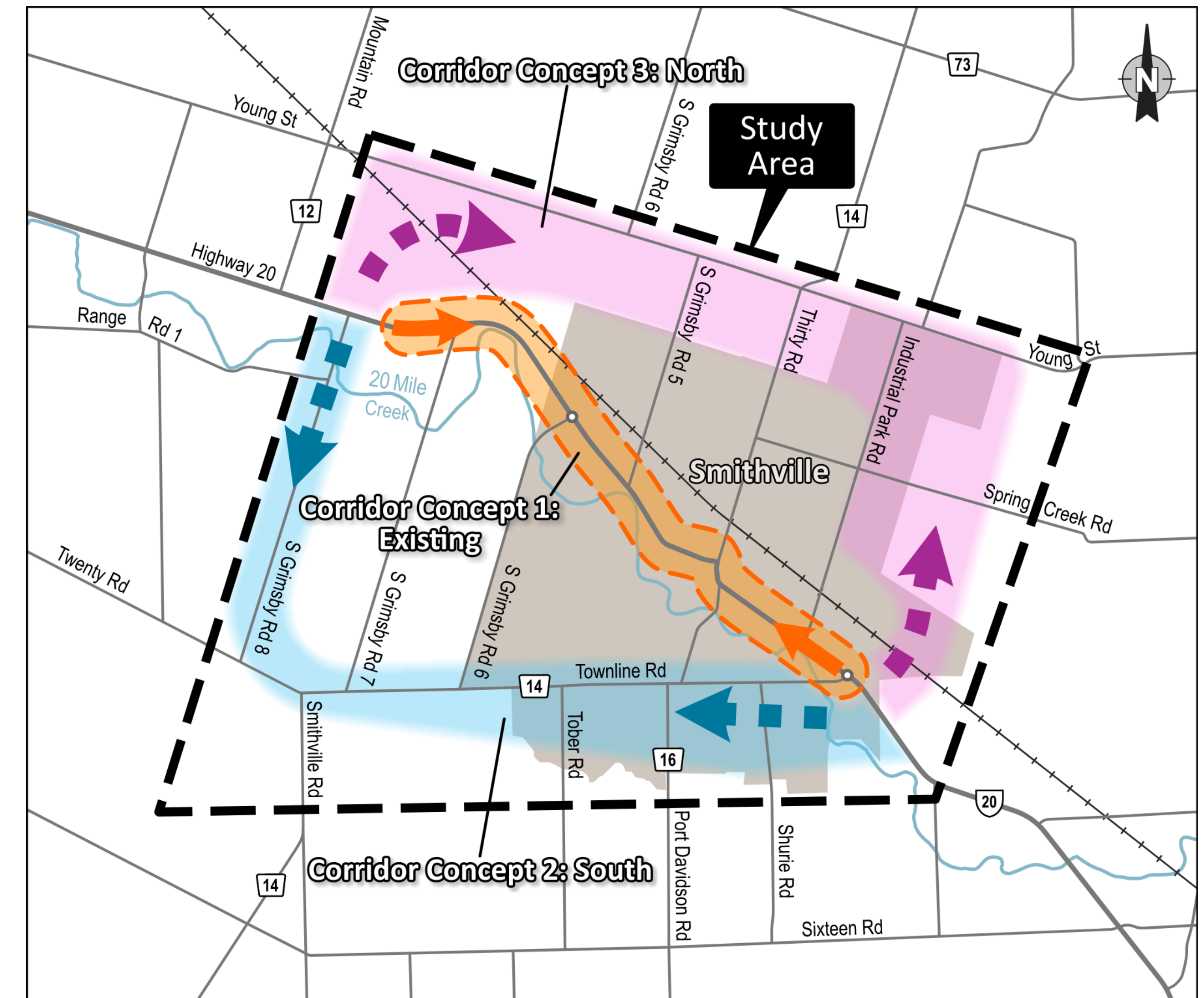
This current study will examine in more detail:

- Benefits of the bypass
- Role in mitigating traffic pressures
- Improving regional connectivity
- Supporting Downtown Smithville
- Recommended alignment and preliminary design details

Township of West Lincoln Council passed a resolution on October 28, 2024 directing Township staff to request that Corridor Concept 2, the south bypass option, be removed from consideration as it is no longer consistent with the Township of West Lincoln Transportation Master Plan.

For completeness and for our due diligence, the Environmental Assessment will evaluate Corridor Concept 2 (south bypass option) along with Corridor Concept 3 (northern bypasses), and the Do Nothing alternative (Corridor Concept 1), to develop the bypass corridor recommendations. Regional policy guidance and the Township Council's resolution will be considered as inputs.

## Preliminary Corridor Concepts



# Existing Conditions: Urban Boundary and Land Use

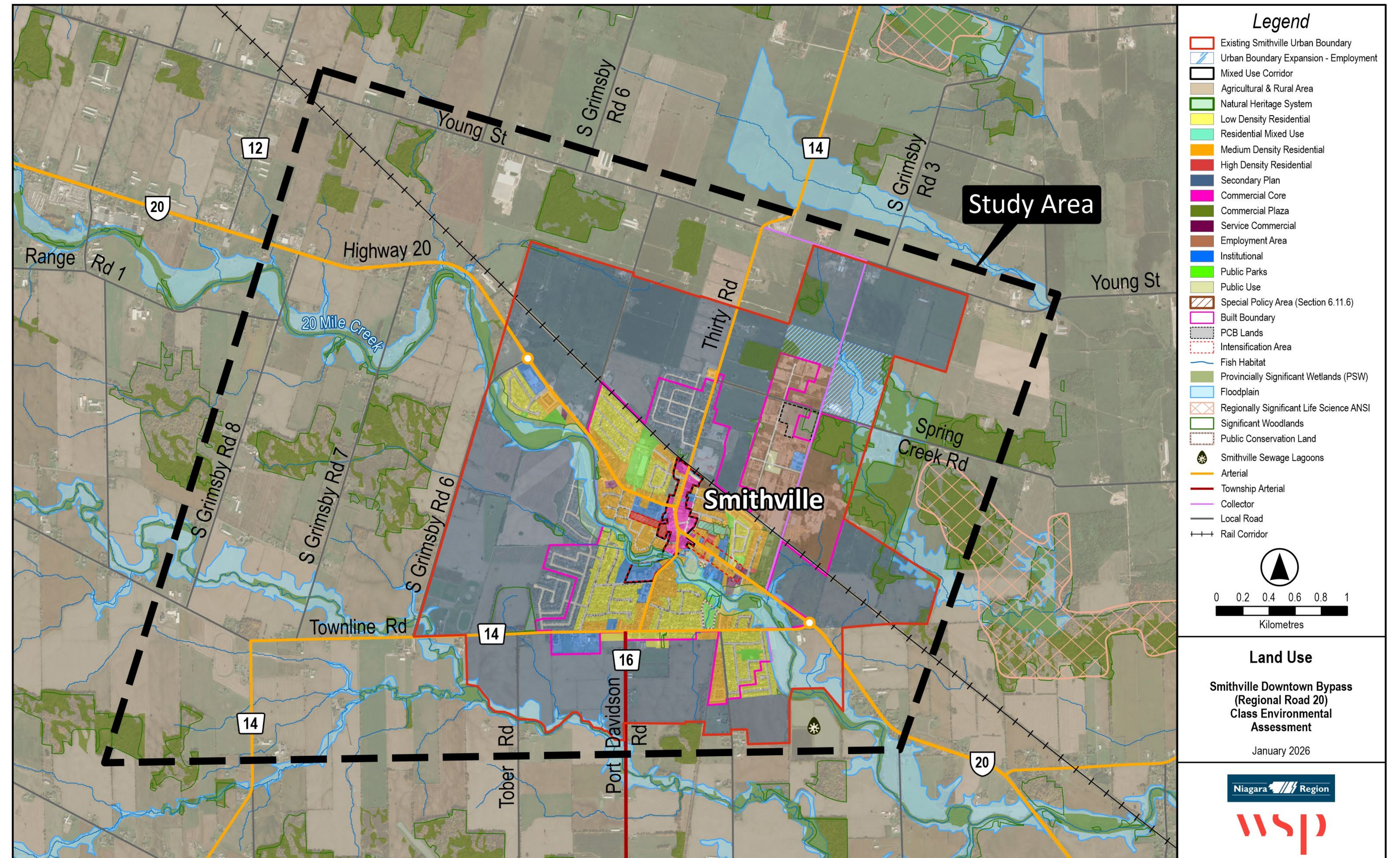
## Environmental Assessment (EA) Process

The EA process evaluates a broad range of environments, including:

- Existing and future urban areas and land uses
- Natural environment and waterways
- Archaeology and cultural heritage
- Transportation and traffic

## Urban Expansion Considerations

- Significant growth is planned beyond the current urban boundary
- The study will:
  - Assess the expanded urban boundary
  - Minimize impacts on potential land uses
  - Identify opportunities for connectivity where feasible



# Existing Conditions: Natural Environment

## Designations:

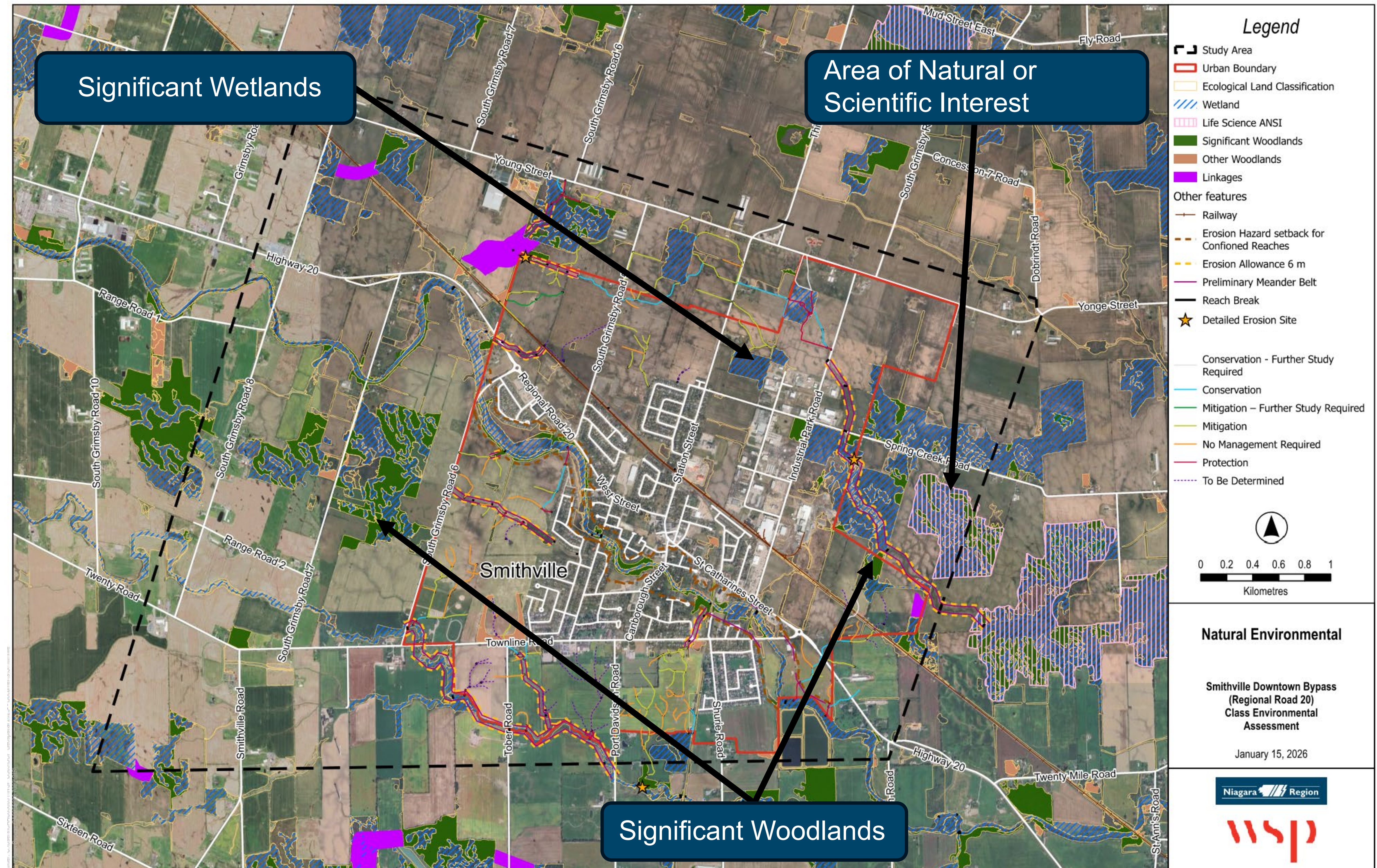
- Provincially Significant Wetlands (Lower Twenty Mile Creek Wetland Complex)
- Significant Woodlands
- NE Area: Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) – *East Smithville Slough Forest*

These areas/features will be carefully considered in our assessment of alternative solutions.

## Ecological Features:

- Candidate Significant Wildlife Habitat
- Potential Threatened/Endangered Species Habitat

**Next Steps:** Review refinements from MCP Sub-watershed Study & conduct field investigations for the preferred alignment.



# Existing Conditions: Watercourses

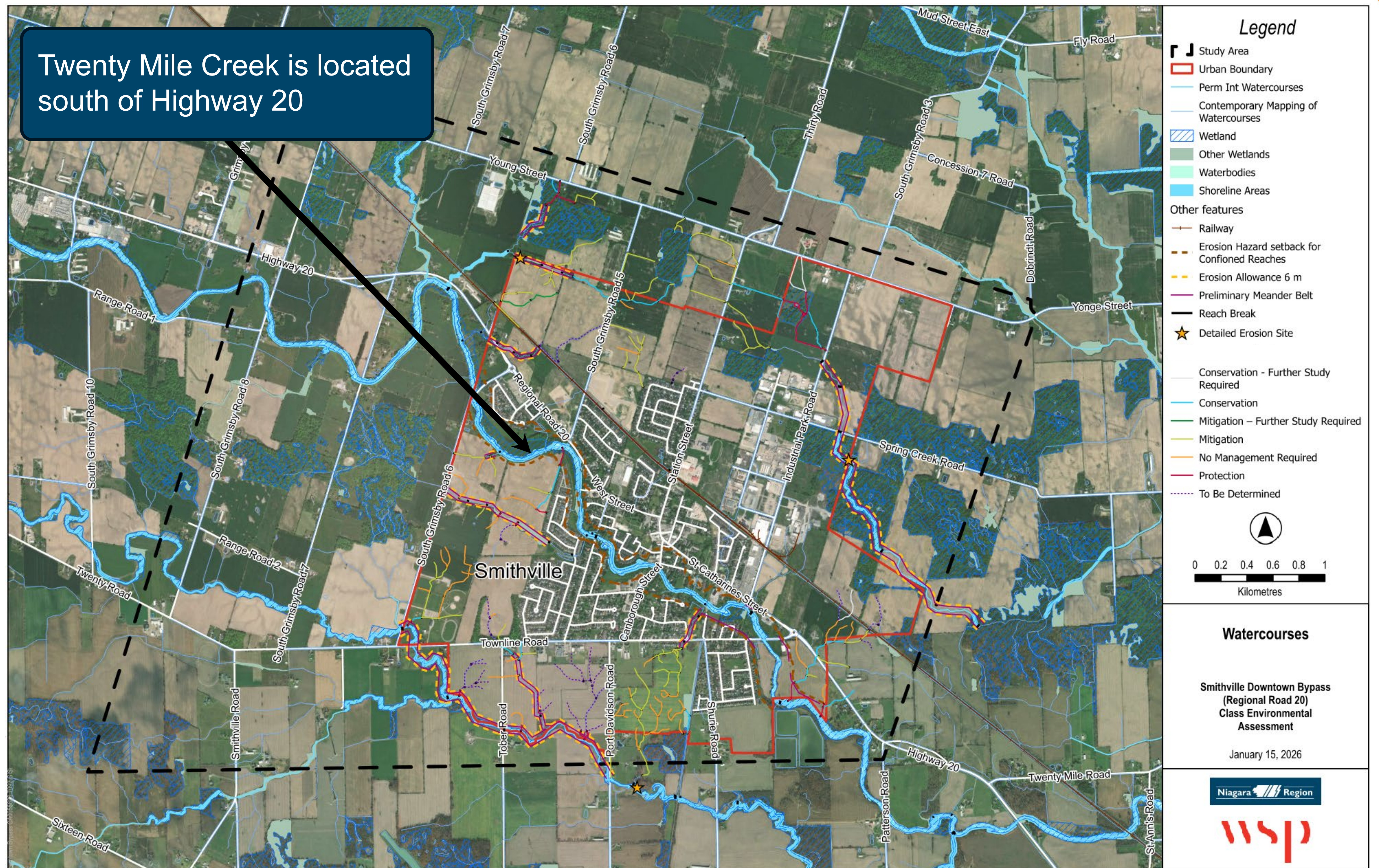
## Twenty Mile Creek Overview

- Located **south of Highway 20**, passing through **Smithville**
- Includes **several tributaries** feeding into the creek from both **north and south**

These areas/features will be carefully considered in our assessment of alternative solutions.

## MCP Sub-watershed Study

- Refinements completed as part of the study will be reviewed



# Existing Conditions: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

A Stage 1 archaeological investigation on the preferred corridor will be completed and may recommend Stage 2 investigations to be completed in the future.

A Cultural Heritage Report will also be prepared through this study..

Almost all of the land in and around Smithville is still undisturbed and has archaeological potential.

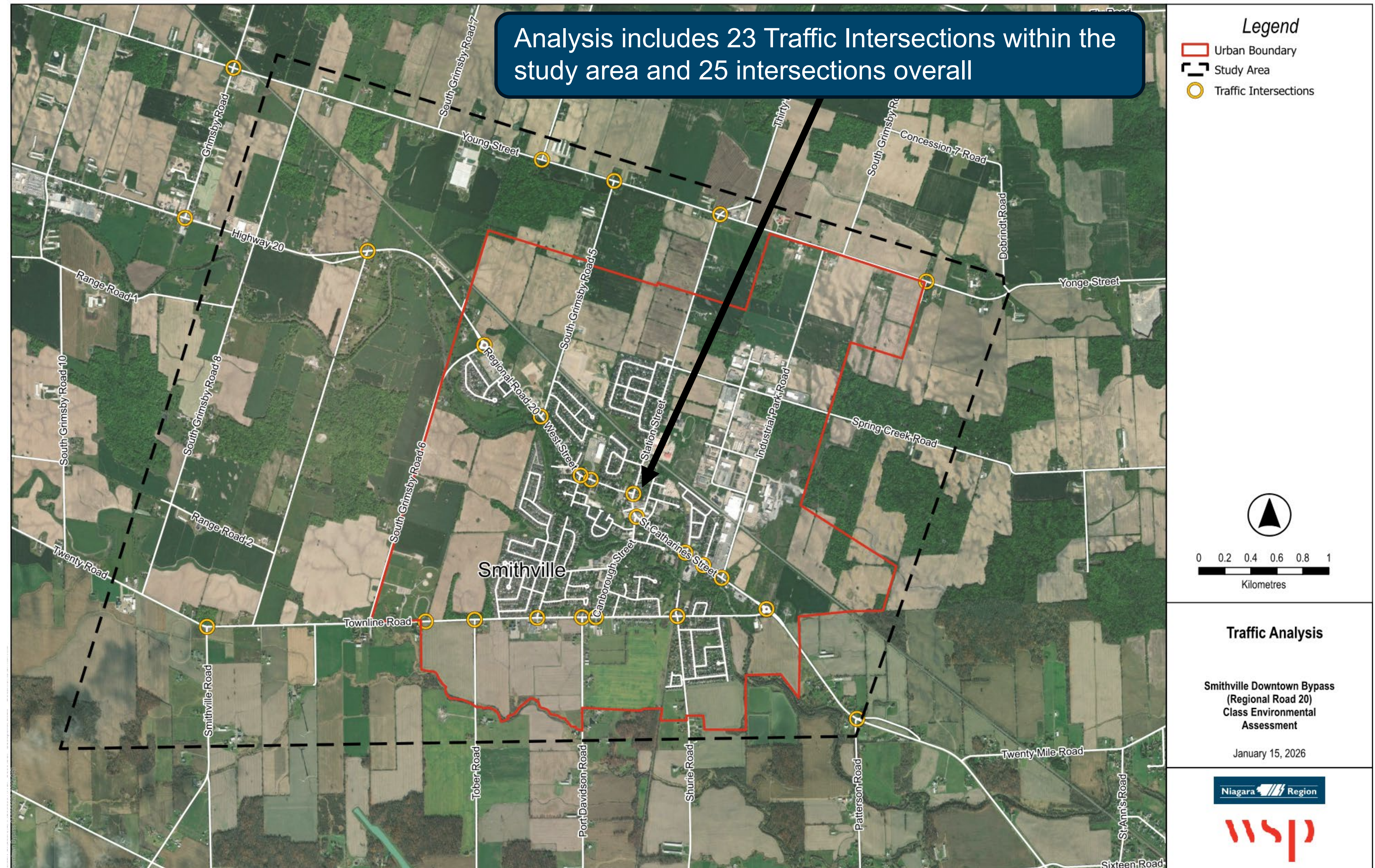


# Existing Conditions – Traffic Analysis Area

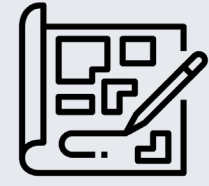

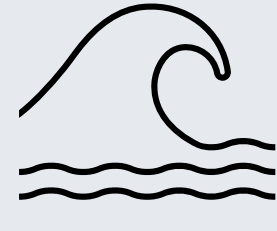

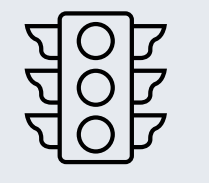
The traffic analysis for this project will consider key performance indicators such as:

- **Level of Service (LOS):** Intersection and corridor performance
- **Delay:** Average vehicle delay at key points
- **Traffic Volumes:** Current and projected capacity needs
- **Safety:** Collision history, conflict points, and safety improvements

Based on traffic counts completed by the Region 10% to 20% of vehicles in the AM peak period are trucks for the eastbound and westbound traffic along Highway 20 through Smithville.



# Summary of Existing Conditions

Technical Discipline	Existing Conditions Summary
<b>Urban Boundary and Land Use</b> 	<p>The EA process examines multiple environments, including current and future urban areas and land uses, natural features and waterways, archaeology, cultural heritage, and traffic. The study will account for significant planned urban expansion, aiming to minimize impacts on potential land uses while creating connection opportunities where possible.</p>
<b>Natural Environment</b> 	<p>Natural Heritage areas east and west of the urban boundary include Provincially Significant Wetlands (Lower Twenty Mile Creek Wetland Complex), Significant Woodlands, and an ANSI (East Smithville Slough Forest). These areas may contain candidate wildlife habitat and threatened/endangered species. Refinements from the MCP subwatershed study will also be reviewed.</p>
<b>Watercourses</b> 	<p>Twenty Mile Creek is located south of Highway 20 going through Smithville, and a few tributaries feeding into it north and south.</p> <p>Refinements completed as part of the MCP subwatershed study will be reviewed.</p>
<b>Archaeology and Cultural Heritage</b> 	<p>The majority of land in and around Smithville is still undisturbed and has archaeological potential. A Stage 1 investigation on the preferred corridor will be completed, alongside a Cultural Heritage Report.</p>
<b>Traffic Analysis Area</b> 	<p>Extent of the traffic analysis area, and intersections from which we will collect existing conditions data.</p> <p>This will provide input into the modelling of future conditions with and without the bypass.</p>

# Problems and Opportunities

Problems	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing heavy vehicle and freight traffic through downtown Smithville</li> <li>• Overall increase in traffic congestion on local network</li> <li>• Anticipated additional traffic pressures due to planned population growth</li> <li>• Large turning areas and wider rights-of-way required for trucks limit the space available for streetscaping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the overall transportation network</li> <li>• Improving safety for both pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers</li> <li>• Dedicated bypass designed for heavy trucks to increase safety and efficiency</li> <li>• Provide future connection to the proposed new escarpment crossing</li> </ul>



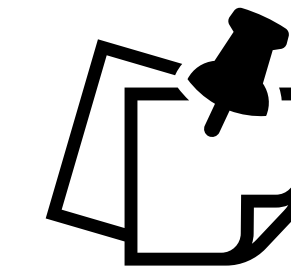
Are there other problems or opportunities you'd like to share? Grab a sticky note and leave your comments here!

# Draft Problem and Opportunity Statement

A draft problem and opportunity statement has been established for the Smithville Bypass to reflect the priorities of the Township and Region's strategic objectives:

“Smithville’s downtown core is currently experiencing increasing traffic congestion and truck volumes, which are affecting safety, mobility, and the ability to improve future streetscaping and pedestrian accessibility. Projected population growth and intensification will further strain the transportation network, creating challenges for efficient movement of people and goods.

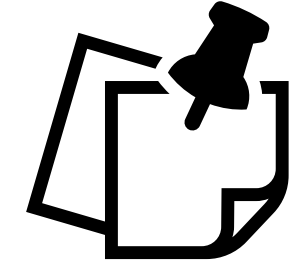
The Smithville Downtown Bypass provides an opportunity to mitigate these existing pressures, enhance connectivity with the broader Region, plan for future growth, and support economic development and the downtown core by reducing cut-through traffic. This study will aim to develop a sustainable and integrated transportation solution for the area.”



Are there changes to the statement you'd like us to consider? Grab a sticky note and leave your comments here!



# Aerial of Study Area



Are there area specific issues you'd like to share? Grab a sticky note and leave your comments here!

# Next Steps & Contact

You are invited to be added to the Study contact list and/or provide comments by submitting a completed comment form in the comment box today or by contacting the Project Team members below by **February 28, 2026**.

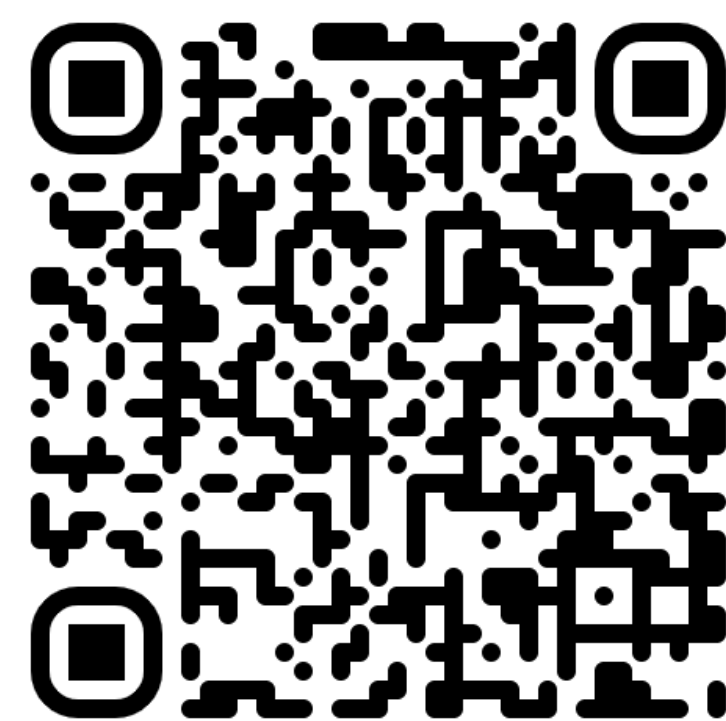
## Next Steps:

1. Continue through the assessment of alternatives process.
2. Public Information Centre #2 planned for later this year (date to be confirmed).

This material will be available on the Project webpage for further review.

Visit the Project Webpage for more details:

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass/default.aspx>



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