

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

May 2026

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## 1 Introduction and Project Overview

Niagara Region, through their consultant WSP Canada Inc., has initiated a Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) for a proposed Highway 20 (Regional Road 20) bypass around downtown Smithville in West Lincoln. Highway 20 is the only major east-west road that connects Smithville to the rest of the Region and passes directly through the downtown area, which can lead to traffic congestion and heavier truck traffic.

The study will build on the recommendations of the Niagara Region's 2017 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and the Township of West Lincoln's Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP), which recommended that the Region and Township explore the routing of a bypass either on the north side or south side of Downtown Smithville and conduct a subarea analysis to understand local traffic impacts and identify required infrastructure and operational improvements. The main objective of the study is to identify and evaluate alignment options for a Highway 20 / Regional Road 20 bypass around Downtown Smithville. In addition, a critical goal of the project is to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. The Study Area surrounds Downtown Smithville, as shown in **Figure 1**.

As part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process, a reasonable set of alternatives need to be considered, as well as a Do-Nothing scenario.

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

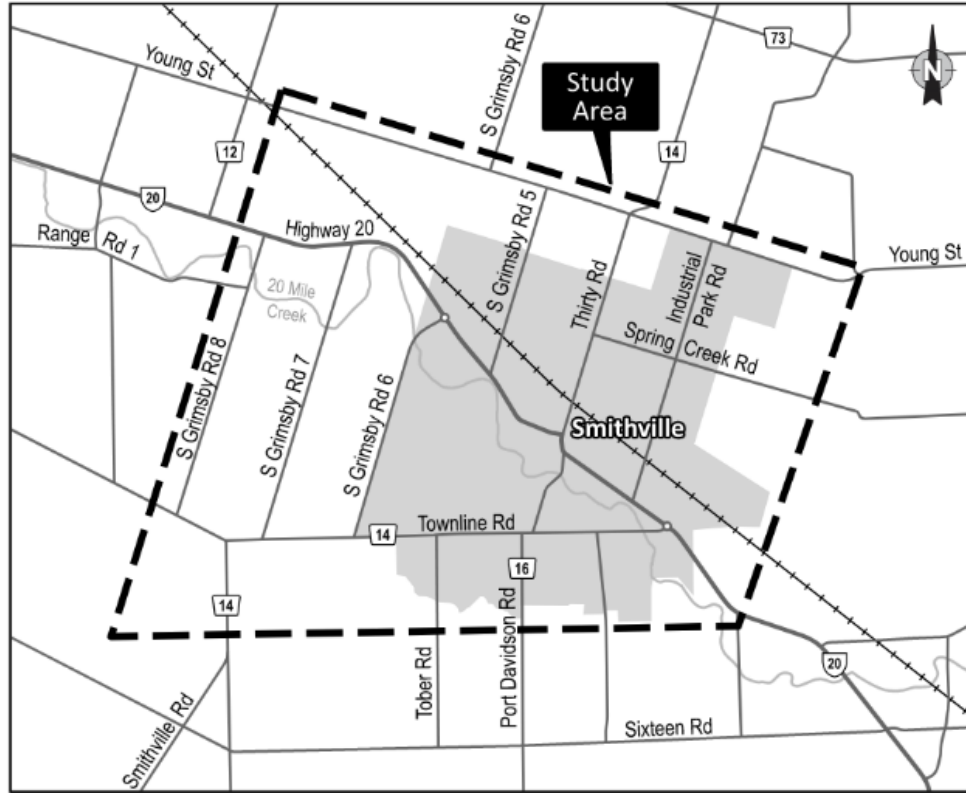
1. Existing Highway 20 Improvements;
2. South Bypass Corridor;
3. North Bypass Corridor; and
4. Do Nothing.

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

### **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; and
- Support economic development by improving access and movement.

Figure 1. Study Area



## 2 Notifications

In accordance with the requirements of the MCEA process, a combined Notice of Study Commencement and Public Information Centre (PIC) #1 was issued.

A range of communication methods was used to notify the public of the study and opportunities to participate at PIC #1. Notification of the study and PIC #1 was carried out through both mailed and electronic means, including posting notices on the project webpage, distributing email notifications to study subscribers, sharing social media advertisements on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), and publishing the Notice as an advertisement in the *NewsNow* newspaper. In addition, a physical copy of the Notice was distributed via Canada Post Neighbourhood Mail to approximately 4,302 property owners, including residences, businesses, and farms located along the designated distribution routes within the Study Area (refer to **Appendix A** for the distribution area).

Parties notified included the following groups:

- Indigenous Communities, including Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Six Nations of the Grand River, Haudenosaunee Development Institute, and Métis Nation.
- Smithville Developers Group.

- Residents and members of the general public.
- Interested parties.
- Local agencies, including Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and local school boards.
- Government bodies and agencies at the provincial, regional, and township levels.
- Infrastructure and utility agencies, including transportation and transit, rail, water and wastewater, stormwater, energy, and telecommunications.

Copies of the Notice of Commencement and PIC #1 and mail-out area extent are provided in **Appendix A**. Social media posts are included in **Appendix B**, and the NewsNow local news advertisement is shown in **Appendix C**.

In addition, AODA-compliant display boards were posted on the project webpage prior to PIC #1 and remained available online afterward for public reference. **Table 1** summarizes each communication method, including the date used, corresponding URLs, and associated appendices.

**Table 1. Communication Activities**

Communication Method	Date	URL and Appendices
Niagara Region project webpage created	December 22, 2025	<a href="https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass/">https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass/</a>
Notice of Commencement and PIC #1 posted on the Niagara Region website	January 6, 2026	The notice was posted on Niagara Region’s public notice webpage.
Notice of PIC #1 posted on Facebook	January 13, 2026	Appendix B
Notice of PIC #1 email to study subscribers	January 22, 2026	Appendix A
Notice of Commencement and PIC #1 mailed out via Canada Post to select neighbourhoods	January 23, 2026	Appendix A
Notice of PIC #1 published in “NewsNow” local news	January 29, 2026	Appendix C <a href="https://www.newsnowniagara.com/2026/01/29/newsnow-e-edition-january-29-2026/">https://www.newsnowniagara.com/2026/01/29/newsnow-e-edition-january-29-2026/</a>
Notice of PIC #1 posted on X (formerly Twitter)	January 29, 2026	Appendix B
Display boards for PIC #1 posted on project webpage	February 10, 2026	Appendix D <a href="https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-">https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-</a>

		<a href="#">downtown-bypass/pdf/pic1-display-boards.pdf</a>
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## 2.1 PIC #1 Consultation Summary

Public and community input about the study was received through the following consultation and engagement activities, shown in **Table 2**:

**Table 2. Consultation and Engagement Activities**

Activity	Date
<b>Drop-In Public Information Centre #1</b>	February 12, 2026
<b>Comments and Related Communications by Email / Phone</b>	February 12, 2026 – February 28, 2026

Consultation activities included:

- A drop-in Public Information Centre (PIC) #1 event was held in-person on February 12, 2026, at the West Lincoln Community Centre (177 West St, Smithville) from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
  - The session began with a presentation at 5:30 p.m., after which attendees could visit at any time during the two-hour window.
- Display boards were available for public review, and members of the study team were on site to answer questions and speak with attendees in a drop-in format.
- Participants were provided with the opportunity to review the detailed project materials and existing conditions maps of the urban boundary and land use, natural environment, watercourses, archaeology and cultural heritage, traffic analysis area, as well as discuss the materials and provide feedback to staff.
- PIC #1 was attended by at least 64 Interested parties, including both Councillor for Ward 2 of West Lincoln, Joann Chechalk and Gerrit Boerema, Director of Growth and Sustainability for West Lincoln.
  - A sign-in sheet was provided for attendees, requesting their name, address, phone number, and email address; however, completing it was optional. Over 64 participants filled out the sheet, and in some cases, an individual signed in another attendee within the same cell. A few attendees opted not to complete the sign-in process.
  - Comment forms were available at Public Information Centre #1 and through a digital form on the project webpage. The comment form invited participants to provide written feedback on the material presented at PIC #1 or on any other aspect of the study, and included space for general comments, project and consultant contact information, instructions on how comments would be collected and used, an option to indicate if a response was not required,

optional contact details, and preferred method of follow-up. In total, one comment form was received at PIC #1 (refer to **Appendix E**). Attendees were able to take comment forms home and submit them at a later date (or electronically).

- Interested parties had the opportunity to submit feedback by contacting the Project Managers by email or phone. Comments provided from February 12, 2026 to February 28, 2026 are included in this report. In total, eight comments were received via email from the public following PIC #1 (refer to **Appendix E**).

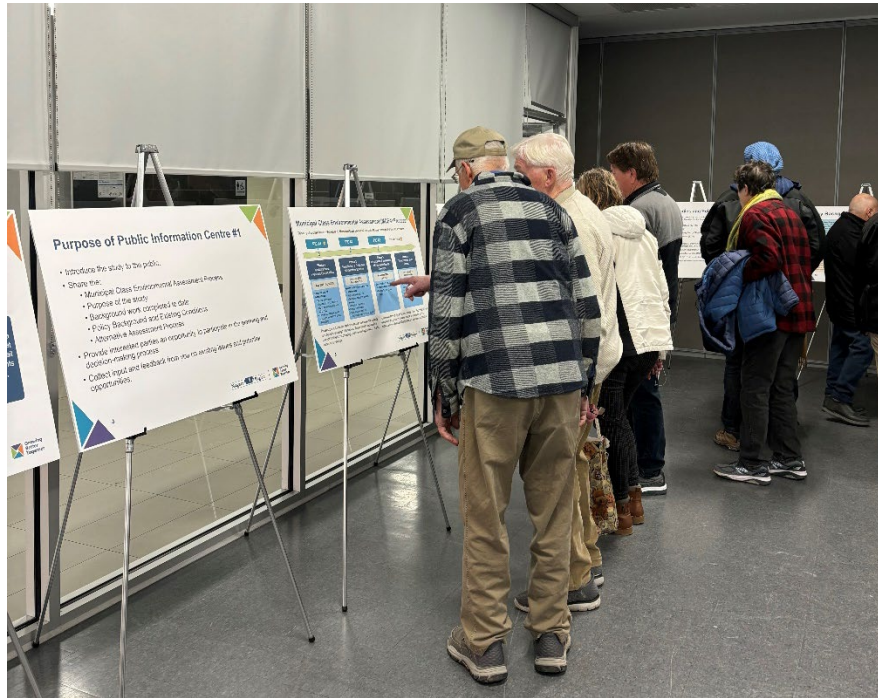
The feedback gathered through this consultation, along with technical considerations and the Region's policies and guidelines, will inform the development and evaluation of alternatives.

### 3 PIC Content

#### 3.1 Purpose of Public Information Centre (PIC) #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; and
  - Alternative Assessment Process.
- Provide interested parties with an opportunity to participate in the planning and decision-making process.
- Collect input and feedback from the public on existing issues and potential opportunities. Attendees viewed display boards and had the opportunity to ask on-site project team members questions, shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. PIC attendees reviewing PIC display boards



### 3.2 PIC #1 Boards and Content

The slide titles presented at PIC #1 are listed below and reflect the information shared with the public during the drop-in event. Public feedback received in response to this material was reviewed and organized into key themes, which are summarized in this section. The PIC #1 presentation boards are provided in **Appendix D**.

The title boards for PIC #1 included the following:

- Purpose of Public Information Centre #1;
- Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Process;
- Project Overview;
- Goals of Study;
- Consultation and Engagement;
- Previous Studies and Policy Background;
- Policy Background;
- Existing Conditions: Urban Boundary and Land Use;
- Existing Conditions: Natural Environment;
- Existing Conditions: Watercourses;
- Existing Conditions: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage;
- Existing Conditions: Traffic Analysis Area;
- Summary of Existing Conditions;

- Problems and Opportunities;
- Draft Problem and Opportunity Statement;
- Feedback on Preliminary Corridor Options;
- Aerial of Study Area; and
- Next Steps & Contact.

Attendee's comments on PIC #1 boards are provided in **Appendix E**.

## 4 Summary of Comments

### 4.1 PIC #1 Drop-in Event Themes

General public feedback received included concerns related to the following:

#### Study Area Boundaries

- Several requests to explain why the study area boundaries are set where they are, especially in relation to more southerly corridor options.

#### Study Process and Timeline

- Questions about how long the bypass study will take.
- Concerns about why the study process is lengthy instead of moving directly to construction.
- Questions about anticipated construction timing.
- Inquiry about anticipated construction costs.

#### Use of Existing Infrastructure

- Questions about whether the bypass would:
  - Use existing roads.
  - Use existing unopened road allowances.
  - Be a completely new road.

#### South Corridor Concerns

- Questions about why the South Corridor is being considered.
- Concerns about proximity to existing and planned residential areas, school traffic, and existing congestion.
- Issues raised about difficulty exiting driveways if the South Corridor is used.
- Concerns that the Township of Lincoln has removed the Southern Corridor (as shown on the PIC board) as an option.

#### Alternate Routes

- Requests to consider corridors further South and North, outside the study area.

- Silver Street / Regional Road 65 suggested as an alternative, based on observed truck traffic between Hamilton and Bismark.

### **Relationship to Other Projects**

- Questions about the role of the bypass versus the Niagara to Greater Toronto Area (NGTA) Corridor:
  - If a bypass around Smithville was necessary.
  - Inquired if the NGTA or a more southerly bypass would better address truck traffic.
  - Repeated questions on how this bypass study differs from the NGTA corridor.
- Confusion about why the study is being “re-done”.
- Requests for clarification between the current EA and previous work, including:
  - Alignments found online from other studies (primarily the MCP and previous Region TMP).
  - References to a previous North Concept Bypass Corridor study with planned rail crossings.
- Questions about coordination with the Niagara Escarpment Crossing.

### **Property Impacts and Acquisition**

- Questions about property acquisition in general.
- Questions about when property owners will know if they are impacted.
- Requests for more route-level detail (street names, directions).

### **Agricultural and Rural Transportation Impacts**

- Concerns about impacts on agricultural vehicle traffic.
- A resident on South Grimsby Road 6 noted:
  - Existing traffic already makes movement of agricultural equipment difficult.
  - The bypass could worsen these challenges.
- Requests to incorporate agricultural vehicle requirements into the bypass design.

### **Rail Crossings and Technical Design Considerations**

- Questions about whether rail crossings would be at-grade or grade-separated.
- Landowner noted previous study of Bypass Corridor for North Concept. There are plans online for the North Concept with required rail crossings.
- Mention of wind turbines on South Grimsby Road, just north of the rail corridor, that could be impacted.

### **Traffic Patterns and Observed Issues**

- Observations of heavy truck traffic traveling from and to Hamilton through Bismark Road.
- Noted truck movements:
  - Through Bismark Road

- Up Victoria Avenue
- Interest in how the bypass would address these existing patterns.
- Mention of planned signalized intersection at St. Catharines Street and Industrial Park Road.

**Development and Growth Context**

- Concerns implicitly tied to future growth and development pressures influencing route selection.

**Public Information and Communication**

- Requests for:
  - More detail at early stages.
  - Clear explanation of what information is available at the first PIC versus later stages.
  - Better differentiation between the bypass study and the NGTA.
- Suggestion to colour-code important information on materials to make it easier to find.
- Landowner request to extend the comment period beyond 30 days to accommodate those out of town.

**Table 3** shows the summary of comments received from PIC #1 and response from the Project Team.

**Table 3. Summary of Comments Received from PIC #1 and Response from Project Team**

Topic	Comment Summary	Response
<b>Bypass Alignment (North versus South)</b>	Many participants expressed a preference for a northern bypass, citing the use of existing road infrastructure, better access to the QEW, reduced impacts on farmland and farming operations, and fewer conflicts with existing and planned residential areas. Some specifically suggested an alignment east of Smithville near Mountain Road, connecting to Regional Road 20 via Twenty Road (Reg. 69), noting that truck drivers they had	The study will further examine both northern and southern bypass alignments, with particular consideration given to existing infrastructure, agricultural land impacts, access to the QEW, and compatibility with current and planned land uses.

Topic	Comment Summary	Response
	<p>spoken with favour this route for similar reasons.</p> <p>Participants questioned the need for a bypass given current traffic conditions and asked whether a southerly route would be the most cost-effective option. Some participants suggested considering more southerly or westerly corridors, including routes outside the study area, to better address truck traffic and reduce impacts to the Smithville urban area and surrounding natural features. While some attendees expressed support for a southern route, many participants preferred a northern bypass.</p>	
<p><b>Southern Bypass Concerns</b></p>	<p>Participants raised concerns that a southern bypass would introduce through- and truck-traffic near existing housing, schools, and community uses, potentially creating new traffic issues rather than resolving them.</p>	<p>Traffic impacts, including the proximity of potential alignments to housing, schools, and community uses, will be a key consideration as alternatives are refined and evaluated through the study process.</p>
<p><b>Townline Road Impacts</b></p>	<p>Strong opposition was expressed to using Townline Road, citing the presence of schools and significant residential development and the need to keep heavy traffic away from sensitive land uses.</p>	<p>In the selection of a preferred corridor to study in more detail, the project team will consider the presence of schools and residential areas along Townline Road.</p>
<p><b>Truck Traffic and Network Connectivity</b></p>	<p>Participants emphasized the importance of accommodating truck traffic,</p>	<p>The study will consider goods movement needs and network connectivity,</p>

Topic	Comment Summary	Response
	suggested connecting close to the industrial park and providing direct, efficient connections to the QEW and industrial areas, potentially built in coordination with the north–south corridor.	including connections to the QEW, industrial areas, and planned north–south corridors to ensure the bypass functions effectively for regional travel and truck traffic.
<b>Agricultural Impacts</b>	Comments highlighted concerns about farmland loss and the need to consider ongoing agricultural operations, including the movement of large farm equipment.	Potential impacts to agricultural lands and farming operations, including access for large agricultural equipment, will be considered as part of the evaluation of bypass alternatives.
<b>Infrastructure and Constructability</b>	Participants noted differences in infrastructure requirements between alternatives, including railway crossings for northern options and numerous bridges for southern options, which should be considered in the evaluation.	Infrastructure requirements, including crossings and structures, will be reviewed as part of the technical assessment to understand constructability, complexity, and overall feasibility of each alternative.
<b>Alternative Routing Suggestions</b>	Participants suggested a range of alternative routing concepts, including following existing utility corridors, modifying roundabout connections, or locating the bypass farther from the town to reduce impacts on residents and future growth areas. Some questioned whether a bypass is needed given current traffic conditions and recent growth patterns, noting that Regional Road 20 may not experience significant increases in traffic. If a	Alternative routing ideas raised through public consultation will be reviewed, where appropriate, and considered as part of refining and evaluating potential bypass alignments.

Topic	Comment Summary	Response
	<p>bypass proceeds, participants suggested a more southerly or westerly alignment using Regional Roads 65, 14, Grimsby Road 8, or Sixteen Road, or an alternative via Industrial Park Road to Young Street and continuing to Highway 12 (Grimsby Mountain), to avoid residential neighbourhoods and the Smithville urban boundary and to minimize impacts on woodlots and wetlands. Others also recommended expanding the study area further south and west and requested greater opportunities for public dialogue and visibility of community input to support more meaningful engagement.</p>	

## 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 Key Themes from Engagement Feedback

- **Scope and Study Area Definition**

Participants asked for clearer justification of the bypass need and explanation of why the study area boundaries were defined as shown, particularly with respect to more southerly corridor options. Some questioned whether a bypass is required given current traffic conditions and growth patterns.

- **Strong Preference for Northern Bypass Options**

Many participants expressed a preference for northern bypass concepts, citing better access to the QEW, reduced impacts on existing and planned residential areas, fewer conflicts with schools, and greater compatibility with existing road infrastructure. Northern options were also perceived as having fewer long-term community and growth-related conflicts.

- **Concerns with Southern Corridor Options**

Significant concern was raised regarding southern bypass alignments, particularly related to proximity to residential neighbourhoods, schools, and planned development areas, as well as potential impacts to driveway access and local circulation. Some participants questioned whether the southern corridor remains viable given previous municipal decisions and past planning work.

- **Property and Agricultural Impacts**

Participants sought clarity on potential property acquisition, timing of notification, and requested more route-level detail to better understand possible impacts. Agricultural stakeholders emphasized the importance of minimizing farmland loss and ensuring that any bypass design accommodates the safe and efficient movement of large agricultural equipment.

- **Truck Traffic and Network Connectivity**

Feedback highlighted the need for the bypass to effectively address existing truck traffic patterns and goods movement, particularly traffic observed through Bismark Road and Victoria Avenue. Participants emphasized the importance of direct, efficient connections to industrial areas, the QEW, and the broader regional road network while avoiding sensitive land uses.

- **Use of Existing Infrastructure**

Questions were raised about whether the bypass would utilize existing roads, unopened road allowances, or require a fully new corridor. Participants generally favoured solutions that minimize new disruption and leverage existing infrastructure where feasible.

- **Relationship to Other Studies and Projects**  
Participants expressed confusion regarding how the bypass study relates to previous planning work, the NGTA Corridor, and other regional initiatives, including references to alignments found online and prior “North Concept” studies. Requests were made for clearer explanation of how the current EA builds on or differs from previous work and how it coordinates with other transportation projects
- **Technical and Constructability Considerations**  
Comments noted that different alignment options may require varying infrastructure, such as railway crossings, bridges, or other major structures, and that these differences should be considered when evaluating feasibility, impacts, and cost. Specific local constraints, including rail corridors and wind turbine locations, were also raised.
- **Process Transparency and Communication**  
Participants asked for clearer information on study timelines, anticipated construction timing, and general cost expectations. There were also requests for clearer communication on what level of detail is available at early study stages, improved differentiation between this study and other projects, and enhanced clarity of materials. Suggestions included colour-coding information and providing flexibility in comment submission timelines.

## 5.2 Next Steps

The project team will review the feedback received during this round of consultation as part of the identification and evaluation of alternative solutions. The alternative solutions will be presented during the next consultation round. PIC #2 is tentatively scheduled for early June 2026.

# **Appendix A - Notice of Commencement and PIC #1 Letter and Mail-out Area Extent**



# Notice of Study Commencement and Public Information Centre #1

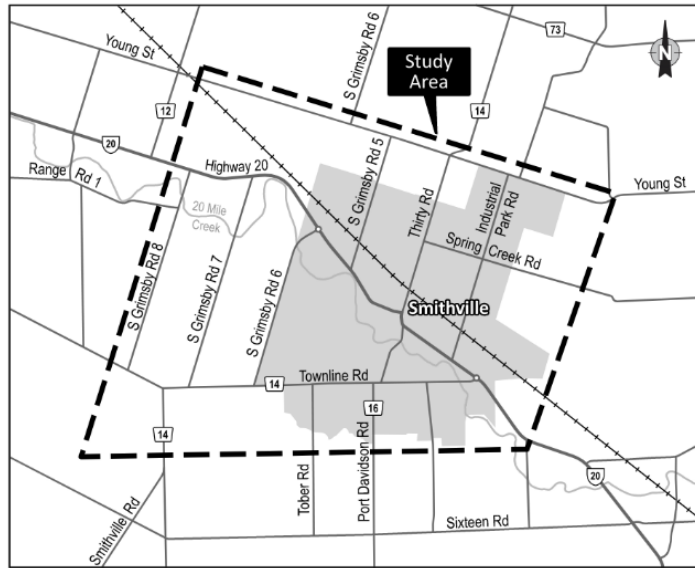
## Schedule 'C' Municipal Class Environmental Assessment

### Smithville Downtown Bypass (Highway 20 / Regional Road 20) in the Township of West Lincoln

#### The Study

Niagara Region, through their consultant WSP Canada Inc., has initiated a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Study (the Study) to examine a potential Highway 20 (Regional Road 20) bypass around downtown Smithville in the Township of West Lincoln. The Study Area surrounds Downtown Smithville, as shown in the key plan on the right.

The Study will build on the recommendations of the Niagara Region's 2017 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and the Township of West Lincoln's Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP), which recommended that the Region and Township explore the routing of a bypass either on the north side or south side of Downtown Smithville and conduct a subarea analysis to understand local traffic impacts and identify required infrastructure and operational improvements. The main objective of the study is to identify and evaluate alignment options for a Highway 20 / Regional Road 20 bypass around Downtown Smithville. In addition, a critical goal of the project is to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.



#### The Study Process

Niagara Region has planned this project according to Ontario's *Environmental Assessment Act*, under Schedule 'C' of the Municipal Engineer's Association's Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (2023). The Study will address Phases 1 to 4 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process (the Process) requirements.

The project team will examine a full range of alternatives and identify a preferred strategy for addressing the project needs. When the study is complete, an Environmental Study Report will be prepared to document the Process planning and decision-making, which will be made available for a 30-day public review period. A Notice of Completion will be issued at that stage.

#### You Are Invited to Participate

Consultation with the public, Indigenous Communities, regulatory agencies, and other interested parties is important to the Study. To facilitate this, three Public Information Centres (PICs) are

planned to gather input on potential alternative solutions and designs and to discuss concerns and issues with the project team.

**PIC #1 is scheduled for:**

**Date:** February 12, 2026  
**Time:** 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** West Lincoln Community Centre, Community Rooms #2 and #3.  
177 West St, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

PIC #1 will be held in in-person and will provide information about Phase 1 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, including displays with background information on the Study, project timelines, and existing conditions. Feedback from the public on travel preferences, patterns, and accessibility across Smithville will also be collected to identify problems or opportunities. There will be a **presentation at 5:30 p.m.**, but those interested may drop in anytime from **5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** PIC #1 materials will also be available on the project webpage.

**Stay Connected**

As the study progresses and more information becomes available, it will be posted on the project webpage: [www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass](http://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass). If you have any questions or comments regarding the study, or wish to be added to the email list for receiving notices, please contact one of the project team members below. All comments will become part of the study documentation.

**Amy Shanks, MCIP, RPP**  
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Niagara Region  
905-980-6000 ext. 3532  
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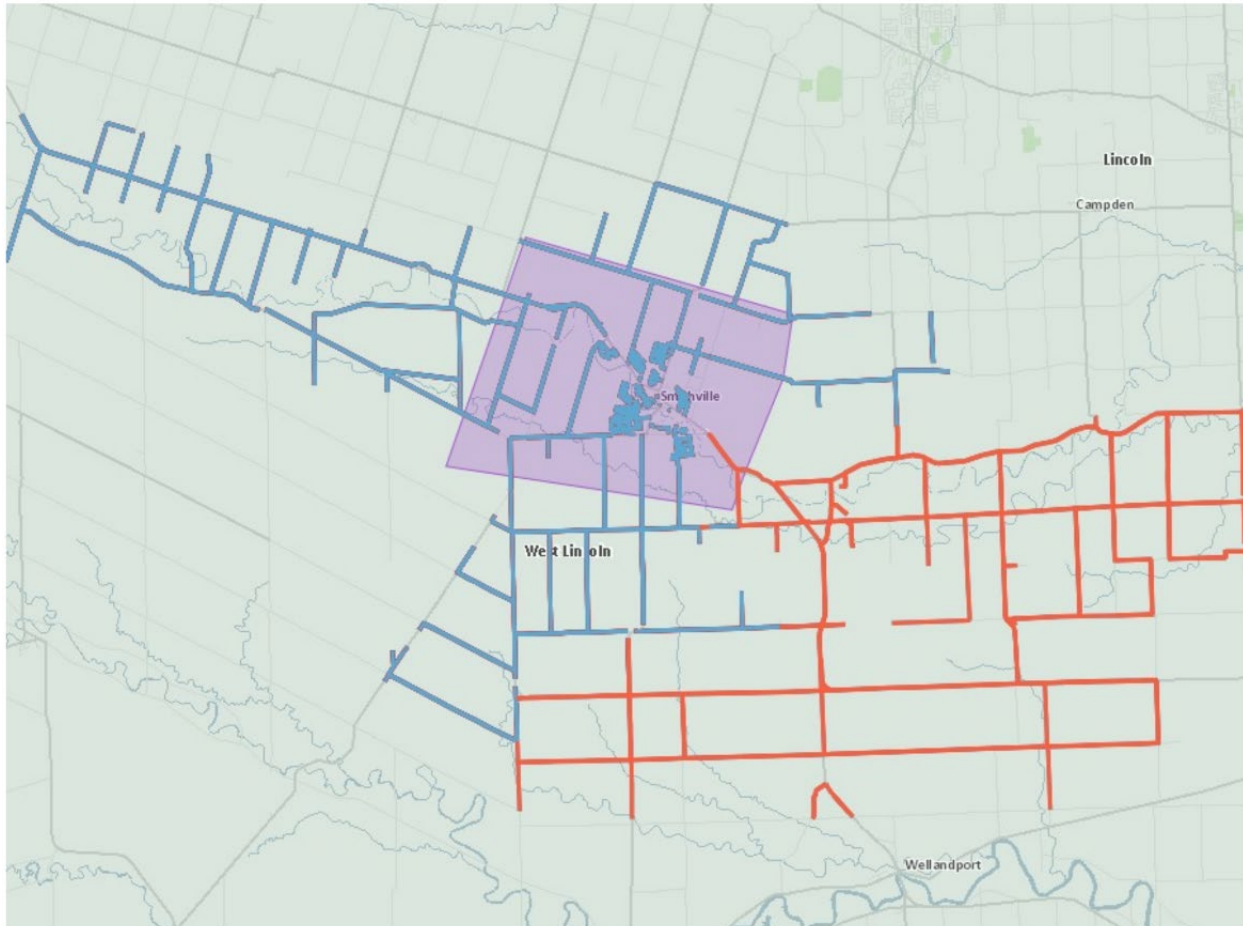
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If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend and participate in meetings or events, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. Please contact the **Accessibility Advisory Coordinator** at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or [accessibility@niagararegion.ca](mailto:accessibility@niagararegion.ca).

All personal information included in your request such as name, address, telephone number and property location are collected under the authority of section 30 of the Environmental Assessment Act and is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public. Any personal information submitted will be collected, used, and disclosed, where applicable, by members of Regional staff according to the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**. Any information you share will only be used for the intended purpose for which it was provided. For questions or comments about privacy practices, or for more information about the administration of the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act** in Niagara Region programs see: [niagararegion.ca/government/foi](http://niagararegion.ca/government/foi).

This notice was first issued the week of January 19, 2026.

## Mail-out Area Extent



Screenshot from Canada Post's Mailing Distribution Mapping tool. Blue and red lines depict mail routes that received notices, with every residence, business and farm along these routes receiving notice. The purple shaded area denotes the Study Area and was used to ensure all routes covered the full extent of this area.

# Appendix B - Social Media Posts (Facebook and X/formerly Twitter)

Facebook Post



Niagara Region created an event.

January 13 · 🌐



Thu, Feb 12

**Public Information Centre #1: Highway 20 (Regional Road 20)  
Smithville Downtown Bypass**

177 West St, West Lincoln, ON L0R 2A0, Canada  
100 people interested

☆ Interested

👍 2

X/ Formerly Twitter Post

**Niagara Region** @NiagaraRegion · Jan 29  
Hey @TWPWestLincoln!

Join Public Information Centre #1 for the potential Highway 20 bypass around downtown Smithville.

📅 Thursday, Feb. 12, 5:30-7:30 p.m.  
📍 West Lincoln Community Centre

Drop in to learn about the project and share feedback.  
More info: [bit.ly/4pKAo9f](https://bit.ly/4pKAo9f)

**MOVING ROADS FORWARD**

2 replies, 3 retweets, 1 like, 547 views

# Appendix C - Notice of PIC #1 Published in the NewsNow Newspaper

**MOVING  
ROADS  
FORWARD**

**Notice of Study Commencement and Public Information Centre #1  
Schedule 'C' Municipal Class Environmental Assessment  
Smithville Downtown Bypass (Highway 20 / Regional Road 20) in the Township of West Lincoln**

**The Study**

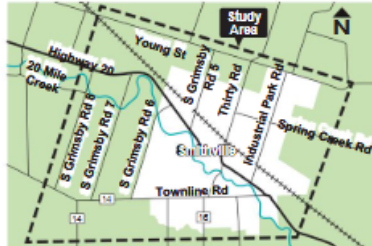
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**The Study Process**

Niagara Region has planned this project according to Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act, under Schedule 'C' of the Municipal Engineer's Association's Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (2023). The Study will address phases 1 to 4 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process (the Process) requirements.

The project team will examine a full range of alternatives and identify a preferred strategy for addressing the project needs. When the Study is complete, an Environmental Study Report will be prepared to document the project planning and decision-making, which will be made available for a 30-day public review period. A Notice of Completion will be issued at that stage.



**You Are Invited to Participate**

Consultation with the public, Indigenous Communities, regulatory agencies, and other interested parties is important to the success of the Study. To facilitate this, three Public Information Centres (PICs) are planned to gather input on potential alternative solutions and designs and to discuss concerns and issues with the project team.

**The first Public Information Centre is scheduled for:**

**Date:** February 12, 2026      **Time:** 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** West Lincoln Community Centre, Community Rooms #2 and #3, 177 West St, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

Public Information Centre #1 will be held in person and will provide information about Phase 1 of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, including displays with background information on the Study, project timelines, and existing conditions. Feedback from the public on travel preferences, patterns, and accessibility across Smithville will also be collected to identify problems or opportunities. There will be a presentation at 5:30 p.m., but those interested may drop in anytime from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Public Information Centre #1 materials will also be available on the project webpage.

**Stay Connected**

As the Study progresses and more information becomes available, it will be posted on the project webpage: [niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass](http://niagararegion.ca/projects/smithville-downtown-bypass). If you have any questions or comments regarding the Study, or wish to be added to the email list for receiving notices, please contact one of the project team members below. All comments will become part of the Study documentation.

**Amy Shanks, MCIP, RPP**  
Project Manager, Transportation Planning  
Niagara Region  
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If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend and participate in meetings or events, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made in a timely manner. Please contact the Accessibility Advisory Coordinator at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 or [accessibility@niagararegion.ca](mailto:accessibility@niagararegion.ca).

All personal information included in your request such as name, address, telephone number and property location are collected under the authority of section 30 of the Environmental Assessment Act and is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public. Any personal information submitted will be collected, used, and disclosed, where applicable, by members of Regional staff according to the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**. Any information you share will only be used for the intended purpose for which it was provided. For questions or comments about privacy practices, or for more information about the administration of the **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act** in Niagara Region programs see: [niagararegion.ca/government/foi](http://niagararegion.ca/government/foi).

This notice was issued the week of January 29, 2026

Connecting more people to more possibilities.

Niagara Region  
[niagararegion.ca/projects](http://niagararegion.ca/projects)

# Appendix D - Public Information Centre #1 Boards (February 12, 2026)

# 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

**We're inside  
Community Room #2  
& #3!** If you don't have  
time to see us now,  
please visit the project  
webpage using the QR  
Code!



# 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

# Welcome!



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.



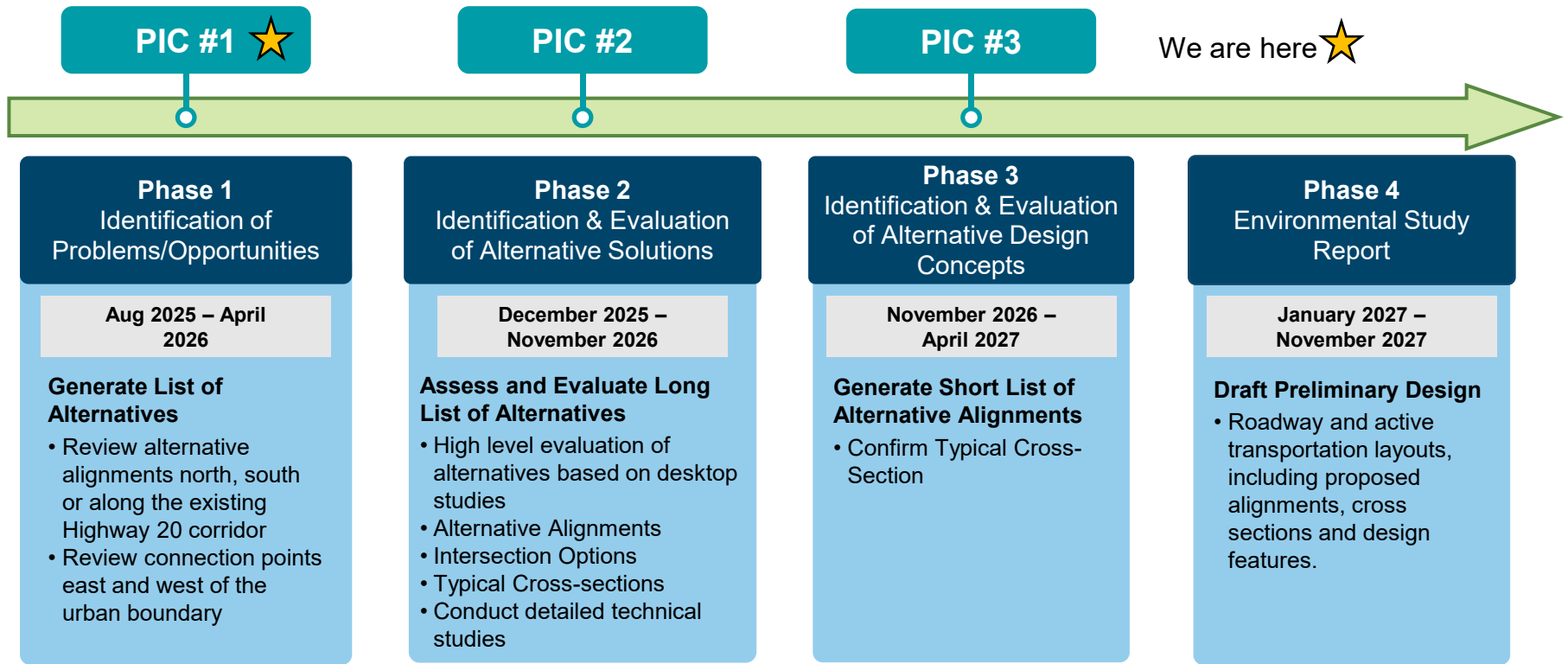
Please fill out a comment sheet today OR email your comments by Feb 28, 2026.

# 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.

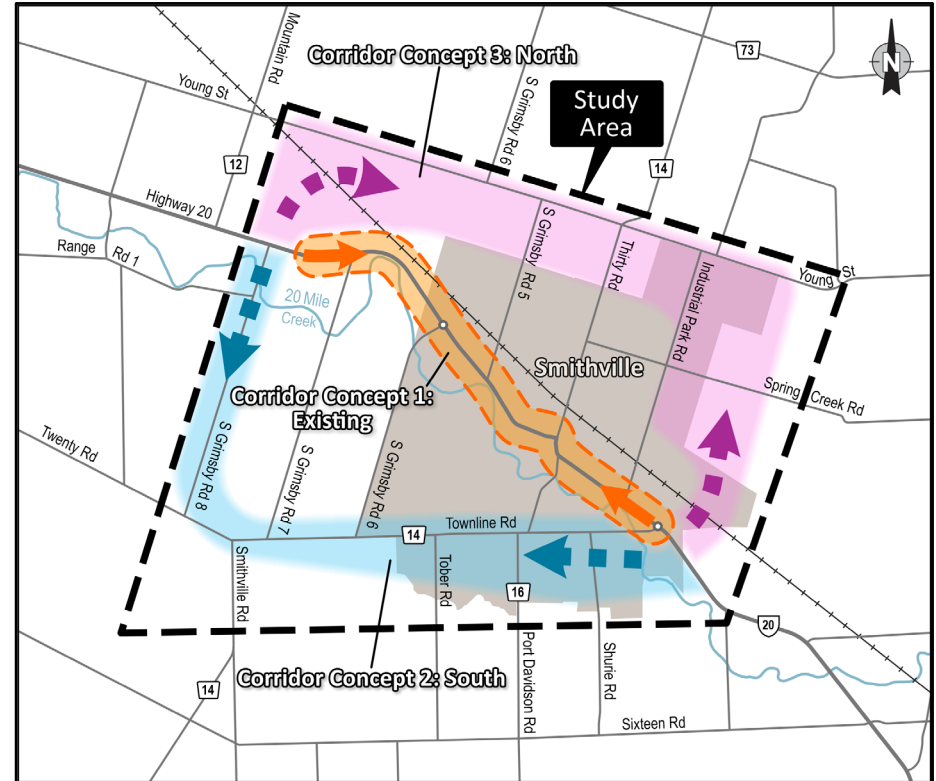
As part of the EA process, a reasonable set of alternatives needs to be considered, as well as a Do-Nothing scenario.

## 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



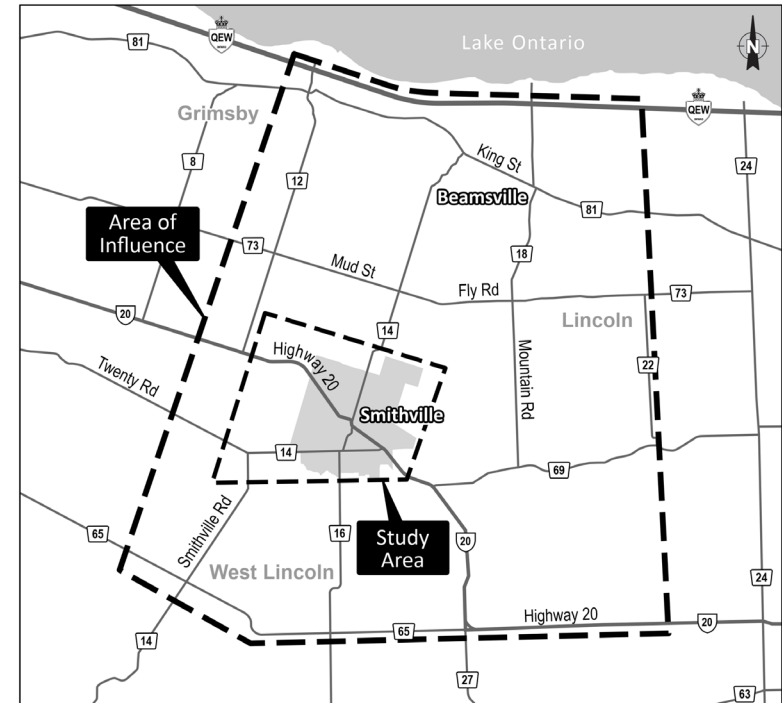
# Consultation and Engagement

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

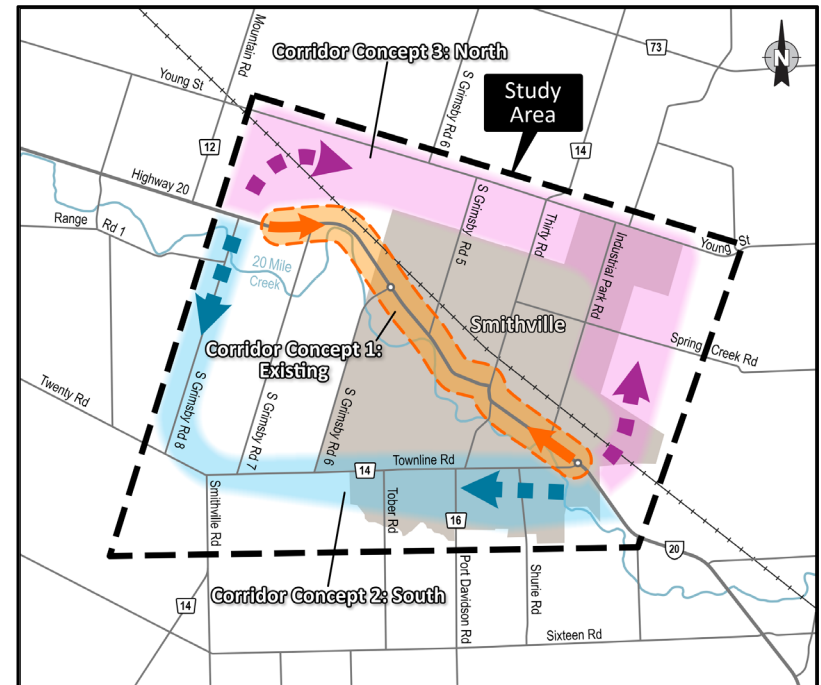
This current study will examine in more detail:

- 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

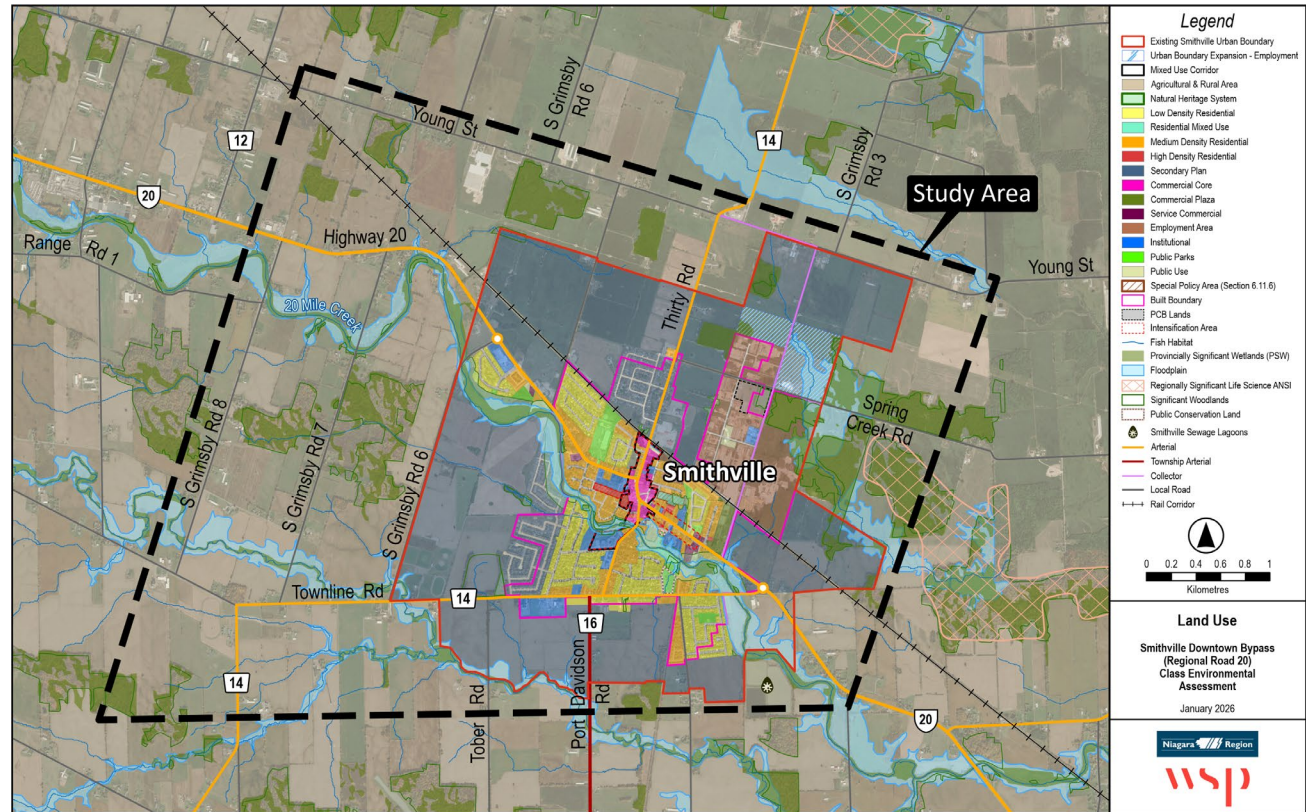
## Environmental Assessment (EA) Process

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:

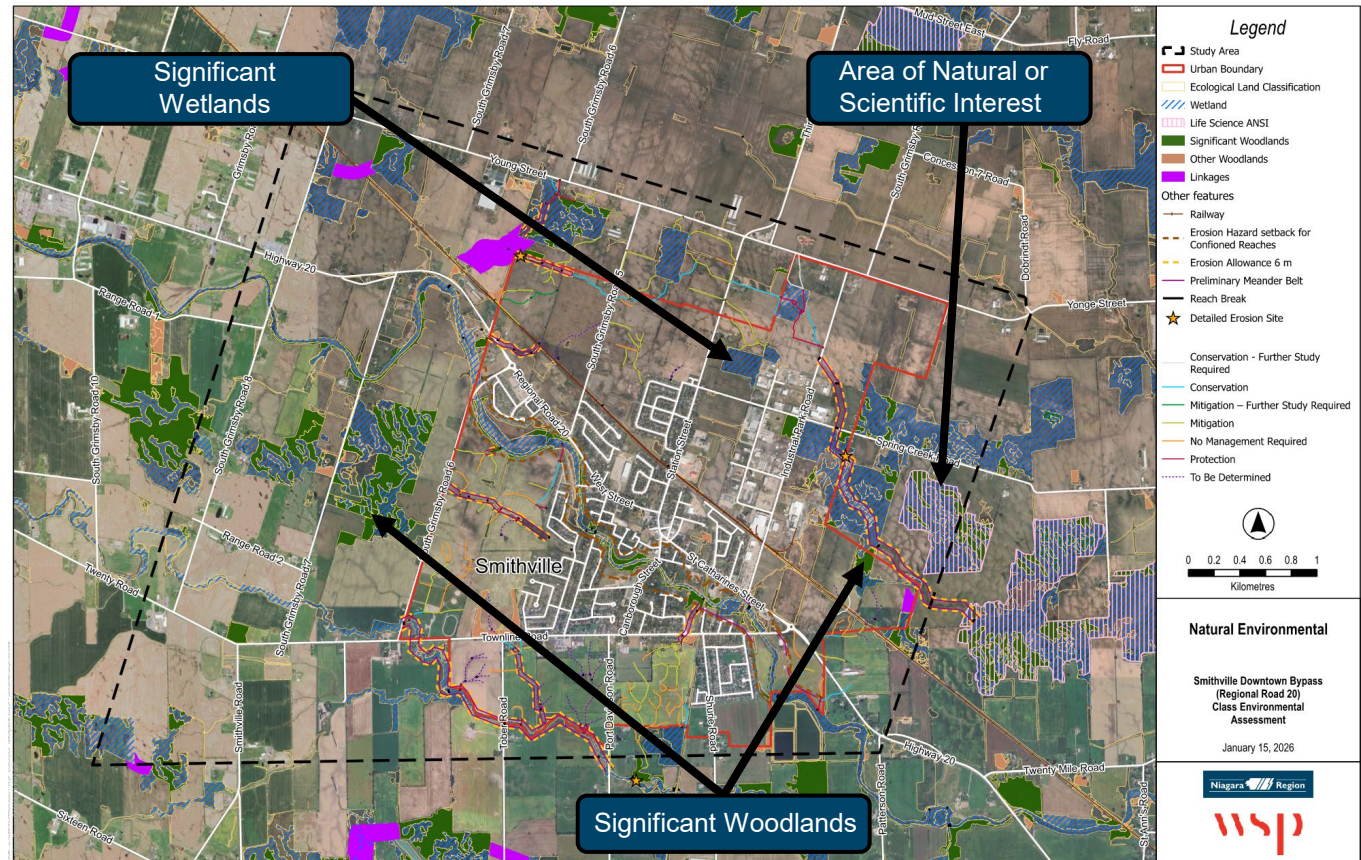
- Provincially Significant Wetlands (Lower Twenty Mile Creek Wetland Complex)
- Significant Woodlands
- NE Area: Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) – *East Smithville Slough Forest*

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

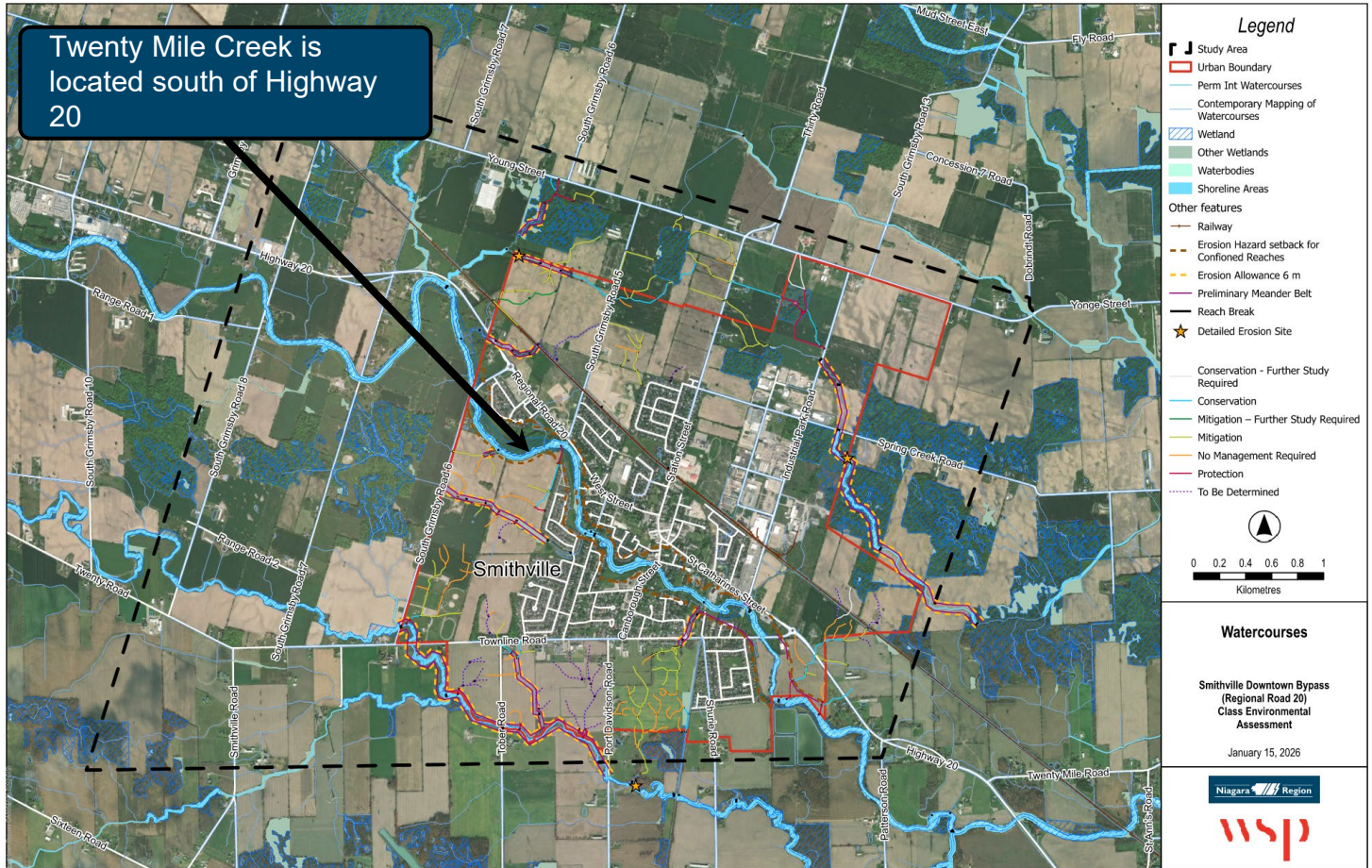
## Twenty Mile Creek Overview

- 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.

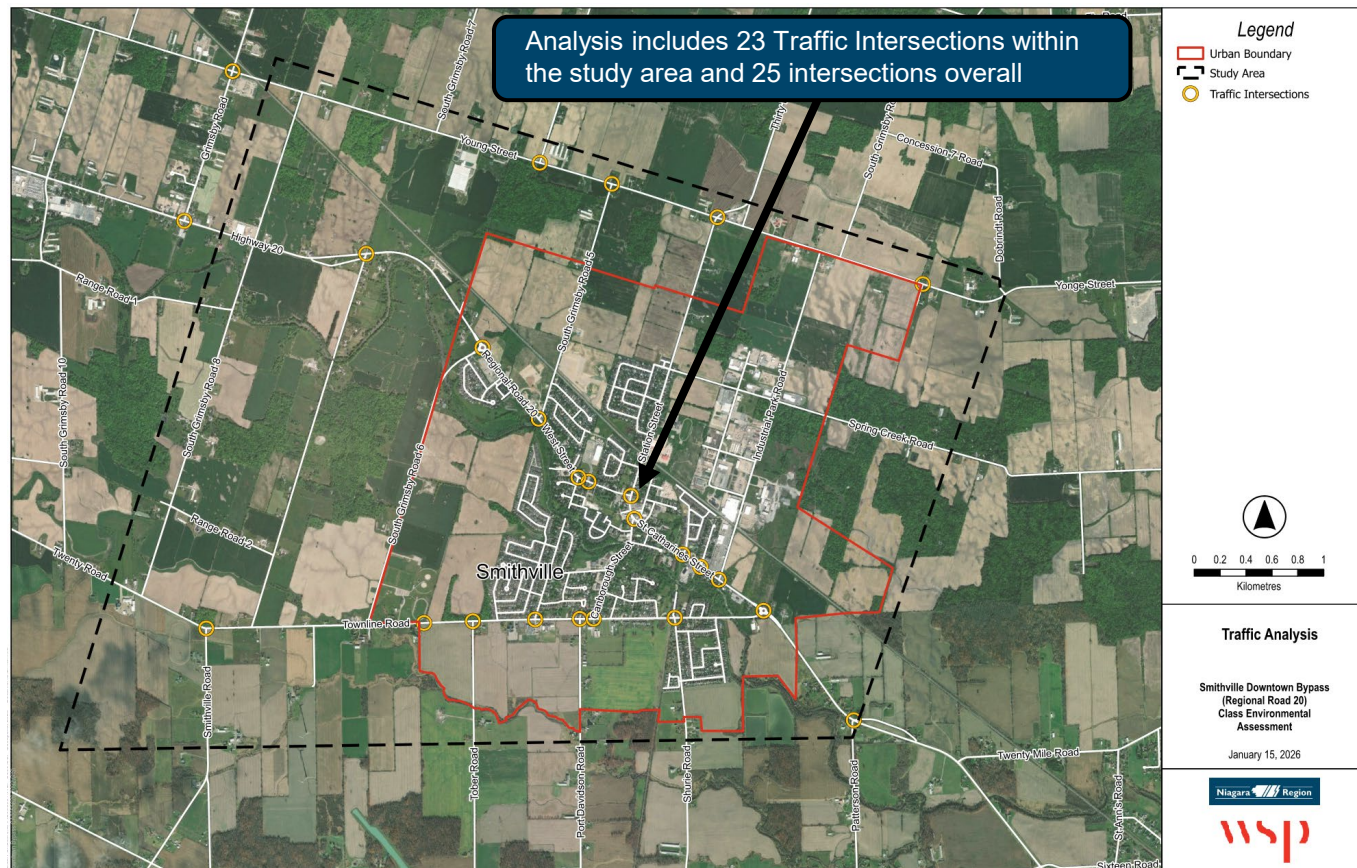


# Existing Conditions – Traffic Analysis Area






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:

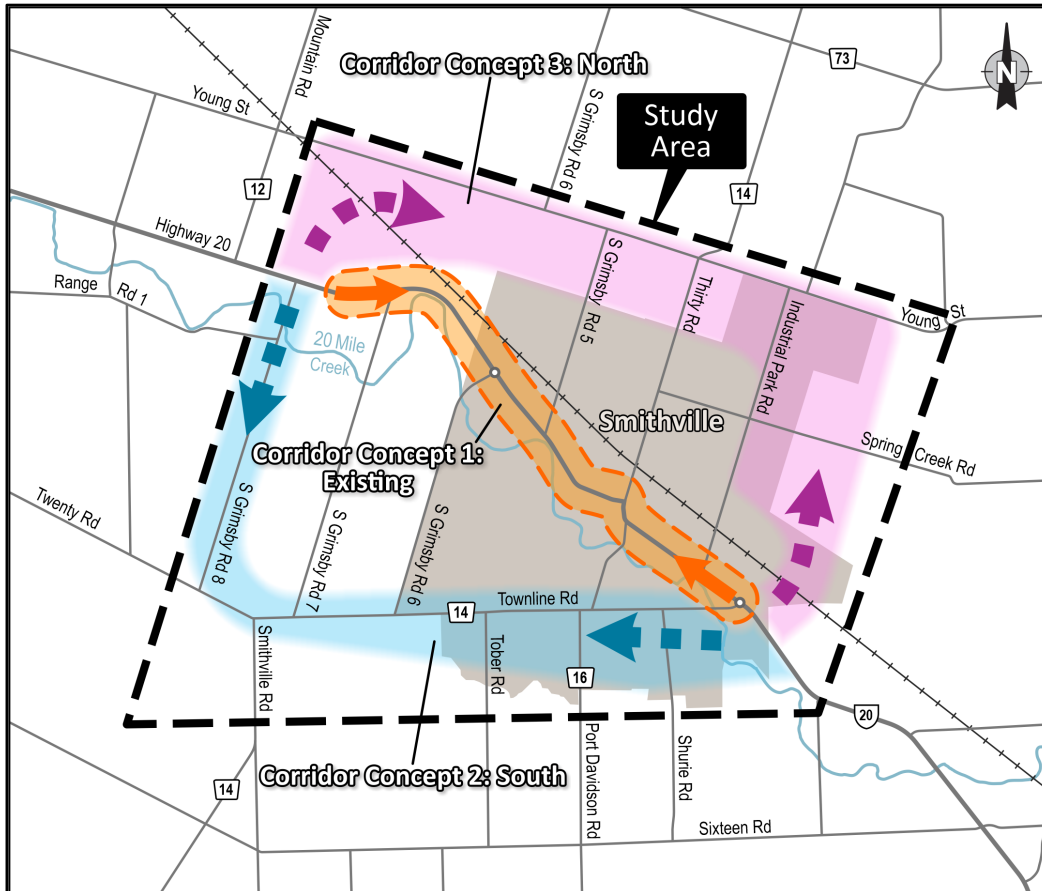
“Smithville’s downtown core is currently experiencing increasing traffic congestion and truck volumes, which are affecting safety, mobility, and the ability to improve future streetscaping and pedestrian accessibility. Projected population growth and intensification will further strain the transportation 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!


# Feedback on Preliminary Corridor Options



Are there other comments you'd like to share about the preliminary corridor options? 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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Senior Project Manager, Transportation Planning, WSP

T: 289-835-2489

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# Appendix E – PIC #1 Submitted Comments

# Feedback on Preliminary Corridor Options



Are there other comments you'd like to share about the preliminary corridor options? Grab a sticky note and leave your comments here!

Feedback comments on sticky notes:

- Southern bypass will put extra traffic where new housing will be so will create traffic problems.
- Corridor 3 is better than the other two options. It is more direct and has less traffic lights.
- Southern bypass via Townline will place trucks too close to existing housing, creating street close to road!
- Have you considered the amount of large trees required?
- Corridor going North South would be better than the other options including any other options.
- Need more size of shoulders where there are no shoulders. Please do more work on this.
- The bypass should be outside of the proposed corridor where housing, churches and schools are is just not wise.
- More work needed on the South - 20 Mile Creek area. A more direct route will be better. It is more direct and has less traffic lights.
- Keep it away from Townline Road.



Are there other comments you'd like to share about the preliminary corridor options? Grab a sticky note and leave your comments here!

Southern bypass will put extra traffic where new housing will be, so just creating another problem.

Two schools by Southern bypass?

Concept 3: North the Rd is partly there, it makes sense to put it there, why take more farmland away from the South Side

Southern bypass via Townline will place truck traffic close to existing housing, already close to road.

Have you considered the movement of large farm equipment?

Consider going further south towards Bismark avoids the town altogether including any future growth.

NORTHERN SIDE OF SMITHVILLE MAKES SENSE FOR BY PASS AROUND YONGE ST. SOUTH SIDE SCHOOLS HOMES ETC.


The bypass should be outside of the proposed corridor. Placing the corridor where housing, churches and schools are is just not wise.

North → 2 rail, crossings  
South → 24 bridges  
North → better access to QEW  
old right turn in townline roundabout up to hydro lines, follow them to a dirt trail used for the wind turbine lines which comes back out at the little north section of Stationby Rd

Keep it away from Townline Road

Townline Road should not be an option. We have a school and significant housing that needs to be considered and respected.

ies



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

Is there any thought as to the location of the corridor of traffic coming from the QEW and joining up with the new bypass?

This bypass should be built in conjunction with the North South corridor and should connect close to the industrial park to accommodate truck traffic

Truck Route #6 | QEW LINK  
Extension 15  
West Roadabout

ed  
se  
to

**Smithville Downtown Bypass EA  
Comment/Response Tracking Table**

Note: Comments are reproduced verbatim including typos and/or grammatical errors

Tracking Table Last Updated: February 28, 2026

#	NAME / ADDRESS	COMMENT RECEIVED	ACTION / STATUS NOTES	RESPONSE
Public Participant				
	[REDACTED]	<u>Received in person at PIC 1 via comment form on February 12, 2026</u> Just wish to be kept informed.	Y	The comment has been noted. The individual will continue to receive project updates and notifications as the study progresses.
PP-6	[REDACTED]	<u>Received via Online Form on February 28, 2026</u> The bypass should be on north side of Smithville and come out of the east just before Beamsville Mountain rd. I have spoken to a number of truckers. I am in farming and that is their preferred route. Closer to QEW. The road should hook up with Regional 20 by Twenty Rd. (Reg 69).	Y	The comment supporting a northerly bypass alignment and specific connection points to improve goods movement has been noted and will be considered alongside other alternative corridors evaluated as part of the EA.
PP-7	[REDACTED]	<u>Received via online comment form on Feb 28, 2026</u> <b>Provide any comments or questions you have on the proposed alternative solutions and designs.</b> It seems this road is not necessary as Smithville is not congested and with the expanded boundary, the new households in our community will be using the natural entrance and exits from their new subdivisions to link up with the main roads, and Regional road 20 would not see such a dramatic increase in traffic.  But to efficiently bypass Smithville would it be most cost effective to choose a southern route so no roads need to cut through wood lots and wetlands and instead by built through open farmland?  I would think it would make the most sense to create a route through Bismarck using Regional rd 65 west to Caistor- Gainsborough townline rd., north across Regional Rd 14, to Grimsby Rd 8 and hooking up back to regional rd 20  Could also use Sixteen Rd west to Caistor Gainsborough townline  It seems best to keep it clear of the Smithville urban boundary if this road is even needed. <b>Do you have any suggestions that should be considered for the next steps of this project?</b>  a wider study area to the south and west  Crossing through significant wetland/woodlands	Y	The study will further examine both northern and southern bypass alignments, with particular consideration given to existing infrastructure, agricultural land impacts, and compatibility with current and planned land uses.  Alternative routing ideas raised through public consultation will be reviewed, where appropriate, and considered as part of refining and evaluating potential bypass alignments.

**Smithville Downtown Bypass EA  
Comment/Response Tracking Table**

*Note: Comments are reproduced verbatim including typos and/or grammatical errors*

**Tracking Table Last Updated: February 28, 2026**

#	NAME / ADDRESS	COMMENT RECEIVED	ACTION / STATUS NOTES	RESPONSE
PP-8	[REDACTED]	<p><b>Received via online comment form on Feb 28, 2026</b></p> <p><b>Provide any comments or questions you have on the proposed alternative solutions and designs.</b></p> <p>I feel the by-pass should not be going past schools, residential neighbourhoods, and proposed residential areas as part of the Master Plan. Joining up with the west turncircle on Highway 20 on both proposed routes is still within the urban boundary in residential areas. My suggestion is to go up Industrial Park Rd to Young St and then continue along Young St to Highway 12 (Grimsby Mountain ). This would have the minimum impact to the actual town and avoid residential and school areas.</p> <p><b>Do you have any suggestions that should be considered for the next steps of this project?</b></p> <p>It would be nice at the next meeting to have more of a "Town Hall" or small group table approach to hear the points of view, issues and comments from other people. People can better shape their thoughts when they hear the opinions of others and you feel like you have more of a voice. The first meeting was fine to get info out to the community, but feel more active dialogue is needed with the public at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Do you have any other comments?</b></p> <p>Very informative first meeting. Presentations were well done. Thanks.</p>	Y	<p>Avoiding schools, residential areas, and planned growth areas, along with the suggested alternative routing via Industrial Park Road and Young Street, has been noted. Alternative routing ideas raised through public consultation will be reviewed, where appropriate, and considered as part of refining and evaluating potential bypass alignments.</p> <p>Feedback on providing more interactive engagement formats at future Public Information Centres has also been noted and will be considered in planning subsequent consultation activities.</p>