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

**Policy 3.A.3.19** Local municipalities will develop phasing strategies for vacant, un-serviced *employment lands*. Phasing strategies should be prepared at the time of either local official plan reviews or *infrastructure* master plan updates and also be part of broader servicing strategies which examine phasing for *development*. Priority will be given in phasing plans for first, lands within the *urban area* that are fully or partially serviced, subject to full servicing being provided. The second priority will be for vacant, ~~un-serviced~~ un-serviced lands within the *urban area*.

**Policy 3.A.3.20** The *Region* and local municipalities will align its capital planning for new *infrastructure* and transportation with the Strategic Locations for Investment identified in ~~this Amendment~~, section 3.A.3.1 "Policies for the Niagara Economic Gateway". An acceptable financial strategy must be prepared and approved by Regional Council for the provision of Regional *infrastructure*.

**Policy 3.A.3.21** The *Region* will encourage cross-border trade through:

- a) ~~Strategic~~ strategic improvements to Regional *infrastructure*;
- b) ~~Working~~ working with the *Province* and the Federal ~~governments~~ government to improve and upgrade border crossing *infrastructure*;
- c) ~~Preparation~~ preparation of a Regional ~~goods movement strategy~~ Goods Movement Study;
- d) ~~Examining~~ examining issues and opportunities for cross-border trade with the ~~US~~ United States; and,
- e) ~~Examining~~ examining issues and opportunities for a Niagara Free Trade Zone / Export Distribution Zone within the *Niagara Economic Gateway*.

**Policy 3.A.3.22** The *Region* will continue to work the Federal, Provincial and local governments, the private sector and other agencies to attract investment into ~~Niagara's~~ the Niagara Economic Gateway.

**Policy 3.A.3.24** ~~23~~ Tourism uses and tourism economic development is a priority for the ~~Niagara~~ Niagara Gateway Economic Gateway Zone and Gateway Economic Centre. Tourism focused lands are not identified on a map as they are broadly through the Gateway Economic Zone and Gateway Economic Centre in such areas as the Niagara River Parkway, the Niagara Falls ~~Tourist Area~~ tourist area, tourism areas in Fort Erie, and along the Welland Canal. Transit opportunities for strengthening the tourism economy will be pursued.

**Policy 3.A.3.25** ~~24~~ Land use compatibility within the Gateway Economic Zone and Gateway Economic Centre is a primary focus of this Plan. Tourism uses within the Niagara Economic Gateway municipalities shall be located to ensure the planned function of employment uses on *employment lands* shall be maintained and enhanced.

**Policy 3.A.3.26** ~~25~~ The *Region* will monitor implementation of the Gateway Economic Zone and Gateway Economic Centre and report on land *development* and job creation within the Niagara Economic Gateway. Every five years, the *Region* will undertake a review of section 3.A.3 "Policies for the Niagara Economic Gateway policies" to assess growth, *development*, land budget, and policy implementation.

## 3.B Rural Employment Lands

~~The Rural Employment Lands~~ Within the *Niagara Economic Gateway*, rural employment lands have been identified on the basis of existing local municipal official plans and are shown on Schedule G2. The rural employment lands designation is intended for lands that by the nature of their existing *development* are outside the ~~Urban Areas~~ *urban areas* boundaries of the *Region's settlement areas* yet have existing employment uses or clusters of existing employment uses. ~~Within the Niagara Economic Gateway Zone and Centre, strategic rural employment areas have been identified on the basis of existing local municipal Official Plans and land use designations.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Policy 3.B.2.1** Rural employment lands may only be identified through an ~~Amendment~~ *amendment* to this Plan and must be specifically identified on ~~a map as a Schedule to this Plan. Addition~~ *G2. The addition* of new ~~Rural Employment Lands~~ *rural employment lands* shall only be considered as part of ~~a municipally initiated~~ *the Region's municipal* comprehensive review of employment lands by Niagara Region and shall ~~fulfill all requirements of this Plan with regard to comprehensive reviews.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Policy 3.B.2.7** Lands shown on Schedule G2 of this Amendment as *employment lands* that are outside the ~~Urban Area Boundary~~, located urban area in the City

of Thorold as well as Special Policy Area “8” as identified in the City of Niagara Falls Official Plan, shall be classified as ~~“Rural Employment Lands”~~ rural employment lands. In this regard, the following policies will apply:

- a) Uses shall be only those which are considered to have minimal water and wastewater requirements.
- b) Functional servicing reports and hydrogeological reports, at a minimum, shall be required to support these uses. Additional studies, as outlined in the ~~Complete Application Policies~~ complete application policies of this Plan, shall also be required.
- c) The lands shall be subject to ~~Site Plan Control~~ site plan control and the ~~Niagara Region~~ will be circulated all site ~~Plan Control~~ plan control applications for ~~Rural Employment Lands~~ rural employment lands in the Niagara Economic Gateway.

**Policy 3.B.2.8** New ~~Rural Employment~~ rural employment lands will only be added to this ~~plan~~ Plan by way of an amendment to implement the ~~Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review~~ Region’s municipal comprehensive review.

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

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

### 3.C Employment Lands

- Policy 3.C.1** The *Region* and the local municipalities will ensure economic competitiveness by:
- ~~Providing an appropriate mix of employment uses, including industrial, commercial and institutional uses to meet long term needs on employment lands.~~
  - Providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses.
  - Planning for, protecting and preserving employment ~~areas~~ for current and future use.
  - Incorporating ~~employment area conversion~~ the policies implementing ~~Chapter~~ section 4.E “Employment Conversion” in local official plans.
  - Ensuring that the necessary *infrastructure* and services are provided to support current and forecasted employment needs including transit and *active transportation* facilities. This will include undertaking discussions with telecommunications providers regarding the feasibility of servicing existing and future *employment areas* with telecommunications services, including broadband technology, to attract knowledge-based industries and support the technological advancement and growth of existing businesses.
- Policy 3.C.2** Local municipalities should designate and preserve lands within ~~Urban Areas~~ urban areas which are adjacent to or in close proximity to existing major goods movement facilities and corridors including highway interchanges, ~~ports~~ airports, marine facilities, or rail yards facilities as employment ~~areas~~ lands providing for manufacturing, warehousing, transportation and associated retail, office and ancillary employment uses, where appropriate.
- Policy 3.C.3** ~~Where new~~ The development of sensitive land uses are proposed adjacent to, major retail uses or in proximity to employment areas, analysis is required to assess any constraints the introduction of such major office uses will have on the types of uses which could locate within all, in accordance with Provincial guidelines, avoid, or portions of the employment area where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts on industrial, manufacturing or on any existing employment other uses that are particularly vulnerable to encroachment.
- Policy 3.C.4** The *Region* strongly supports local and ~~regional~~ Regional efforts to develop clusters of associated economic activities including protecting

lands within and adjacent to major goods movement facilities and corridors for employment uses and associated supportive uses.

**Policy 3.C.5** ~~The Section 3.C “Employment Land” policies of Chapter 3.C~~ should be read in conjunction with ~~the~~ section 3.A “Niagara Economic Gateway” policies and section 3.E “Employment Areas”.

**Policy 3.C.6** Retail and office uses will be directed to locations that support active transportation and have existing or planned transit.

**Policy 3.C.7** The retail sector will be supported by promoting compact built form and intensification of retail and service uses and areas and encouraging the integration of those uses with other land uses to support the achievement of complete communities.

**Policy 3.C.8** In planning for employment, surface parking will be minimized and the development of this Plan active transportation networks and transit-supportive built form will be facilitated.

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### 3.D Commercial Areas

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

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

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

**Policy 3.D.4** ~~Municipalities~~ [Local municipalities](#) are encouraged to develop policies which support the use of ~~market impact studies~~ [Market Impact Studies](#) and peer reviews for major commercial applications. Market ~~impact studies~~ [Impact Studies](#) and peer reviews should consider:

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

Where the trade area for a ~~market study~~ [Market Impact Study](#) extends beyond the boundary of the *local municipality* in which the proposed commercial facility would be located, the *local municipality* should consult with the other municipalities within the trade area.

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

**Policy 3.D.6** The *Region* encourages local municipalities to revise ~~their~~ planning policies and zoning by-laws to support the *redevelopment* of ~~greyfield~~

~~areas~~ *greyfields* into mixed-uses areas. The *Region* strongly supports such *redevelopment* as an alternative to the establishment of new commercial areas.

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

### 3.E ~~Major Office~~ Employment Areas

**Policy 3.E.1** Niagara's *employment areas* are shown on Schedule G3.

**Policy 3.E.2** The *Region*, in consultation with local municipalities, will designate all *employment areas* in official plans and protect them for appropriate employment uses over the long-term. For greater certainty, *employment area* designations may be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan by amendment at any time in advance of the *Region's* next municipal comprehensive review.

**Policy 3.E.3** The *Region* and local municipalities will promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- a) making more efficient use of existing *employment areas* and vacant and underutilized *employment lands* and increasing employment densities;
- b) ensuring the availability of sufficient land, in appropriate locations, for a variety of employment to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan;
- c) planning to better connect areas with high employment densities to transit; and
- d) integrating and aligning land use planning and economic development goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.

**Policy 3.E.4** The *Region* will plan for *employment areas* by:

- a) prohibiting residential uses;
- b) prohibiting *major retail* uses; and
- c) limiting other *sensitive land* uses that are not ancillary to the primary employment use.

**Policy 3.E.5** Local official plans and zoning by-laws shall contain provisions that provide for an appropriate interface between *employment areas* and adjacent non-employment areas to maintain land use compatibility.

**Policy 3.E.6** The *Region*, in consultation with local municipalities, will establish minimum density targets for all *employment areas* within *settlement areas* that:

- a) are measured in jobs per hectare;
- b) reflect the current and anticipated type and scale of employment that characterizes the *employment area* to which the target applies;
- c) reflects opportunities for the *intensification* of *employment areas* on sites that support *active transportation* and are served by existing or planned transit; and
- d) will be implemented through official plan policies and designations, and zoning by-laws.

**Policy 3.E.7**

~~Major office and appropriate major institutional uses should~~ will be ~~located within~~ directed to the St. Catharines *Urban Growth Centre*, major transit station areas, or in other strategic growth areas with existing or planned frequent transit service or ~~planned~~ higher order transit service.

**Policy 3.E.8**

Existing office parks will be supported by:

- a) improving connectivity with transit and active transportation networks;
- b) providing for an appropriate mix of amenities and open space to serve the workforce;
- c) planning for intensification of employment uses;
- d) ensuring that the introduction of non-employment uses, if appropriate, would be limited and not negatively impact the primary function of the area; and
- e) approaches to transportation demand management that reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicle use.

**Policy 3.E.9**

The Region, in consultation with local municipalities, the Province, and other appropriate stakeholders, will undertake a co-ordinated approach to planning for large areas with high concentrations of employment that cross municipal boundaries and are major trip generators, on matters such as transportation demand management and economic development.

**Policy 3.E.10**

The conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses are not permitted except pursuant to section 4.E "Employment Conversion".

### **3.F Provincially Significant Employment Zones**

**Policy 3.F.1** The Minister may identify *provincially significant employment zones* and may provide specific direction for planning in those areas to be implemented through appropriate official plan policies and designations and economic development strategies.

**Policy 3.F.2** Lands in a *provincially significant employment zone* shall not be considered for conversion to a non-employment use except as part of the *Region's* next municipal comprehensive review.

**Policy 3.F.3** Local municipal official plans shall contain policies that prohibit conversion of any part of an *employment area* identified within a *provincially significant employment zone* until the *Region's* next municipal comprehensive review.

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## 4.E Employment Lands Conversion

### 4.E.1 Conversion of Lands Within Employment Areas

Policy 4.E.1.1 ~~Municipalities may permit~~ The conversion of lands within employment areas to non-employment uses may be permitted only through a the Region's municipal comprehensive review where it has been demonstrated that:

- ~~a) There~~ there is a need for the conversion;
- ~~b) The~~ the lands are not required over the horizon of this Plan for employment purposes for which they are designated;
- ~~b)c) the municipality will meet the~~ maintain sufficient employment targets allocated lands to the municipality pursuant to accommodate forecasted employment growth to the horizon of this Plan;
- ~~c)d) The conversion will~~ the proposed uses would not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area and/or the achievement of the municipal minimum intensification target, and density targets and in this Plan, as well as the other policies of this Plan; and
- ~~d)e) There is~~ there are existing or planned *infrastructure* ~~in place~~ and public service facilities to accommodate the proposed ~~use~~ uses.
- ~~e) The lands are not required over the long term for employment purposes for which they are designated.~~
- ~~f) Cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.~~

Policy 4.E.2 Notwithstanding section 4.E.1, until the Region's next municipal comprehensive review, lands within existing employment areas may be converted to non-employment uses, provided the conversion would:

- a) satisfy the requirements of section 4.E.1 a), c), and d);
- b) maintain a significant number of jobs on those lands through the establishment of development criteria; and
- c) not include any part of an employment area identified as part of a provincially significant employment zone.

Policy 4.E.3 Outside of employment areas, development criteria should be established by the Region and local municipalities to ensure that the redevelopment of any employment lands will retain space for a similar number of jobs to remain on site. Development applications shall satisfy all applicable development criteria.

Policy 4.E.4.2 ~~For the purposes of Policy 4.E~~ section 4.E "Employment Conversion", major retail uses are considered to be non-employment uses and are not permitted in employment areas. Development applications for the conversion of employment uses to major retail uses on designated employment lands will need to may only be undertaken within the context of a considered as part of the Region's next municipal comprehensive review, and are subject to the policies of 4.E-section 4.E "Employment Conversion".

## 4.G Urban Growth

**Policy 4.G.12.1** The detailed policies for ~~the [section 3.A](#) “Niagara Economic Gateway”~~ are incorporated in ~~the [section 3](#) “Employment—Chapter Four”~~ of this Plan. ~~The [section 4.G](#) “Urban Area Growth”~~ policies of this Plan must be read in conjunction with ~~the [section 3.A](#) “Niagara Economic Gateways Gateway”~~ policies for the respective [local](#) municipalities.

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## Definitions

### **Brownfield Sites**

are undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant. (~~Provincial Policy Statement, 2005~~ [PPS, 2014](#))

### **Gateway Economic Centre**

means settlement areas identified in this Plan, as depicted on Schedule G1 that, due to their proximity to major international border crossings, have unique economic importance to the region and Ontario. (Based on the Growth Plan, 2019 and modified for this Plan)

### **Gateway Economic Zone**

means settlement areas identified in this Plan, as depicted on Schedule G1 that, due to their proximity to major international border crossings, have unique economic importance to the region and Ontario. (Based on the Growth Plan, 2019 and modified for this Plan)

### **Employment Area**

means areas designated in ~~an official plan~~ [this Plan](#) for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities. ([Based on the PPS, 2014 and modified for this Plan](#))

### **Employment Land**

means lands that are designated in local official plans or zoning by-laws for employment uses. *Employment lands* may be within and outside of *employment areas*.

### **Major Retail**

means large-scale or large-format stand-alone retail stores or retail centres that have the primary purpose of commercial activities. (Growth Plan, 2019)

### **Major Office**

~~is generally defined as~~ means freestanding office buildings of ~~10,000m<sup>2</sup>~~ approximately 4,000 square metres of floor space or greater, or with ~~500~~ 200 jobs or more. (Growth Plan, 2019)

### **Office Parks**

means *employment areas* or areas where there are significant concentrations of offices with high employment densities. (Growth Plan, 2019)

### **Niagara Economic Gateway**

means the total geographic area of the local municipalities a part of the *Gateway Economic Centre* or *Gateway Economic Zone*.

### **Provincially Significant Employment Zones**

means areas defined by the Minister in consultation with affected municipalities for the purpose of long-term planning for job creation and economic development. *Provincially significant employment zones* can consist of *employment areas* as well as mixed-use areas that contain a significant number of jobs. (Growth Plan, 2019)