

REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT 6

TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE NIAGARA PLANNING AREA

PART “A” - THE PREAMBLE

The preamble provides an explanation of the Amendment including the purpose, location, background, and basis of the policies, and implementation, but does not form part of this Amendment.

- Title and Components
- Purpose of the Amendment
- Location of the Amendment
- Background
- Basis for the Amendment
- Implementation

PART “B” – THE AMENDMENT

The Amendment describes the additions and/or modifications to the Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area, which constitute Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 6.

- Map Changes
- Text Change

PART “C” – THE APPENDICES

The Appendices provide information, public participation and agency comments relevant to the Amendment, but do not form part of this Amendment.

PART “A” – THE PREAMBLE

TITLE AND COMPONENTS:

This document, when approved in accordance with Section 17 of the Planning Act, 1990, shall be known as Amendment 6 to the Regional Official Plan of the Niagara Planning Area. Part “A” – The Preamble, contains background information and does not constitute part of this Amendment. Part “B” – The Amendment, consisting of map and text changes, constitutes Amendment 6 to the Regional Official Plan of the Niagara Planning Area. Part “C” – The Appendices, does not constitute part of the Amendment. These Appendices contain information related to public involvement and agency comments associated with the Amendment and do not form part of this Plan.

PURPOSE OF THE AMENDMENT:

The purpose of this amendment is to:

- a) Protect lands for the long term that are required for planned transportation corridors in Niagara.
- b) Ensure land use compatibility and mitigate potential risks to ensure development is aligned with and supports future transportation corridors in Niagara.
- c) Support and balance the long term growth and transportation objectives of the Province, Region and local municipalities.
- d) Align with local municipal official planning frameworks.
- e) Serve as a basis for future local municipal corridor protection policies.

LOCATION OF THE AMENDMENT:

This amendment applies throughout the entire Niagara Planning Area.

BACKGROUND:

In recent years, the Province and Region have studied, and in some cases approved, the development of significant transportation corridors in the Niagara Region. To ensure the preferred alignments for future transportation corridors are protected and can be developed expediently, detailed corridor protections policies are being added to the Regional Official Plan.

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT:

1. This Amendment will protect the Niagara-to-GTA East Corridor Alignment, as well as other key corridors, from incompatible development.
2. The Amendment will protect lands identified for stations associated with the future GO Transit expansion.
3. This Amendment will encourage and support the development of the Niagara-to-GTA East Corridor that will connect the Gateway Employment Lands to other transportation corridors.

4. The Amendment will ensure consistency between the Region's corridor protection policies, policies in local municipal official plans, Section 3 of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006), and the Section 1.6.8 of the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement.
5. The Amendment is divided into sections, which constitute the Amendment:
 - a) Part I: New Policies
 - b) Part II: Modifications to existing policies
 - c) Part III: Definitions
 - d) Part IV: Mapping
6. The Amendment was the subject of a Public Meeting held under the *Planning Act* on September 24, 2014. Public and agency comments were addressed as part of the preparation of this Amendment.
7. Based on the Region's review of the *Planning Act*, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006), the Provincial Policy Statement (2014), the Regional Official Plan, and public and agency consultation, Regional staff is of the opinion that the Amendment is consistent with and aligns with Provincial and Regional policies and plans and, therefore, represents good planning.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Section 14 – Implementation of the Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area, shall apply where applicable.

PART “B” – THE AMENDMENT

Amendment 6 To the Regional Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area

Note to the Reader:

Policies that are in a black text box are in force and effect and not part of this amendment. They are shown for continuity purposes only.

Map Changes: (Please see Appendix 1)

- i. Appendix I – “Planned Transportation Corridors and Transit Facilities” in Niagara is added to the Regional Official Plan as “Schedule I – Planned Transportation Corridors and Transit Facilities”.

Text Changes:

The Official Plan for the Niagara Planning Area is amended as follows:

Part I: New Policies

1. The following policies are added to Section 9.D – Corridor Protection

“Transportation corridors and transit facilities play an integral role in the regional economy and the daily lives of Niagara’s residents by supporting the movement of people and goods. As the region continues to grow, the need for new and expanded transportation corridors and transit facilities will emerge. To ensure that these corridors and facilities can be developed in a manner that helps achieve growth and employment goals without compromising existing and planned land uses, corridors must be protected. This section provides protective policies for planned corridors and planned transit facilities within the Niagara region.

Policy 9.D.1 The Region **and the local municipalities**¹ shall protect corridors and rights of way for transportation and transit facilities to meet current and future needs and not permit development in such corridors that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified or is actively being planned.

Policy 9.D.2 The following *planned transportation corridors* and *planned transit facilities* shown on Schedule I are to be protected:

- a) The Niagara-to-GTA East Area Corridor
- b) The Highway 20 By-Pass
- c) Lands identified for the future Casablanca Boulevard GO Rail Station
- d) Lands identified for the future Beamsville GO Rail Station
- e) Lands identified for the future St. Catharines VIA Rail/GO Rail Station
- f) Lands identified for the future Niagara Falls VIA Rail / GO Rail Station

¹ Please see Part II: Modifications to Existing Policies. **Bold** font indicates text change.

Policy 9.D.3 The planning and design of highway corridors, and the land use designations along these corridors, will support the policies of this Plan, in particular those directing development to Urban Areas.

Policy 9.D.4 The Region will ensure land use compatibility and mitigate potential risks to the development of *planned transportation corridors* in Niagara by only considering development within *planned transportation corridors* in the following circumstances:

- a) Lands within an area where the existing built form presents significant challenges to future corridor development; *or*
- b) Lands in an existing registered plan of subdivision; *or*
- c) The provision of public utilities; *or*
- d) Situations that are compatible with, and supportive of, the long term purpose of the corridor.

The Region will work collaboratively with Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and the local municipalities to evaluate appropriate development opportunities within *planned transportation corridors*.

Policy 9.D.5 New *development* proposed on *adjacent lands* to existing or *planned transportation corridors*, *planned transit facilities*, and transportation facilities should be compatible with, and supportive of the long term purposes of the corridor/facility and should be designed to avoid, mitigate or minimize negative impacts on and from the corridor and transportation facilities.

Policy 9.D.6 The threshold for *adjacent lands* for *planned transportation corridors* shall be defined in local municipal official plans. For the purposes of evaluating *development* on *adjacent lands*, the Region will provide formal comments for development applications on properties abutting the planned corridor.

Policy 9.D.7 *Development* proposed within 500 metres from a *planned transit facility* shall reflect the purpose for which the facility was designated and be transit supportive.

Policy 9.D.8

In addition to all the applicable municipal requirements, all proposed development located adjacent to and in the vicinity of a provincial highway within the Ministry of Transportation's (MTO) permit control area under the *Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act* (PTHIA) will also be subject to MTO approval.

A permit from the Ministry of Transportation may be required:

- a) To place a building, structure, entrance or any road within 45 metres of the limit of a Provincial Highway.
- b) To place a building, structure, entrance or any road within 180 metres of the centre point of any intersection (on Kings Highways).
- c) To place a building, structure, entrance or any road within 395 metres of the centre point of any interchange (on controlled access highways).
- d) For major developments or uses that cause persons to congregate in larger numbers within 800 metres of the limit of a Provincial Highway.
- e) To place a sign within 400 metres of the limit of a Provincial Highway.

Policy 9.D.9

Where a *planned transportation corridor* results in a route design that displaces or encumbers designated employment lands, opportunities for compensation of additional employment supply shall be evaluated through a *municipal comprehensive review*.

Policy 9.D.10

The Region supports the development of a future transportation corridor linking Niagara with the western Greater Toronto Area as shown on Schedules 2 and 6 of the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Policy 9.D.11

Conceptual transportation corridors are shown on Schedule I for context only. Lands associated with *conceptual transportation corridors* shall be developed consistent with applicable local municipal plans or by-laws until formal corridor protection is deemed necessary. Formal corridor protection shall be completed by way of a further amendment to this Plan to identify the lands as a *planned transportation corridor*.

Policy 9.D.12

Refinements to existing *planned transportation corridors* shown on Schedule I may be made to reflect further study, route selection, or corridor development without amendment to this Plan.

Policy 9.D.13

Local municipalities, in consultation with and the satisfaction of the Province, shall develop official plan policies that provide transportation/transit corridor protection to ensure that development applications will not predetermine or preclude the planning and/or implementation of provincial transportation/transit facilities.

Policy 9.D.14

Local municipalities are encouraged to protect *planned transportation corridors*, *planned transit facilities* and their respective *adjacent lands* in Zoning By-laws and through the site plan approval process.

Policy 9.D.15

Regional Road widenings should not compromise the streetscape or individual buildings.

Part II: Modifications to Existing Policies

1. Policy 6.6.5 of RPPA 2-2009 is modified by:
 - i. Adding the words “**and the local municipalities**” before the words “shall protect corridors”.

Part III: Definitions

1. The following definitions are added to Chapter 15 of the Plan:

“**Planned Transportation Corridors** are future transportation corridors which are required to meet projected needs, and are identified through this Plan or Provincial plans, preferred alignment(s) determined through the Environmental Assessment Act process, or identified through planning studies where the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Niagara Region, or local municipality is actively pursuing the identification of a corridor.”

“**Conceptual Transportation Corridors** are preferred, hypothetical alignments for future transportation corridors. These alignments have not been reviewed or approved through the Environmental Assessment or planning studies.”

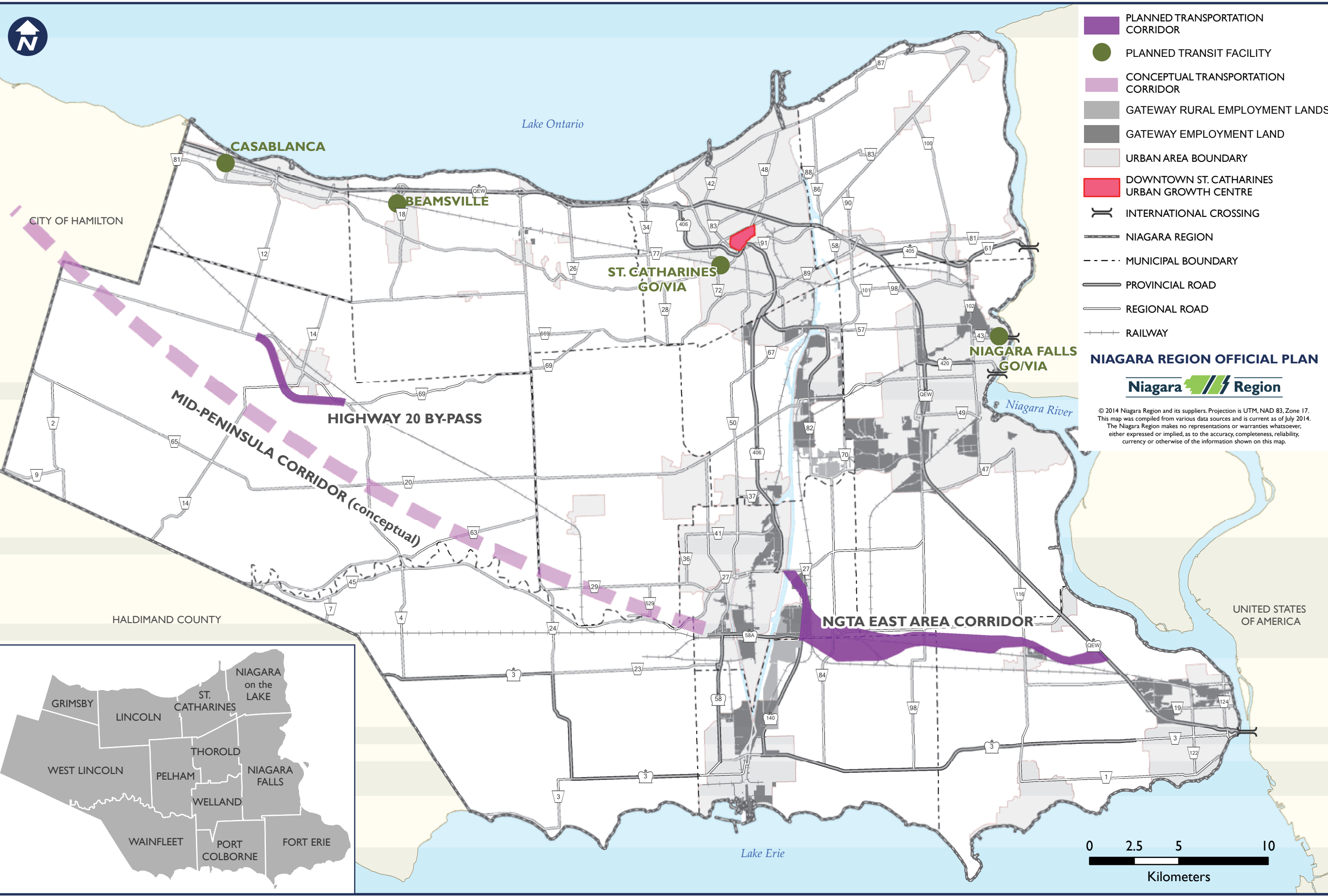
“**Planned Transit Facilities** are future public transit facilities (commuter rail stations, bus stations) that have been identified by the Province, Region, or local municipalities, through the Environmental Assessment process for future intra and inter-regional bus or commuter rail service.”

“**Adjacent lands** means:

- a) For the purpose of *planned transportation corridors*, those lands contiguous to existing and planned corridors and transportation facilities where *development* would have a *negative impact* on the corridor or facility.
- b) For the purpose of *planned transit facilities*, those lands within 500 metres of the preferred or existing station area.”

PART "C" - THE APPENDICES

DRAFT



- PLANNED TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR
- PLANNED TRANSIT FACILITY
- CONCEPTUAL TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR
- GATEWAY RURAL EMPLOYMENT LANDS
- GATEWAY EMPLOYMENT LAND
- URBAN AREA BOUNDARY
- DOWNTOWN ST. CATHARINES URBAN GROWTH CENTRE
- INTERNATIONAL CROSSING
- NIAGARA REGION
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
- PROVINCIAL ROAD
- REGIONAL ROAD
- RAILWAY

NIAGARA REGION OFFICIAL PLAN



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