Making our mark

Niagara Official Plan
Creating a New Regional Official Plan

Update for Local Councils – Spring 2019
Creating a new Regional Official Plan

The new Official Plan will be a cohesive, concise, user-friendly document that:

• Implements new provincial policy and plans, as amended
• Reflects current goals and priorities of the community and Regional Council
• Provides clear direction for local planning, with flexibility where appropriate
Initiating the New Official Plan

- Q4 2016 Resource Allocation
- Q4 2017 OP Process Framework
- Q2 2018 Local Council Presentations
- Q1 2019 Consultation Timeline
- Q2 2017 Planning Advisory Committee
- Q1 2018 Area Planners
- Q3 2018 Special Meeting of Council
Priority Background Studies

GROWTH MANAGEMENT
- Employment Land Strategy
- Land Budget
- Urban Structure
- Housing Strategy

RURAL AND NATURAL SYSTEMS
- Climate Change
- Agriculture
- Natural Environment
- Aggregate Resources
Process to Create the New Official Plan

2019
- BACKGROUND STUDIES

2020
- DRAFT POLICIES AND MAPPING

2021
- DRAFT REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN

YEAR END 2021
- COUNCIL ADOPTION
- SUBMISSION TO PROVINCE FOR APPROVAL

CONSULTATIONS CONSULTATIONS CONSULTATIONS
Growth Management – Land Budget

What is it?

• Amount of land needed for residential and employment growth to 2041

• Establish process to address urban expansions requests (TBC)

Current status

• Land budget cannot be finalized until other growth management studies are substantially complete

• Will be impacted by amendments to Growth Plan
Growth Management – Urban Structure

What is it?
• Strategic areas to direct growth and intensification
• Implemented through local Secondary Plans

Current status
• Draft Regional Urban Structure to be discussed with Area Planners prior to public consultations
Growth Management – Draft Urban Structure Components

- Local Corridors
- Local Centres
- Strategic Growth Areas
- Go Transit Station Area
- Regional Centre
- Urban Growth Centre
Growth Management – Employment Lands Strategy

What is it?
• Identify and protect a sufficient and marketable supply of land for employment uses

Current Status
• A consulting firm has been retained to undertake the study
• Target completion date is end of 2019
Growth Management – Housing Strategy

What is it?
• Plan for an appropriate range and mix of housing forms to provide choice, affordable options and aging in place
• Will align with the Region’s Housing and Homelessness Action Plan (to be updated in 2019)

Current Status
• Housing data has been prepared by a consulting firm and shared with municipal staff
• Target completion date for a housing database is Spring 2019
• Data will be analyzed to inform a Housing Strategy for the Official Plan and targets for the Region’s Housing and Homelessness Action Plan
Rural and Natural Systems – Agriculture

What is it?

• Inform the identification and protection of our agricultural land, and support the agricultural industry as the primary driver of Niagara’s economy

Current status

• Agriculture study to be initiated in Spring 2019
Rural and Natural Systems – Natural Environment

What is it?

• Inform the identification of a natural system or systems in Niagara, and protect important natural features

Current status

• A consulting team has been retained to complete a Watershed Planning Discussion Paper, Mapping Discussion Paper, and Natural Environment Background Study

• Target completion date for the background studies is Spring 2019
Rural and Natural Systems – Aggregate Resources

What is it?

• Help to ensure that aggregate resources are available close to market, while addressing land use compatibility and environmental considerations

Current Status

• A consulting firm completed a “State of Aggregates in Niagara Region: Background Report”, which was brought to Committee and Council in 2016
• A Technical Addendum was completed in Spring 2018 to supplement the Background Report as a result of changes to provincial legislation and policies
• Draft policies are currently under development
Rural and Natural Systems – Climate Change

What is it?

• Will explore opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our communities and better adapt to the effects of climate change in Niagara, such as flooding

Current status

• Target completion date for climate change discussion paper is Fall 2019
Consultation Overview

• Consultation framework endorsed by Regional Council in March 2019
• Build on “Imagine Niagara” consultations
• Consult on background studies, draft policies and draft consolidated official plan
• Stakeholder sessions, public information centres (open houses), public meetings, online comments
• Educational videos and social media
Next Steps and Considerations

Next Steps
• Complete majority of background work in 2019
• Hold first round of public consultations in Fall 2019
• Third ‘Local Council Checkpoint’ estimated for Spring 2020

Considerations
• The provincial land use planning framework is currently under review
Preliminary Framework for New Official Plan

**GROWING REGION**
How we manage growth and development, with a range and mix of housing forms, including affordable housing.

**CONNECTED REGION**
How we improve connections with transit, recreation and trails, infrastructure and technology.

**COMPETITIVE REGION**
How we increase our competitiveness by supporting employment opportunities and protecting agricultural lands.

**VIBRANT REGION**
How we enhance the vibrancy of communities by supporting strong urban design and protecting cultural heritage.

**SUSTAINABLE REGION**
How we protect our natural environment and plan for climate change.