



STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2022

SHAPE NIAGARA



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of myself and the members of Niagara Regional Council, I am pleased to present Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, Shape Niagara. The strategy sets the stage for the priorities we set and the decisions we make as a Council and an organization over the next four years. In developing this strategy, we heard from over 1500 participants from across Niagara. It was encouraging to see the common vision, interests and priorities across the community emerge, and then form the basis for this strategic plan.

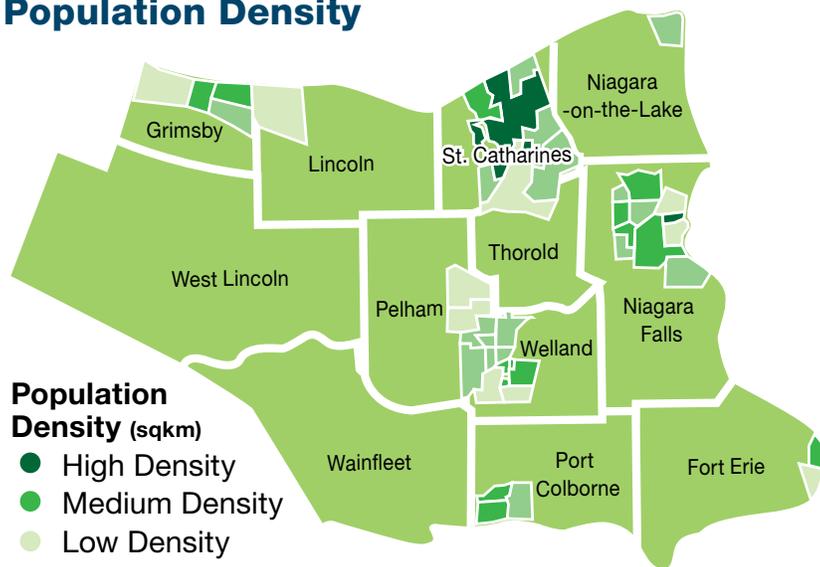
The strategic planning process has given us the opportunity to come together, and talk about what we value in the community, as well as identify what we would like to see change and improve. This plan identifies the immediate priorities and objectives that will help us accomplish both Council's and the community's vision for the future. It will be a valuable tool to guide Council and staff's decision-making processes, directing resources to where they will have the most impact in achieving our goals. As a Council, we are excited by this new strategy and the implementation plan that accompanies it, and we look forward to working together to build a Niagara that we can all be proud of.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Bradley". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Regional Chair Jim Bradley

NIAGARA AT A GLANCE

Population Density



Statistics Canada, Census (2016)

Employees



209,890
people employed in the labour force



80,000
projected new people employed by 2041

Municipal Comprehensive Review, Phase 4 Forecast (2018)

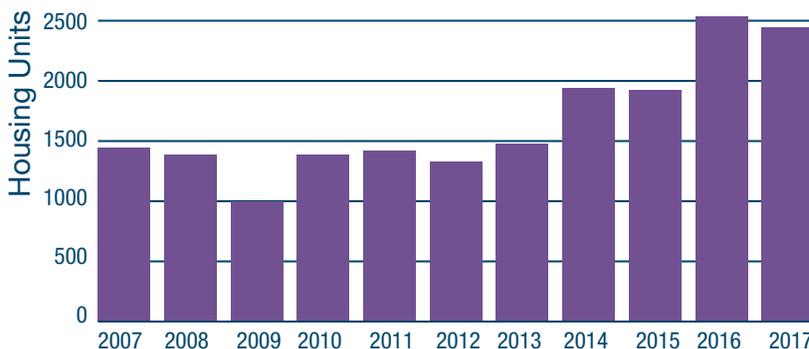
Tourism



13,000,000
VISITORS TO NIAGARA

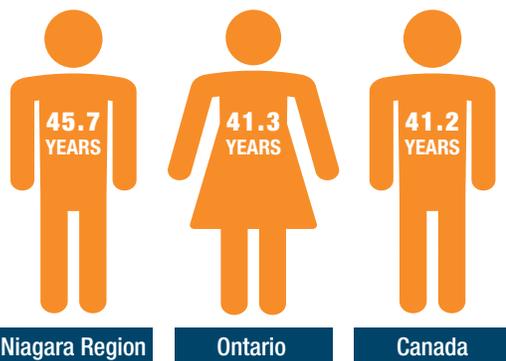
Ontario Ministry of Tourism (2016)

Housing Starts



Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Housing Now Tables (2018)

Population's Median Age



Statistics Canada, Median Age (2016)

Cost of Living



Family of four in 2017
\$71,294

Niagara Poverty Reduction Network (2017)



8.9%
Increase in just one year

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a strategic plan is to guide the work of the organization over a four year period, to shape a new direction for Niagara as a community and an organization. Niagara Regional Council set strategic directions focused on services provided at the Regional government level, bringing attention to the areas which require more immediate and focused attention.

Creating the Plan: The Voice of the Community

This strategic plan was informed by an extensive community engagement initiative that captured the priorities identified by Niagara’s residents, businesses, organizations and local area municipalities. Over 1,500 of Niagara’s community members contributed to the creation of this strategic plan by participating and sharing their ideas in-person and online. An overview of the initiative and full summary of the community’s input can be found in the report titled “Shape Niagara – What We’ve Heard”. The strategy was also informed by a current state analysis of Niagara, as captured in the report titled “Shape Niagara – Setting the Stage for Strategy”. Both reports can be found at niagararegion.ca/priorities.

What a Strategic Plan Means to Niagara

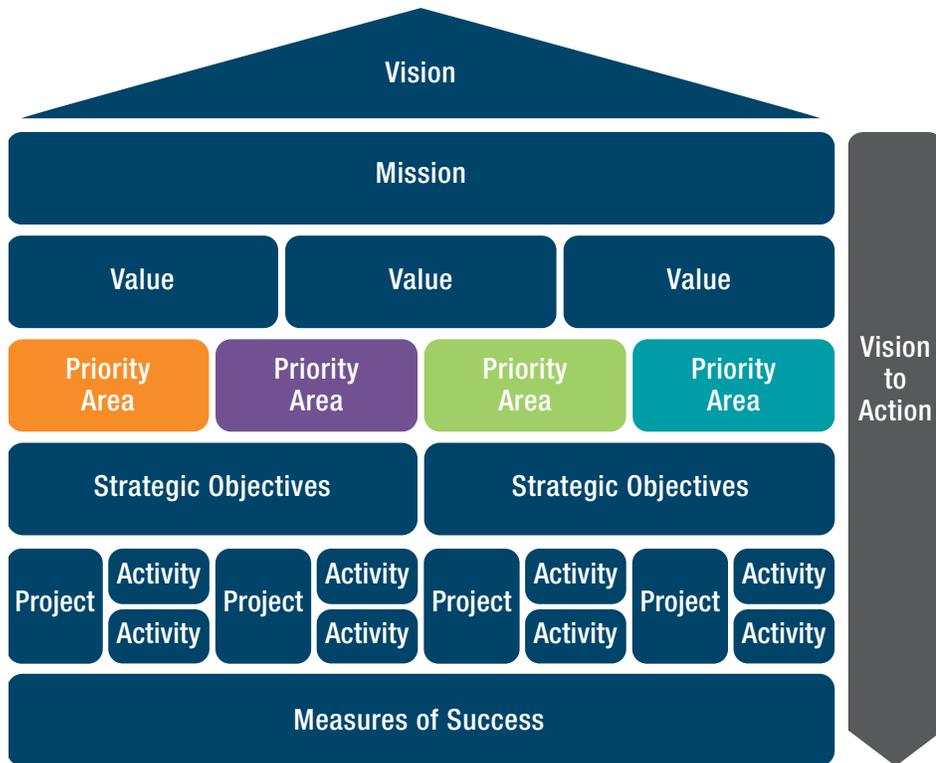
A strategic plan is an important document that underpins all of the work the Region will set out to achieve over the next four years. It is focused in its intent, aligned with the mandate of services provided at this level of government, and set up in a way to act as a motivation to work together to achieve something great.

Members of Niagara Regional Council came together to create this plan, informed by the community’s input, with an understanding that for municipal government, a strategy is the basis for aligning the work of the organization with the priorities of Council. It is about solving the right problems, to deliver value to the residents of Niagara by demonstrating transparency and accountability.

The strategic plan references many other important and directional documents at the Region, such as Niagara’s Transportation Master Plan, and the work going on to update the Official Plan. It will serve to inform new plans such as the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. These strategic documents are also developed with significant time and input from Niagara’s residents, as they reflect on what they envision for the future of Niagara, and the path to get us there.

VISION TO ACTION

A strategic framework serves to provide structure to this type of long-term planning by focusing on key elements: Vision, Mission, Corporate Values, Priority areas of focus and the Objectives that identify what we hope to achieve. The Implementation Plan that accompanies this strategy, consists of the actions and projects that we will undertake to meet those objectives. The following framework is the basis of this 2019-2022 Council Strategic Plan:



Following this framework, Niagara Regional Council refreshed their Vision, Missions and Values for Niagara as a community and organization, as well as identified four priority areas of focus, and the objectives for each that define how we might achieve progress on these priorities.



VISION, MISSION CORPORATE VALUES

VISION

Niagara Region is a mosaic of diverse communities. We strive to achieve a prosperous, safe and inclusive community that embraces our natural spaces and promotes holistic wellbeing and quality of life.

MISSION

Niagara Region will serve its residents, businesses and tourists through collaborative leadership, responsible policy and the provision of effective and efficient community-focused services, while maintaining environmental and economic sustainability.

CORPORATE VALUES

Equity

Inclusive, acting with compassion for the community

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Striving to improve through innovation, not limitation

Integrity

Behaving ethically, and acting with respect, accountability and trust

Stewardship

Working to consider long term consequences of actions, think broadly across issues and act responsibly

Foster Partnerships

Building partnerships to leverage resources and talents

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



01

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

A coordinated approach to fostering economic growth in Niagara



02

HEALTHY AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY

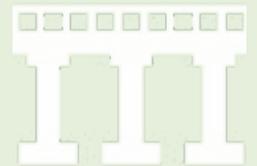
Foster a high quality of life through safe, healthy, and inclusive neighbourhoods through the delivery of quality, affordable and accessible human services



03

RESPONSIBLE GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Sustainable investments in transportation, transit and infrastructure, while aligning infrastructure planning with preservation of the natural environment



04

SUSTAINABLE AND ENGAGING GOVERNMENT

A commitment to high quality, efficient, fiscally sustainable and coordinated core services through enhanced communication, partnerships and collaborations with the community



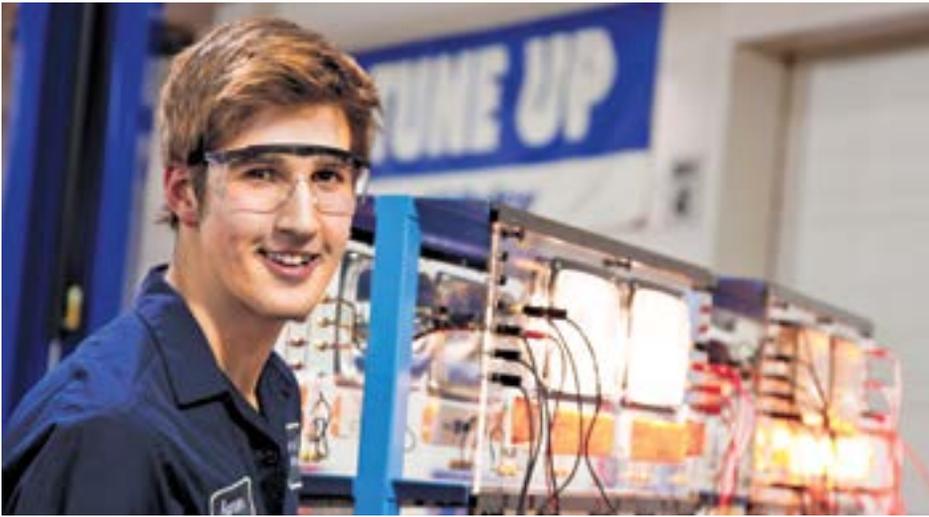
01

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SUPPORTING BUSINESSES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

A coordinated approach to fostering economic growth in Niagara.





Objective 1.1: Economic Growth and Development

- Enhance integration with local area municipalities' economic development and planning departments to provide supports and improve interactions with businesses to expedite and navigate development processes
- Forward thinking approach to economic development in Niagara through long term strategic planning and leveraging partnerships with post-secondary institutions

Objective 1.2: Support Retention and Development of a Skilled Labour Force

- Partner with all levels of education, private sector businesses and industry associations to advocate for skilled trade labour to address the workforce gap
- Explore the development of a regional talent network, and develop an advanced manufacturing workforce strategy for Niagara

Objective 1.3: Collaborative Approach to Business Growth and Retention

- Work collaboratively with local area municipalities to connect with existing businesses proactively to achieve long term economic success
- Work collaboratively with community organizations, post-secondary institutions and businesses to support research and technology facilities in the region that foster new business start-up opportunities

Objective 1.4: Strategically Target Industry Sectors

- Define Niagara's role in tourism including areas such as sport, eco, agricultural and culture tourism
- Through advocacy and collaboration with Tourism Partnership of Niagara, encourage visitors to spend more and stay longer, using an inclusive approach across all areas of the region
- Foster opportunities to drive economic diversity through value-add sectors such as agri-business

02

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

HEALTHY AND VIBRANT COMMUNITY

Foster a high quality of life through safe, inclusive neighbourhoods and delivery of quality, affordable and accessible human services.





Objective 2.1: Enhance Community Wellbeing

- Foster safe and inclusive neighbourhoods and communities tied to a larger strategic Community Safety and Wellbeing strategy
- Drive positive and healthy early childhood education and experiences through the delivery of high quality and affordable child care services
- Increase the capacity of long-term care across the region to meet the needs of the aging population

Objective 2.2: Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Support the health and wellbeing of the community by facilitating and advocating for access and timeliness of mental health services for all residents

Objective 2.3: Addressing Affordable Housing Needs

- Retain, protect and increase the supply of affordable housing stock to provide a broad range of housing to meet the needs of the community
- Support clients through the stages of the housing continuum, towards more stable and permanent housing

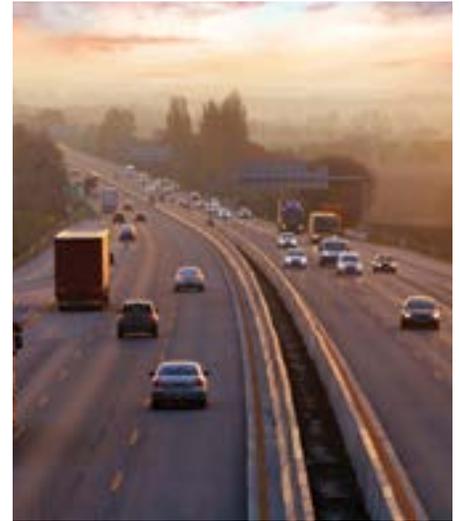
03

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

RESPONSIBLE GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Sustainable investments in transportation, transit and infrastructure, while aligning infrastructure planning with preservation of the natural environment.





Objective 3.1: Advancing Regional Transit and GO Rail Services

- Advance and advocate for Niagara's effort towards integrated and efficient conventional, specialized and higher order transit, enabling seamless and connective travel for all people throughout Niagara and the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA)

Objective 3.2: Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship

- A holistic and flexible approach to environmental stewardship and consideration of the natural environment, such as in infrastructure, planning and development, aligned with a renewed Official Plan
- Drive environmental protection and addressing climate change such as through increasing waste diversion rates and reducing our carbon footprint

Objective 3.3: Maintain Existing Infrastructure

- Sound asset management planning to ensure sustainable investments in the infrastructure needed to support existing residents and businesses, as well as future growth in Niagara

Objective 3.4: Facilitating the Movement of People and Goods

- Commitment to the implementation of Niagara's Transportation Master Plan, creating an integrated network of roads and highways for the movement of people and goods
- Advocate and support for Niagara's transportation projects, safe and healthy streets supporting active transportation, and opportunities in rail

04

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SUSTAINABLE AND ENGAGING GOVERNMENT

A commitment to high quality, efficient, fiscally sustainable and coordinated core services through enhanced communication, partnerships and collaboration with the community.





Objective 4.1: High Quality, Efficient and Coordinated Core Services

- Promote an organizational culture that values continuous improvement, collaboration, and innovation
- Explore cost-efficiencies through coordinated service delivery and collaboration with local area municipalities
- Commit to customer focused services, improving access such as through digital and online service delivery
- Drive evidence informed decisions by building staff skills and capacity, and by making information and data accessible across the organization

Objective 4.2: Enhanced Communication

- Increase public knowledge through education and promotion of Regional programs and services, initiatives and priorities. Focus on clear and consistent communication on Regional budget, activities and successes, in a simplified manner
- Strive to be inclusive and increase the reach of communications with the community and explore best practice multi-media approaches

Objective 4.3: Fiscally Sustainable

- Build an adaptive environment that employs leading business practices, such as asset management, to foster financial stability in delivering critical infrastructure and services
- Explore opportunities for driving new revenues and generating business

A sunset over a field of purple flowers. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange and yellow glow across the sky. The foreground is filled with green grass and numerous purple flowers. A semi-transparent geometric pattern of overlapping triangles is overlaid on the entire image. The text 'COMMITMENT TO ACTION' is written in large, bold, white capital letters in the upper left quadrant.

COMMITMENT TO ACTION

Implementation Plan

A strategic plan has no true value without an action plan to implement the goals and objectives that it identifies. In order to move these strategic priorities forward, specific projects, initiatives and actions will be identified for the term of Council to achieve the objectives. It is important to note that these projects and initiatives are not intended to be an inclusive list of everything the Region does as core services. The implementation plan identifies new or ongoing initiatives that the organization needs to focus on specifically to enact Council's priorities. They will ensure the Region is meeting the current and most immediate needs of the community, as identified through the strategic planning process.

The 2019 – 2022 Council Strategic Plan, the background reports that informed this strategy, the Implementation Plan, and the public-facing performance measures dashboard will be made available on the Region's website. We invite you to follow the progress of the plan and view the performance dashboard through the Regional website at niagararegion.ca/priorities.

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You cannot be everything to everyone. If you decide to go north, you cannot go south at the same time.

— Jeroen De Flanderl

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