

Township of
Wainfleet



OFFICIAL PLAN
— UPDATE —

Special Meeting of Township Council
Tuesday April 14, 2026





Hello. We are



- **GSP Group** is a recognized, award-winning leader in **planning, urban design, and landscape architecture**.
- We have offices in **Hamilton and Kitchener**; members of our team live and work in Niagara, bringing local insight and experience.
- Our team has worked on planning applications in Wainfleet and understands the community's unique character and planning needs.
- We are here to assist the Township in preparing its new **Official Plan** and **Parks Plan** that will be used by Council to guide the future growth and development of the community.
- To learn more about our work or connect with our team, please visit: www.gspgroup.ca

Project Team Members



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Purpose of Tonight's Meeting

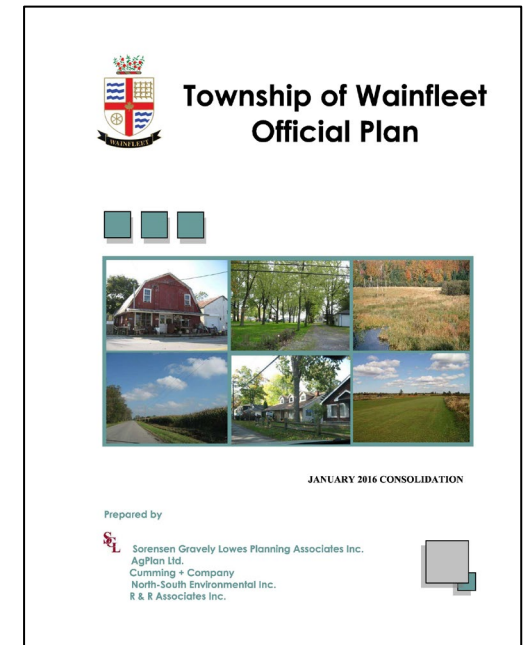
- A Special Meeting of Council is required under Section 26 the Planning Act.
- To formally “kick-off” the process and introduce the project including:
 - Background on the legislative and policy context
 - An overview of key areas to be explored
 - Results of the Gap Analysis Report
 - Process, timeline and next steps
- Initial opportunity for open discussion by Township Council with public input.

**** Residents are welcome to provide comments, opinions and suggestions on the project. ****

NOTE: New policies and mapping have not been prepared at this point in the project. These materials will be prepared in Phase 2 for public review and discussion.

What is an Official Plan?

- The **Official Plan (or OP)** is a long-term guide that explains how the Township plans for future growth and development—usually looking **20 years ahead**.
- It is one of Council's key **tools** for making sure Wainfleet grows in a way that reflects the needs and values of the community.
- The OP sets out **high-level policies** and identifies **land use designations** (how land can be used) across the Township. All planning decisions must follow these policies.
- The OP helps the Township:
 - Manage and review new development
 - Protect important resources, such as natural areas and agricultural lands
 - Direct where infrastructure, services, and community facilities should go



Why is an Update Required?

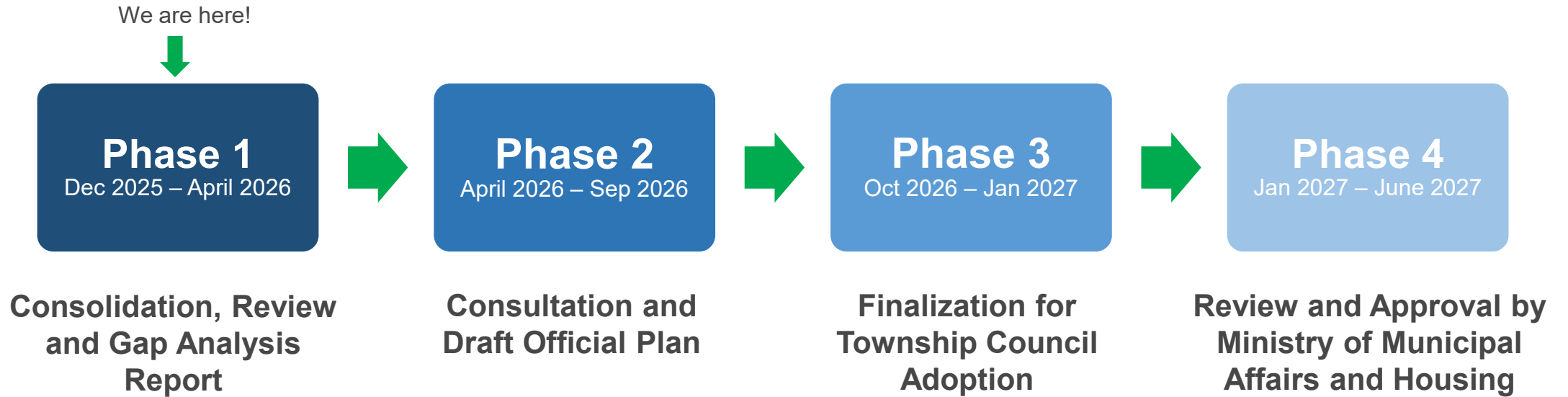
First and foremost, *to set out an updated vision for the community's growth and development to the year 2051.*

- The Planning Act dictates that all municipalities must update their official plan every 10-years – the previous Official Plan was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board in 2016.
- The Regional Municipality of Niagara no longer has a formal planning function or authority over the Township.
- To include recent Provincial legislative changes related to Land Use Planning in Ontario.
- To ensure consistency with the Provincial Planning Statement (2024).
- To remove policies and references to repealed plans and documents that are no longer in effect.
- To ensure recent amendments and development is captured in text and mapping of the plan.
- To address “Gaps” in the Plan identified through the completed **Gap Analysis Report**.
- To inform future updates to the Township's Zoning By-law.

Official Plan Review and Update Process

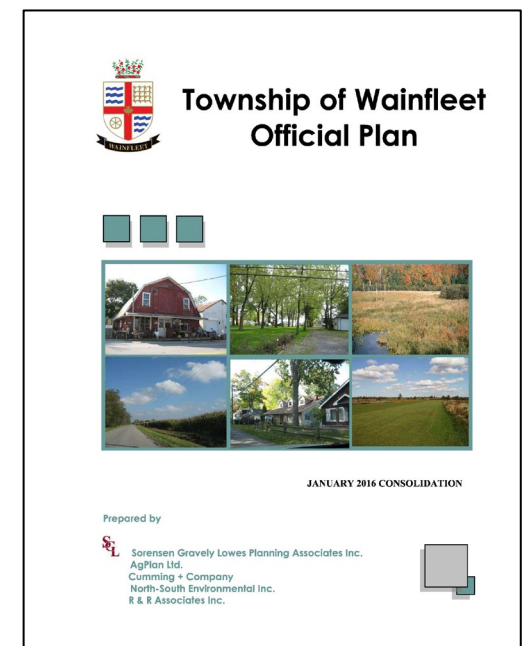
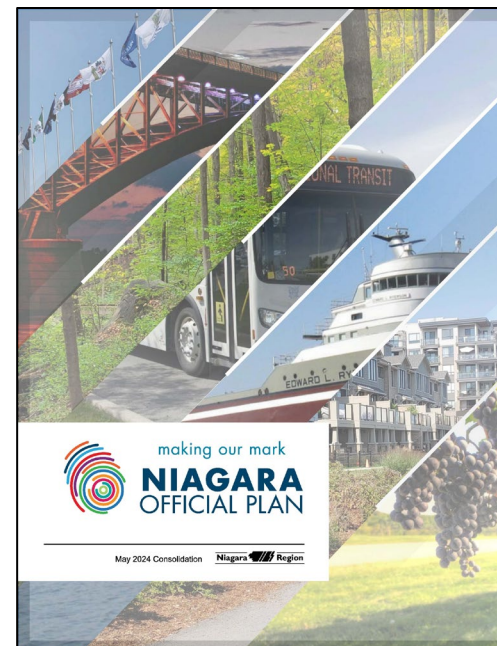
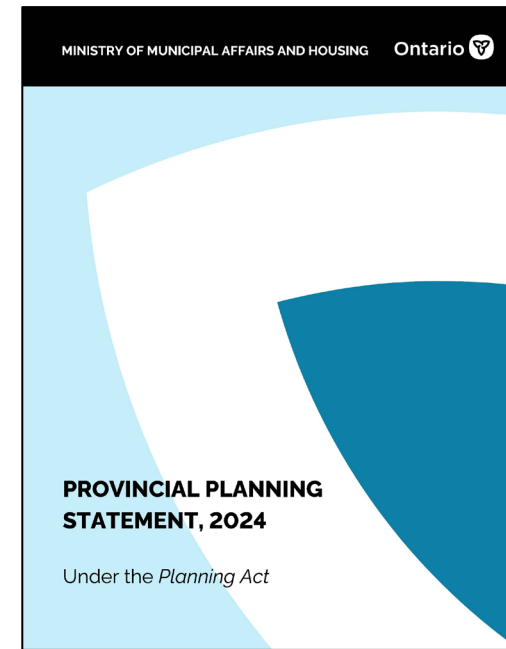
- The RFP for the Official Plan Update was issued on September 19, 2025.
- The Project was Awarded to GSP Group by Township Council on November 18, 2025.
- The OP Review process was formally initiated in December 2025 and is expected to be considered by Council no earlier than Q4 of 2026.
- The Project consists of four (4) Phases, that include:
 - **Phase 1** – Consolidation, Review and Gap Analysis Report ← We are here!
 - **Phase 2** – Consultation and Draft Official Plan
 - **Phase 3** – Finalization for Township Council Adoption
 - **Phase 4** – Review and Approval by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Official Plan Review and Update Timeline



Planning Hierarchy

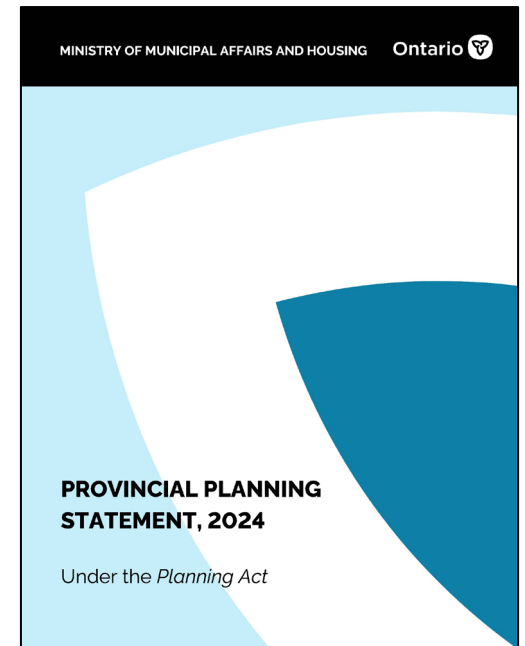
- **Provincial law** (legislation) and policies set out the Land Use Planning framework in Ontario. This is primarily governed by the **Planning Act**.
 - These rules flow down through different levels of government until they reach the Township, where local planning decisions are made.
- Recent changes by the Province replaced the **Provincial Policy Statement (2020)** and the **Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019)** with the new **2024 Provincial Planning Statement**.
- While the Region of Niagara no longer has planning authority over Wainfleet, the **Niagara Official Plan (2022)** still forms part of Wainfleet's current **Official Plan (2016)**.



Provincial Planning Statement (2024)

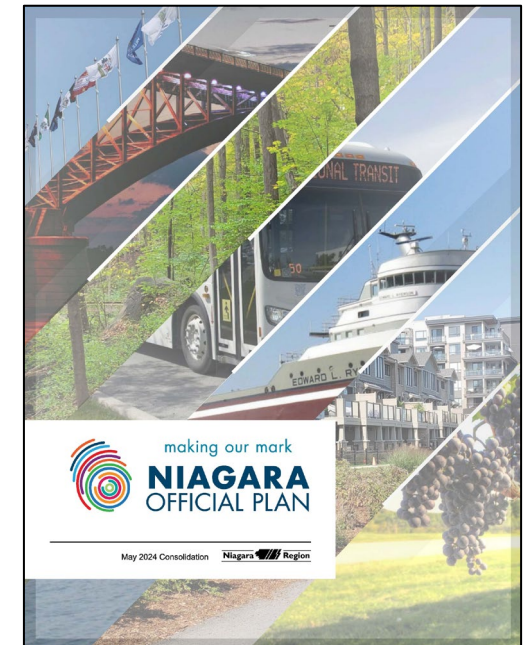
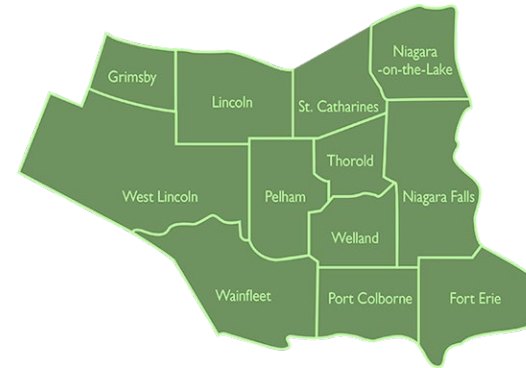
➤ A **Provincial policy document** that provides direction to Ontario communities on matters of Provincial Interest set out in the Planning Act, that includes:

- Growth
- Housing
- Employment
- Agriculture
- Natural Heritage
- Cultural Heritage
- Servicing and Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Implementation



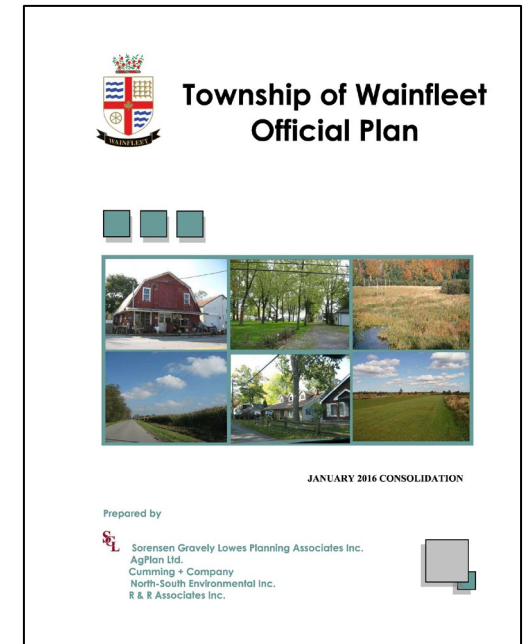
Niagara Official Plan (2022)

- An Official Plan for the entire Regional Municipality of Niagara.
- Adopted by Regional Council in June 2022 and approved by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in November 2022.
- Regional Planning Responsibilities revoked by Province on March 31, 2025.
- Entirety of the **NOP (2022)** was automatically included as part of every local municipal official plan, including Wainfleet.
- Local municipalities are required to review and select policies from the **NOP** that are **relevant or desired to remain**. All other policies and schedules will be repealed and not form part of local Official Plan.

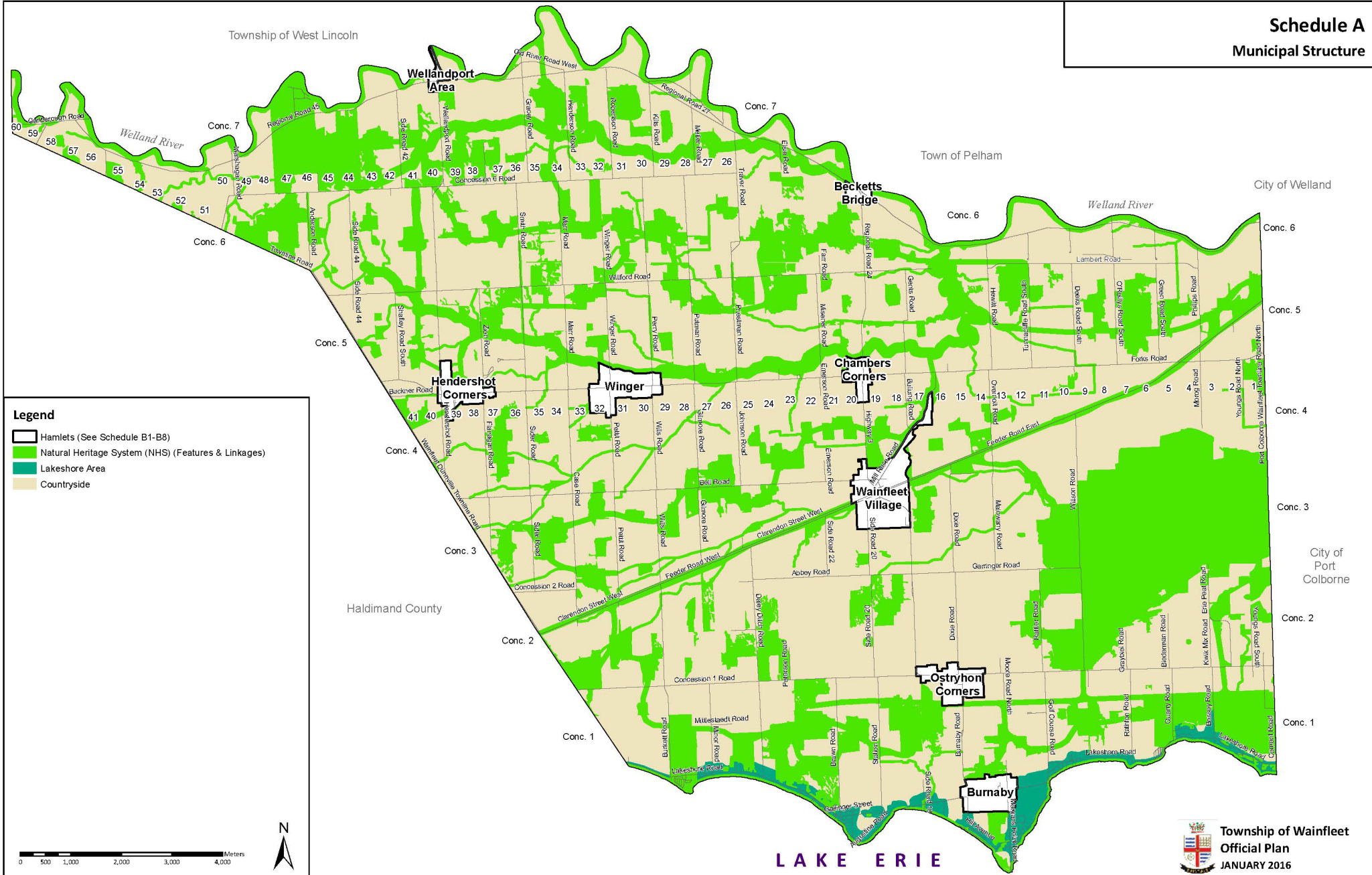


Wainfleet Official Plan (2016)

- The current Official Plan sets out the Township's long-term goals, objectives, and land use policies to the year 2031.
- **Municipal Land Use Structure** includes:
 - Hamlets
 - Seven (7) in total
 - Also known as "Rural Settlement Areas"
 - Countryside
 - Agricultural and Rural Lands
 - Lakeshore Area
 - Natural Heritage System



**Schedule A
Municipal Structure**



Key Policy Areas

- Although the update will be comprehensive, there are key policy areas that GSP will be addressing through the Official Plan Update.
- These matters have been identified within the completed **Gap Analysis Report** prepared by GSP and through preliminary discussions with **Township Staff** and **Council Members**.
- These specific matters are arranged thematically and are outlined in more detail on the following slides and include:
 - Growth & Development
 - Agriculture & Rural Areas
 - Infrastructure & Services
 - Natural & Cultural Resources
 - Public Health & Safety
 - Implementation & Administration





Key Policy Areas

Growth & Development

- Wainfleet's current Official Plan is based on growth forecasts to **2031**, which estimated:
 - 8,195 residents
 - 1,630 jobs
- The **Niagara Official Plan (2022)** updated these forecasts to the year **2051**, projecting:
 - 7,730 residents
 - 1,830 jobs in Wainfleet

Key Policy Areas

Growth & Development



- As part of the Official Plan update, GSP will review several key items to ensure Wainfleet can accommodate growth to 2051, including:
 - Updated **population and employment forecasts**
 - Comparing the **Regional 2051 forecast, Ministry of Finance projections**, and assessing whether a **new local forecast** is needed
 - Determining where additional **housing options**—beyond single detached homes—could be located
 - Reviewing **Township-wide permissions for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**
 - Identifying suitable locations for **residential** and **employment** growth and intensification
 - Evaluating the Township's **Hamlet boundaries**



Key Policy Areas

Agriculture & Rural Areas

- Agriculture and rural living are central to Wainfleet's identity, economy, and landscape.
- Most of the Township's land (outside the Lakeshore Area and Hamlets) is made up of **Agricultural** and **Rural** areas.



Key Policy Areas

Agriculture & Rural Areas

- As part of the Official Plan update, GSP will review and update several important topics, including:
 - **Agricultural Land Base Mapping**
Updating maps that identify Agricultural and Rural land use designations.
 - **Minimum Farm Parcel Sizes**
Reviewing the current minimum parcel size of 40 hectares (100 acres).
 - **Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses**
Exploring opportunities for businesses and activities that support farms or provide additional income on farms.
 - **Land Use Compatibility**
Ensuring agricultural operations and nearby homes can co-exist safely and appropriately (including applying Minimum Distance Separation guidelines).
 - **Residential Opportunities in Rural Areas**
Considering whether new or additional residential options are appropriate in Agricultural and Rural areas.
 - **Supporting the Agricultural Economy**
Identifying policies that help strengthen and grow local agriculture.
 - **Updated Terms and Definitions**
Aligning Township terminology with Provincial definitions to ensure clarity and consistency.



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Key Policy Areas

Infrastructure & Services



- Infrastructure includes **roads, servicing systems, and other public assets** that are owned or maintained by the Township or other government agencies.

Key Policy Areas

Infrastructure & Services



- As part of the Official Plan update, GSP will review several important topics:
 - **Boil Water Advisory Policies**
Exploring policy options to help address the long-standing Boil Water Advisory.
 - **Servicing Options**
Updating policies related to different types of servicing, including **municipal, partial, and communal systems**.
 - **Municipal Servicing Investments**
Establishing policies to help guide and manage potential future investments in servicing infrastructure.
 - **Stormwater Management**
Updating requirements and policies to help manage runoff, reduce flooding risks, and protect the environment.
 - **Road Allowance Widths**
Preparing a schedule in the Official Plan that outlines the required widths for Township roads.
 - **Aviation Regulations**
Reviewing and updating policies for lands around **Burnaby Airport** and the **Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport** to ensure safety and compatibility.
 - **Land Use Compatibility & Noise**
Updating policies to ensure appropriate separation and compatibility between sensitive land uses and transportation noise sources such as **roads, railways, and airports**.



Key Policy Areas

Natural & Cultural Resources

- Wainfleet has a rich cultural heritage and a wide range of natural resources.
- Protecting these resources requires clear policies, accurate mapping, and an understanding of their importance to the Township, local residents, Indigenous communities, and the broader region.



Key Policy Areas

Natural & Cultural Resources

- As part of the Official Plan update, GSP will review and update several key matters:
 - **Archaeological Screening Tools**
Incorporating the Archaeological Study Screening Tool from the **2022 Niagara Official Plan (Schedule K)**.
 - **Archaeological Preservation Areas**
Clarifying the Township's approach to identifying and managing any **Archaeological Preservation Areas** or **Special Policy Areas**.
 - **Cultural Heritage Policies**
Updating policies that identify and protect **built heritage, cultural landscapes**, and other significant cultural resources.
 - **Indigenous Engagement**
Including policies that require early, meaningful, and ongoing **Indigenous engagement** throughout the planning process.
 - **Natural Heritage Review**
Reviewing Regional natural heritage policies and mapping to ensure consistency and local accuracy.
 - **Water Resources**
Updating policies that protect groundwater, surface water, wetlands, and other water-related features.
 - **Mineral Aggregate & Petroleum Resources**
Updating mapping and policies related to mineral aggregate operations, petroleum resources, and related provincial requirements.
 - **Conservation Authority Mapping & Policies**
Integrating updated **Conservation Authority regulated area mapping** and ensuring policies reflect current regulations.



Key Policy Areas

Public Health & Safety

- Matters of public health and safety include natural hazards, human-made hazards, and water quality, all of which play an important role in protecting residents and the environment.

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Key Policy Areas

Public Health & Safety



- As part of the Official Plan update, GSP will review the following:
 - **Natural Hazards**
 - Floodplains
 - Shorelines
 - Valley systems
 - Wetlands
 - **Human-Made Hazards**
 - Contaminated sites and requirements for clean-up
 - Records of Site Condition
 - Excess soil management requirements
 - **Water Quality**
 - Policy directions to ensure water resources are protected and enhanced
 - Considerations related to the Boil Water Advisory



Key Policy Areas

Implementation & Administration

- Recent Provincial legislative and policy changes, along with the shift in planning responsibilities away from the Niagara Region, mean the Township now plays a larger role in day-to-day planning decisions.



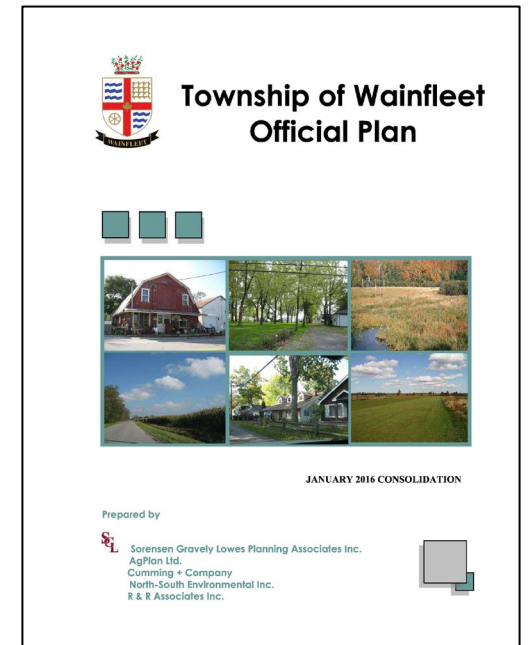
Key Policy Areas

Implementation & Administration

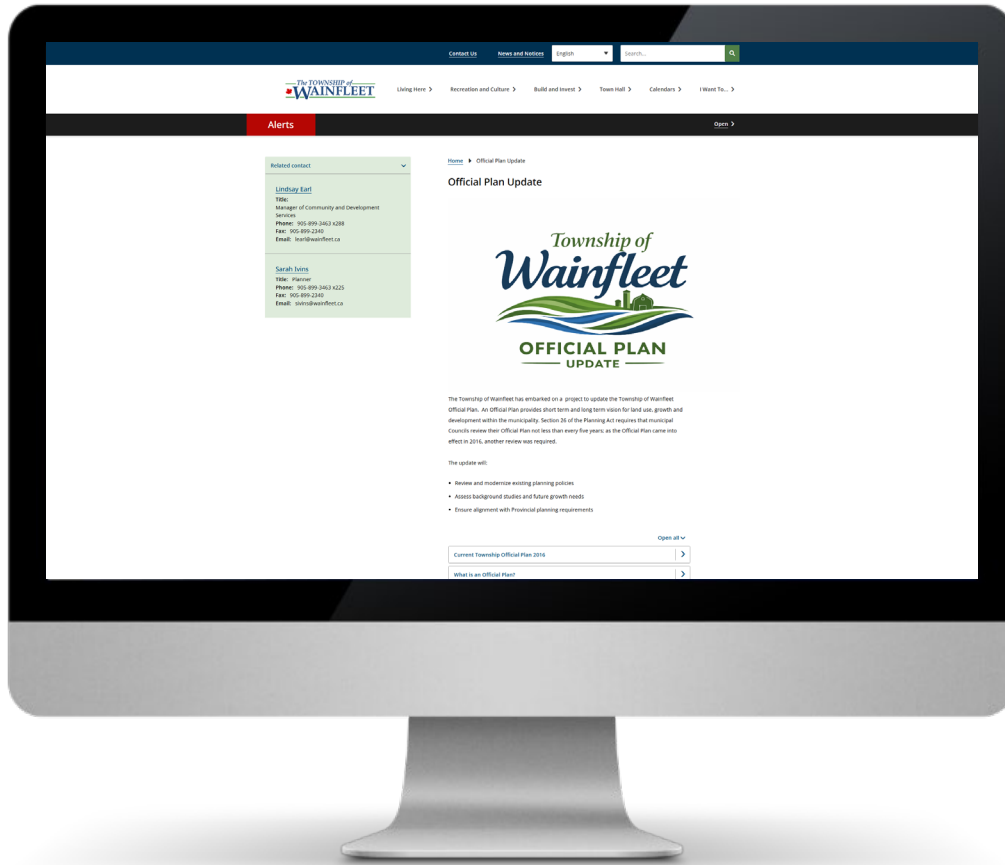
- As part of the Official Plan update, GSP will review and update several key areas, including:
 - **Approval Processes**
Clarifying how Official Plans and Official Plan Amendments are approved, including what is approved by the Township and what requires Ministry approval.
 - **Secondary Plan Policies**
Establishing policies that enable the Township to prepare and use Secondary Plans for specific areas.
 - **Minor By-laws & Delegated Authority**
Reviewing opportunities for Council to delegate certain routine planning decisions to staff for efficiency.
 - **Development Permit / Community Planning Permit Systems**
Exploring whether these streamlined planning tools are appropriate for Wainfleet.
 - **Site Plan Control**
Updating policies that guide how development proposals are reviewed through the Site Plan process.
 - **Pre-Consultation & Complete Applications**
Modernizing requirements for pre-consultation meetings and what constitutes a complete planning application, helping ensure clarity for applicants and the community.

Help us Shape the New Official Plan!

- Creating a clear and effective Official Plan depends on **strong input from residents and community interest holders.**
- Over the coming months, we will host **two (2) public drop-in sessions** where you can speak with the GSP team and Township staff, ask questions, and share your ideas.
- Please visit the **project website** for updates on:
 - Dates and locations for the drop-in sessions
 - Upcoming Council meetings
 - Drafts of the new **Official Plan** and **Maps** as they become available
- You can also share your thoughts anytime by sending written comments:
 - **Email:** officialplan@wainfleet.ca
 - **Mail / Drop-off:** Township Hall, 31940 ON-3, Wainfleet, ON L0S 1V0



Stay Informed and Participate!



Project Website

www.wainfleet.ca/officialplanupdate

Township Contact

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