

## PART 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. THE COMMUNITY VISION

The vision for Lincoln is to be a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture**; an inclusive community that values diversity, partnerships, entrepreneurial spirit and works collectively to evolve as a vibrant and successful Greenbelt community where rural and urban land uses are managed to foster agriculturally related economic activity, protect resources for future generations and ensure a high quality of life for its residents.

In implementing this vision over the planning period to 2031, Lincoln will continue to be a preferred settlement area in the Region. According to Regional growth projections, it is anticipated that the population of the Town will increase by about 4,783 people over the 20 year period. The majority of this growth will be directed to the three larger urban settlements of Beamsville, Vineland and Prudhommes. As a Greenbelt community new residents will be accommodated primarily within firm urban boundaries in existing planned neighbourhoods and through the *development* of vacant lands.

The balance of the Town will remain an intact, protected, rural area where the top priority is agricultural *development* and related activities are a focus. Agricultural lands will be managed as a key feature of the *natural heritage system*. As a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture** the Town recognizes respects and values the considerable ecological goods and services provided for the broader community by best farming practises. Orchards, vineyards, fields and woodlots provide important contributions to healthy hydrological function, air quality and *wildlife habitat*.

In articulating a vision, the Town consulted with its citizens about the qualities they value in their community. These values include a full suite of environmental goods and services incorporating specialty crop lands, the rural landscape, Lake Ontario, the Niagara Escarpment and the creeks and streams that support diverse wildlife and plant communities. Citizens value the small town *character*, diversity in choices of housing, employment and services, the vibrant culture and being part of a Regional community that has tremendous social and economic opportunity.

This Official Plan was prepared at a time when the Town, in conformity with Provincial and Regional policy, was planning for its future as a prosperous and sustainable Greenbelt community. The Town urban boundaries were fixed and rather than responding to urban growth pressures, the Town is in a position to manage planned growth and implement policies to realize a comprehensive vision for the future.

The Town is located in the centre of Niagara Region, bounded by Lake Ontario and sheltered by the Niagara Escarpment has a rich agricultural heritage. The benevolent climate supports a broad agricultural community that includes a unique cluster of wineries, tender fruit orchards and a burgeoning greenhouse and landscaping sector. Lincoln is home to a significant area of specialty crop land, a scarce non-renewable Canadian resource. Because of its strong agricultural resources and diversity of production, the community is home to a cluster of agricultural service support businesses, world class educational and research facilities, value added and agriculturally

related businesses and an extensive network of food and wine related *agri-tourism* amenities. Lincoln is a focus for agri-businesses.

All of these circumstances presented an exciting opportunity for the Town to confirm its vision, long articulated in municipal policy and confirmed in consultations with residents and stakeholders, to be a “**Centre of Excellence for Agriculture**”. Building on its base of protected rural lands that are part of an inclusive *natural heritage system*, the future will focus on building a strong agri-food industry and vibrant, permanent small towns.

## 1.2. SUSTAINABILITY

A sustainable community balances social well-being, resource protection, economic opportunities and environmental responsibility to meet the needs of the present without compromising the quality of life for future generations. In Lincoln, sustainability is linked to the vision of being a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture** where the outstanding agricultural land base is the foundation for a vibrant and progressive local economy.

Decisions relating to land use, public works and capital expenditures shall be made with consideration for this vision and for the long-term well-being of the community, the economy and the environment. Scarce resources, including *prime agricultural lands* shall be protected for the future and all policies on rural lands will be interpreted with regard for their impact on agricultural operations and viability.

The goal of being a sustainable community is achieved by:

- (a) Protection of agricultural lands and areas;
- (b) Supporting the production of *locally grown* foods;
- (c) Promoting “buy-local” initiatives;
- (d) Promoting agricultural diversification and innovation;
- (e) Conservation of agricultural and natural landscapes;
- (f) Carefully managing natural resources including agricultural lands and soil;
- (g) Providing choices and opportunities for housing, employment, transportation, social, recreational and cultural amenities;
- (h) Building on the agricultural resources within the Town to generate economic prosperity;
- (i) Promoting environmental stewardship and sustaining a healthy natural environment;
- (j) Making efficient use of its *infrastructure* by focusing on a compact, mixed-use, walkable, bikeable and connected community;
- (k) Promoting a healthy cohesive community and quality of life;

- (l) Having vibrant downtowns and attractive public spaces;
- (m) Promoting urban design guidelines to ensure a high quality of building and site design;
- (n) Enhancing the existing sense of place and small town *character*;
- (o) Providing access and opportunity to the decision making-process;
- (p) Encouraging design practises that address the accessibility needs of residents with disabilities;
- (q) Reviewing opportunities for reducing the impact of climate change and improving air quality;
- (r) Identifying specific opportunities for promoting energy conservation and reducing waste; and
- (s) Promoting the *adaptive re-use* of existing buildings and structures and the *redevelopment of brownfields and greyfields*.

### **1.3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **1.3.1 Agriculture**

##### **1.3.1.1. Goal**

It is the goal of this Plan to promote Lincoln as a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture**. All policies shall be considered in reference to their contribution to the protection of agricultural land and support of successful agricultural businesses.

##### **1.3.1.2. Objectives**

To protect *Specialty Agricultural areas, prime agricultural areas and prime agricultural land*.

- (a) To ensure *agricultural uses* remain the dominant use in the Agricultural Area.
- (b) To protect the *right to farm*.
- (c) To support a full range of innovative and diverse agricultural operations.
- (d) To support all types, sizes and intensities of *agricultural uses* so they can operate at their full potential.
- (e) To recognize the ability of lands in the Town to produce crops not generally able to be produced elsewhere and to encourage production of those crops.

- (f) To respect the contribution agricultural lands make as an essential working landscape that is within and part of the Town *natural heritage system*.
- (g) To reduce or where possible eliminate, the regulatory requirements associated with *normal farm practices*.
- (h) To protect *agricultural uses* from incompatible activities and land uses that limit agricultural productivity or efficiency.
- (i) To permit a full range of *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses*.
- (j) To support a full range of *agri-tourism use* that showcases the sector while not inhibiting the ability to farm.
- (k) To permit on farm *adaptive re-use*.
- (l) To permit sustainable agricultural related business in the rural area on lands not suited to agriculture.
- (m) To support the long-term rental of land for *agricultural uses*.
- (n) To encourage a strong agricultural support service industry.
- (o) To provide rural *infrastructure* appropriate to and supportive of agriculture.
- (p) To sustain a linked agricultural system and strong rural communities.

### **1.3.2. Protection of Small Town Character**

#### **1.3.2.1. Goal**

It is a goal of this Plan to protect and enhance the small town *character* of the existing communities and neighbourhoods while promoting the Town position as a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture**.

#### **1.3.2.2. Objectives**

- (a) To maintain and enhance the *Settlement areas* as distinct, diverse, liveable, safe, accessible and attractive communities.
- (b) To respect the *character* of existing *development* and ensure that all applications for *development* are physically compatible with the *character* of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- (c) To accommodate new and innovative housing types within and in proximity to the Central Business Districts.
- (d) To encourage local employment so residents can work in close proximity to home.

- (e) To improve the economic health of the Central Business Districts by encouraging *redevelopment* and a broad mix of compatible uses.
- (f) To enhance the *character* and stability of existing and well-established residential neighbourhoods by ensuring that *development* and *redevelopment* is compatible with the scale and density of existing *development*.
- (g) To protect stable residential neighbourhoods by directing higher density *development* to the Central Business Districts and *intensification* areas within the *Built-up Area*.
- (h) To encourage the *development* of neighbourhoods which support active transportation and provide a range and mix of housing types and densities, community facilities, neighbourhood commercial centres and public open spaces.
- (i) To foster a sense of civic identity through a high standard of urban design in public and private *development*.
- (j) To recognize the contribution surrounding rural areas make to communities by providing green landscapes and foster linkages between urban and rural communities.

### 1.3.3. The Economy

#### 1.3.3.1. Goal

It is a goal of this Plan to support diverse and innovative economic activities with an emphasis on those related to food, farming and tourism which will create jobs and sustain a healthy community.

#### 1.3.3.2. Objectives

- (a) To promote Lincoln as a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture** and attract a full range of business linked to or supportive of food and farming and all related activities.
- (b) To endorse the **Golden Horseshoe Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy Food & Farming: An Action Plan 2021** and through an economic development strategy implement those actions in that plan that will support the emergence of Lincoln as a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture** within the larger Golden Horseshoe food and farming cluster.
- (c) To maintain a competitive and positive “open for business” climate.
- (d) To foster partnerships and facilitate cooperation among small businesses.

- (e) To build on agriculturally related educational resources to attract businesses and generate employment.
- (f) To develop a “made in Lincoln” economic development strategy with an emphasis on the agri-food industry.
- (g) To build on tourism initiatives through formation of partnerships with existing associations.
- (h) To facilitate the provision of a full range of goods and services to meet the needs of residents and visitors.
- (i) To support a comprehensive transportation *infrastructure* that supports businesses, residents and tourists.
- (j) To support active transportation such as walking and biking as a means to attract investment in the community.
- (k) To encourage agri-tourism related and indirectly unrelated to agriculture, agriculture- related uses, *on-farm diversified uses*, and agricultural *value retention uses* in the agricultural area.
- (l) To actively encourage the *development* of additional employment and retail and service commercial uses in the Central Business Districts.
- (m) To encourage the *development* of home-based businesses and home industries provided the proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses.
- (n) To optimize the long-term availability and use of land and resources.

#### **1.3.4. Growth and Settlement**

##### **1.3.4.1. Goal**

It is a goal of this Plan to direct the majority of new *development* to the *Urban Areas* where full municipal water and sewer services are available.

##### **1.3.4.2. Objectives**

- (a) To direct residential *development* to areas where full municipal services and other community facilities exist.
- (b) To provide for housing that is *affordable* to the community.
- (c) To encourage diversity in housing in an effort to accommodate the broadest range of income levels.

- (d) To reinforce the function of the Central Business District areas as the primary business, entertainment and commercial focal points of the community.
- (e) To encourage *intensification* and *redevelopment* within the Urban Area specifically within and in proximity to the Central Business Districts.

### **1.3.5. Natural Resources**

#### **1.3.5.1. Goal**

It is a goal of this Plan to ensure that natural resources are protected and used in a manner that has minimal impacts on the environment and *character* of the Town. Agricultural lands are considered an integral component of the Town natural resources.

#### **1.3.5.2. Objectives**

- (a) To preserve the *Specialty Agricultural* lands and ensure that production on them is optimized using best management practices.
- (b) To protect areas demonstrating high capability for agricultural production and to develop land use policies that do not allow for the further fragmentation of farmland nor its conversion to non-agricultural and/or incompatible land uses.
- (c) To protect areas exhibiting high potential for aggregate extraction from incompatible land uses to ensure the potential future extraction of such deposits.
- (d) To work with the aggregate industry and encourage operational extractive practices that are compatible with and respectful of the greater community and natural features and functions.

### **1.3.6. Cultural Heritage**

#### **1.3.6.1. Goal**

It is the goal of this Plan to identify, conserve and promote enhancement of *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes* in the Town.

#### **1.3.6.2. Objectives**

- (a) To prepare an inventory of the Town *built heritage* and *cultural heritage landscapes*.
- (b) To promote protection and enhancement of the *character* of the Town by supporting the on-going maintenance and use of *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes*.

- (c) To encourage the owners of *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes* to retain, maintain and use those resources for the benefit of future generations.
- (d) To support use of *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes* as a tool to attract additional economic development, increase tourism opportunities and enhance the *character* and vitality of neighbourhoods and districts.
- (e) To ensure that the nature and location of *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* are known and considered before land use decisions are made.
- (f) To recognize rural and agricultural landscapes as part of the Town's *cultural heritage landscapes*.

### **1.3.7. The Natural Environment**

#### **1.3.7.1. Goal**

It is a goal of this Plan to maintain, restore and where possible, enhance a healthy, bio diverse, inclusive natural environment. The natural environment includes agricultural lands.

#### **1.3.7.2. Objectives**

- (a) To recognize that the natural environment is broadly based system incorporating natural and working landscapes.
- (b) To respect the role agricultural lands have as an essential component of the *natural heritage system* preserving open spaces, providing linkages and preserving natural features.
- (c) To make planning decisions that maintains the health and integrity of the natural environment and the broader landscape.
- (d) To make planning decisions that mitigates negative, long-term and cumulative impacts on the natural environment and agricultural viability.
- (e) To manage land uses to avoid *negative impacts* on water quality and on the hydrological and hydrogeological characteristics of *watercourses*, aquifers and *wetlands*.
- (f) To promote efficient and effective use of water so there is sufficient supply for agricultural and urban uses.
- (g) To support continuous improvement in the delivery of farm derived ecological goods and services while growing the productivity and quality of farm products.



- (h) To maintain current trail systems, including the Bruce Trail.
- (i) To respect the natural attributes of the Niagara Escarpment and promote compatible land uses such as agriculture.
- (j) To encourage the establishment of an open space system that links agricultural, environmental and recreational resources.
- (k) To foster and promote cooperation among public agencies, private landowners and community groups.
- (l) To support and encourage environmental stewardship and restoration.

#### **1.4. SETTLEMENT AREA STRATEGY**

According to Regional growth studies, the Town is projected to accommodate approximately 4,783 new residents during the life of this Plan. This level of growth will precipitate the need for approximately 2,110 new dwelling units.

##### **1.4.1. Population Forecast**

During the 25 years between 1986 and 2011 the population of the Town increased by about 8,100 people or at an annual rate of 1.4%. The growth management policies of this Plan are premised on a Regional population forecast that has allocated a 20-year population growth of 4,783 people, which represents an annual growth rate of approximately 1.0%. The 20-year population projection is shown below.

Forecast Period	Total Population
2011	23,800
2016	25,300
2021	26,400
2026	27,600
2031	28,583

##### **1.4.2. Housing Forecast**

The growth management policies of this Plan are premised on a Regional forecast that has allocated a 20-year housing growth of 2,110 units as shown in the summary below.

Forecast Period	Total Units
2011	8,190
2016	8,780
2021	9,340
2026	9,840
2031	10,300

According to Regional growth allocations, approximately 53% of this housing growth will be lower density dwelling types, whereas approximately 47% of this growth will be comprised of medium and higher density unit types.

### 1.4.3. Employment Forecast

Regional growth allocations project future employment growth of approximately 980 new jobs over the next 20 years as shown in the summary below.

Forecast Period	Employment/Jobs
2011	10,690
2016	10,910
2021	11,130
2026	11,390
2031	11,670

According to Regional projections, it is anticipated that over half of the new employment positions will be accommodated in population related jobs such as commercial and retail services, while about 25% of new positions are projected to be jobs that require employment land, such as manufacturing and production. The Regional projections also anticipate significant growth in home occupations and limited growth in the primary and industrial sectors.

A significant percentage of the Lincoln workforce is employed in the agricultural sector and unlike the manufacturing workforce, the agricultural workforce experienced considerable growth between 2001 and 2012.

Sector	2001		2012		Increase in Jobs
	Number of Jobs	% of Work Force	Number of Jobs	% of Work Force	
Agriculture	1249	15%	1523	18%	274
Manufacturing	1513	18%	1524	18%	11

### 1.4.4. Land Supply

According to the Greenbelt Plan 2005, the Town urban boundaries are set. The supply of residential lands shall comprise a mix of infilling and *intensification* within the *Built-up Area* and *development* within Greenfield lands. No new Urban or Rural *Settlement Areas* are permitted.

## 1.5. TOWN STRUCTURE AND LAND USE

As a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture**, the Town is comprised of rural lands, the majority of which are under agricultural production, surrounding small towns with fixed urban boundaries.

This Plan intends to maintain and in some cases strengthen these characteristics by employing a structure comprised of the following categories of land use:

- (a) The *Agricultural Area* comprises land use designations that apply to lands outside of the *Urban Area* and includes lands with agricultural potential, resource potential, *rural settlement* areas as well as natural heritage features and natural hazard lands. An overlay approach is used to designate a Natural Environment Area that includes agricultural lands.
- (b) The *Urban Area* comprises land use designations that apply to the settlements of Beamsville, Vineland, Vineland East, Prudhommes, Jordan, Jordan Station and Campden.

The land use designations in each category are intended to implement the Vision, Goals and Strategic Objectives of this Plan.

### **1.5.1. Agricultural Area**

The *Agricultural Area* designations represent categories of land use outside of the primary *settlement areas*. The Agricultural Area designations are:

- (a) Prime Agricultural;
- (b) *Specialty Agricultural*;
- (c) Rural Settlement;
- (d) Mineral Aggregate Resource Area;
- (e) Natural Environment;
- (f) Niagara Escarpment Plan Area; and.
- (g) Natural Hazards.

### **1.5.2. Urban Area**

The Urban Area designations represent categories of land use within full service *settlement areas* which will be the focus for urban *development*. The land use designations within the *Urban Area* are listed below:

- (a) Residential;
- (b) Mixed Use;
- (c) Central Business District;
- (d) General Commercial;

- (e) Industrial;
- (f) Parks and Open Space;
- (g) Natural Environment Area;
- (h) Niagara Escarpment Plan Area; and
- (i) Natural Hazards.

## **1.6. CONCEPTS GUIDING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE URBAN AREAS**

This Plan was prepared at a time when the Province of Ontario and the Region took a strong leadership role in not only directing more growth to existing *settlement areas* but also in requiring that the *development* and utilization of urban areas occur in a more sustainable and efficient manner.

The land use designations listed in Section 1.5, which collectively comprise the Town Structure, are subject to several concepts which have been articulated in Provincial and Regional policy. These concepts are described below and represent primary building blocks, not only of this Plan, but of an overall Provincial strategy aimed at maximizing the use of urban land with access to full municipal services.

### **1.6.1. Urban Area Boundaries**

The urban settlements in this Plan are delineated with an *Urban Area Boundary* in accordance with the Regional Official Plan. The purpose of the *Urban Area Boundary* is to spatially identify the limit of urban *development* for these settlements.

### **1.6.2. The Built-Up Area**

The *Built-up Area* includes all lands within the Urban Boundaries of Prudhommes, Vineland, Vineland East, Jordan, Jordan Station and Campden, as well as those lands within the *Urban Area Boundaries* of Beamsville and Vineland delineated by the Province of Ontario in accordance with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The *Built-up Area* is important for measuring and monitoring *intensification* rates, as all growth which occurs within the *Built-up Area* is considered to be *intensification*.

### **1.6.3. Greenfield Areas**

*Greenfield Areas* are undeveloped areas designated for *development* which are located within the Urban Boundaries of Beamsville and Vineland but outside of the *Built-up Area*. In the policies and schedules to this Plan, the *Greenfield Areas* are referred to as a *Greenfield Area* and all lands not subject to the Greenfield Area are located within the *Built-up Area*. In accordance with Provincial and Regional policy, all future *development* occurring within the *Greenfield Area* shall achieve a minimum *gross density* of 50 people

and jobs per hectare. While it is understood that not every single site will be able to achieve the *density target*, the Town will ensure that new *Greenfield Areas* are planned in a way which supports the achievement of the overall target. The Town will monitor *development* within its *Greenfield Areas* to ensure that the overall *Greenfield density target* is achieved. In order to meet this target, the Town proposes to:

- Develop denser, more compact, mixed use, *transit supportive* neighbourhoods in its *Greenfield Areas* that allow for the efficient use of land, *infrastructure* and public service facilities;
- Establish minimum residential *density targets* within the low, medium and high density residential designations in *Greenfield Areas*;
- Designate specific areas for low, medium and high density housing in *Greenfield Areas* as shown on Schedules 'C1' and 'C2';
- Establish residential density designations for potential vacant *development* sites to ensure compatibility with adjacent *development*;
- Permit and encourage the creation of secondary residential units in accordance with Section 3.1.6; and
- Monitor *Greenfield Area* densities in accordance with Section 9.18.

#### **1.6.4. Intensification**

When referenced in relation to urban land use, *intensification* means developing urban lands at a higher density than currently exists through *redevelopment*, infilling, using vacant or underutilized land or expansion of existing buildings. Provincial and Regional policies require municipalities to identify suitable lands as well as targets for *intensification* within the *Built-up area*.

*Intensification* is an appropriate means of accommodating growth since it makes better use of existing serviced land. The increase in housing units and employment created by *intensification* is also considered a good approach to maintaining and improving vibrancy in a community.

*Intensification* of residential and *employment areas* will be encouraged since it offers opportunities for economic development and takes advantage of already serviced but underutilized land and helps to improve the vibrancy of existing areas. *Intensification* is encouraged within the *Built-up Area*; however strategic locations for *intensification* should be focussed within the Central Business District Areas and *Intensification Corridors* within the Town.

Regional planning policy has allocated a future *intensification* target for the Town of 40% within the *Built-up area* which equates to approximately 900 new units. This target is to be accommodated between 2015 and 2031. Background studies prepared for this Plan have confirmed that the Town can meet or exceed this target. To this end, this Plan has identified potential *intensification* areas and has articulated policies that provide guidance and direction with respect to *intensification*, specifically Section 3.1.13.

### 1.6.5. Intensification Corridors

*Intensification corridors* are areas along major roads that have the potential to provide a focus for higher-density and mixed use *development*. In the Town the areas identified as *intensification corridors* are the Central Business Districts and the Ontario Street Commercial Area as shown on Schedule 'A2' and Schedule 'A3'. This Plan contains urban design guidelines specifically for these areas not only in the interest of better utilizing land and buildings but to do so in a way that creates a high quality urban environment that provides diversity in housing and commerce.

### 1.6.6. Urban Area Expansion

Urban boundary expansion is not an option in this Greenbelt community since all of the *Urban Area Boundaries* are surrounded by lands designated as Protected Countryside in the Greenbelt Plan 2005.

### 1.6.7. Agricultural System

The rural area outside of the urban boundaries comprises a continuous and permanent land base intended to support long-term agricultural production and associated economic activity. This area comprised of extremely productive *Specialty Agricultural* and *Prime Agricultural* land, is the permanent core feature of a **Centre of Excellence for Agriculture**.