
Participant Questionnaire

City of Niagara Falls
Growth Management Strategy - Open House



May 5, 2008

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Background

Meridian Planning Consultants and urbanMetrics were retained by the City of Niagara Falls in January 2007 to undertake a Growth Management Strategy (GMS) for the City of Niagara Falls. The intention of the Growth Management Strategy is to provide the City with a recommended strategy for growth in the context of the current municipal, Regional and Provincial legislative requirements. Specifically, the strategy will address how the City can best respond to its growth requirements in relation to the existing physical and planning context and legislative requirements.

The GMS is intended to utilize many of the findings from the recently completed *Comprehensive Review - Residential and Employment Land Needs Analysis* (2007) by urbanMetrics, as well as the data from the January 2008 Context Report and other sources, to develop various growth strategy options for further review, analysis and consideration.

The GMS is also intended to provide input into the Region of Niagara's Growth Management Study.

This questionnaire is designed to obtain your opinions and ideas relating to the future growth options for the City of Niagara Falls. It poses a number of questions in relation to the past and current growth and development in the City,

and future growth options and impacts. The accompanying fact sheet should help you to understand some of the terms used in the questionnaire. Your responses will help shape the future study directions and recommendations.

If you feel you are unsure of a question or do not have a response, please indicate “no response” after the question.

We thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this exercise.

Part I - Historical Growth and Development

1. As the City of Niagara Falls population continues to grow, what would you say will be the top three challenges/issues the City will face associated with growth? Please rank the top three by placing a number beside the challenge/issue (1 being the top challenge/issue)

Traffic congestion ____

Lack of services due to over demand ____

Overcrowding of schools and hospitals/health facilities ____

Decline in infrastructure (roads, bridges, sewers, water mains) _____

Lack of housing choice _____

Loss of agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas ____

Loss of neighbourhood character _____

Higher taxes _____

2. The majority of new housing units developed in the City in the last ten years have been low density, residential housing primarily in the form of single detached dwellings. Is this form of development appropriate for the future?

If no, what other forms of housing do you believe the City needs to encourage?

3. There has been a considerable shift in the employment base in the City since 1970 with significant growth in the tourism sector. Is this an area the City should continue to focus on in relation to employment growth?

Are there other employment sectors where growth should be promoted?

4. Do you feel Niagara's transit system is sufficient to handle more growth?

5. Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means 'strongly disagree' and 7 means 'strongly agree,' please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements...
 - a. I'm confident that Niagara Falls can successfully manage its future growth _____

 - b. The impact of future growth in the City will be generally positive _____

 - c. As Niagara Falls population continues to grow, it will be important to maintain the essential character of the community _____

Part II - Growth Plan Requirements

The Province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe requires that by 2015 a minimum of 40% of all residential development occurring annually within each upper- and single-tier municipality (not identified as urban growth centres) will be within the built-up area (the area where people currently live). This means that 40% of Niagara Region's residential development as a whole will be required to occur within the built-up areas of the urban municipalities.

6. Rate the following forms of intensification in terms of how likely you feel they will occur in the future (1 being the most likely form to occur and 7 being the least likely)

Infill (development on vacant sites between existing developments) _____

Redevelopment (redevelopment of older buildings and sites) _____

Intensification (additions to existing buildings, including second dwelling units in existing singles and semi's)

7. What forms of intensification do you feel should be developed in the future?

Infill (development on vacant sites between existing developments) _____

Redevelopment (redevelopment of older buildings and sites) _____

Intensification (additions to existing buildings) _____

8. Using a scale from one to seven, where one means 'strongly disagree' and seven means 'strongly agree,' to what extent do you agree or disagree with residential intensification being located in each of the following general areas:

- a. Downtown Niagara Falls (around City Hall) _____
- b. Drummondville (Main & Ferry) _____
- c. Old/Abandoned industrial or commercial sites _____
- d. At major intersections around the City _____
- e. Along arterial roads, that is the major North-South and East-West built up corridors _____
- f. On vacant lands in existing neighbourhoods _____

9. Are there areas of the City where new growth should not occur? (areas that should be protected)

The Growth Plan specifies that the designated greenfield area of each upper- or single-tier municipality will be planned to achieve a minimum density target that is not less than 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare. The average residential density in the City of Niagara Falls has been relatively low in the past decade. (an example of what this density looks like is included in the background sheet)

10. Do you feel the density of 50 residents and jobs per hectare can be achieved in the City?

11. Do you feel the City should consider increased levels of density in the remaining new Greenfields (new development areas outside the built-up area)?

Part III - Growth Options and Issues

As a result of the work completed to date through the Growth Management Strategy the following growth options have been developed.

Intensified Growth - this approach would be focused on maximizing intensification opportunities which would represent a greater percentage of intensification than required by the Growth Plan to be focused around existing nodes and corridors, the Downtown and other CIP areas.

Balanced Growth - this approach would focus on growth in and around existing developed areas with a balance between greenfield development and intensification.

Greenfield Smart Growth - this approach would focus on achieving growth in greenfield areas at a higher density with the possible need to expand the urban boundary, but still achieving the required 40% intensification target.

12. How do you feel the urban systems will be impacted by growth? 1 being highly impacted and 7 being least impacted

Transportation systems _____

Water capacity _____

Sanitary Sewage capacity _____

Waste Management _____

Energy _____

13. Do you feel intensification should be the main focus for new growth?

What percentage of new growth do you feel should be accommodated in the existing built up areas?

14. Do you feel new growth should be directed to areas outside of existing built up areas?

What percentage of new growth do you feel should be developed outside the built up areas?

15. Which of the options for growth do you feel represents the option with the most impacts to the urban systems?
(transportation network, water, wastewater, energy and waste management)

16. Which option do you feel will allow the City to provide the broadest range of new housing choices?

17. How many years have you lived or worked in Niagara Falls?

Lived _____

Worked _____