


City of Port Colborne Growth Analysis

Presentation to Council

August 15, 2023

Agenda

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- 1.0 Project Overview
 - 2.0 Key Findings
 - 3.0 Growth Management Implications
 - 4.0 Recommendations
 - 5.0 Next Steps



1.0

Project Overview

Project Purpose



- Historically, City has not played a major role in accommodating growth
- Recent period has shown a shift away from long-term trends
- Uptick in population, developer interest and economic development
- Concern that Regional allocations of growth are understated
- Dillon retained to undertake an analysis of growth capacity and provide guidance on implementing the results

Regional and Local Policy Context

- **Niagara Regional Official Plan, 2022** – “The Region, in consultation with Local Area Municipalities, will monitor and review the distribution of growth forecasts between municipalities in Table 2-1 every five years and revise the allocations, if necessary, through a municipal comprehensive review.” (*Section 2.1.1.7 Regional Growth Forecasts*)
- **City of Port Colborne Official Plan, 2020** – “...A municipal comprehensive review in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Niagara Region Policy Plan, is required to facilitate expansions to the urban boundary.” (*Section 3.1.1.3 Urban Boundary Expansions*)

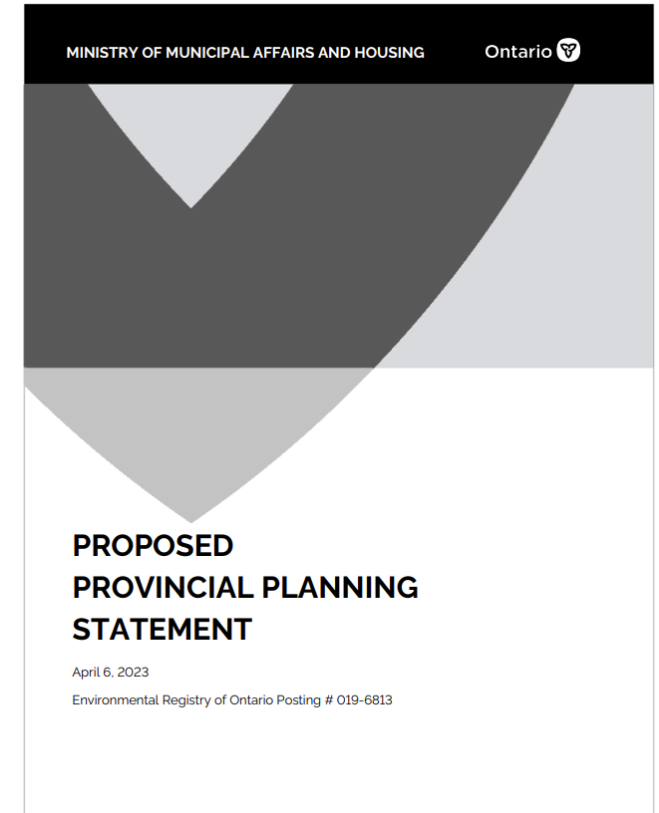
Niagara Region Official Plan Growth Forecasts to 2051
(Adapted from Table 2-1 in Niagara Official Plan, 2022 and supporting documentation)

Municipality	Population	Employment	Housing Units
Niagara Region	694,000	272,000	298,645
Port Colborne	23,230 (3.3% of regional forecast)	7,550 (2.8% of regional forecast)	10,500 (3.5% of regional forecast)



Evolving Provincial Planning Policy Context

- New PPS represents **fundamental changes** in how growth planning is carried out in Ontario
- Municipalities required to have enough land designated **for at least 25 years** (change from up to 25 years)
- Planning can extend beyond this horizon for infrastructure, employment areas and strategic growth areas - focus on specific **intensification targets has been removed**
- Concept of **Municipal Comprehensive Reviews not carried forward**: tests for settlement area expansions not as stringent and can be considered at any time
- Implications for growth management and long-range planning may need to be **revisited as part of OP update**



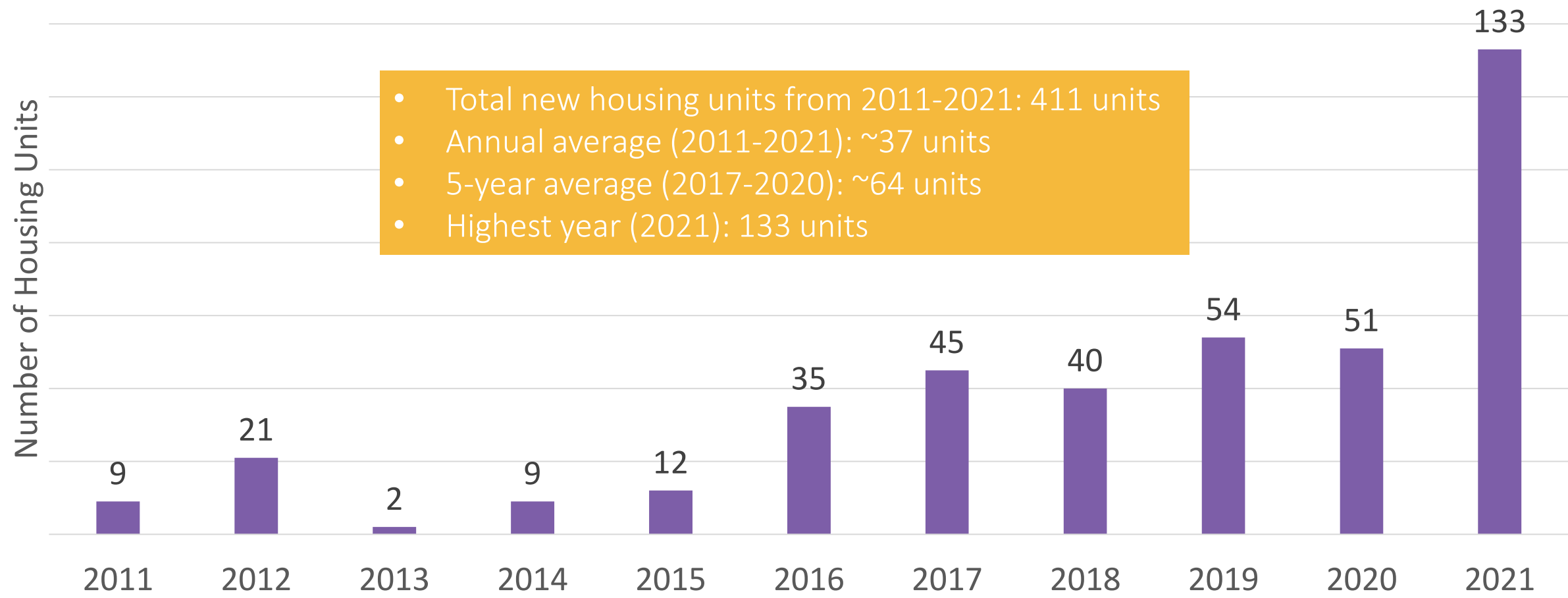


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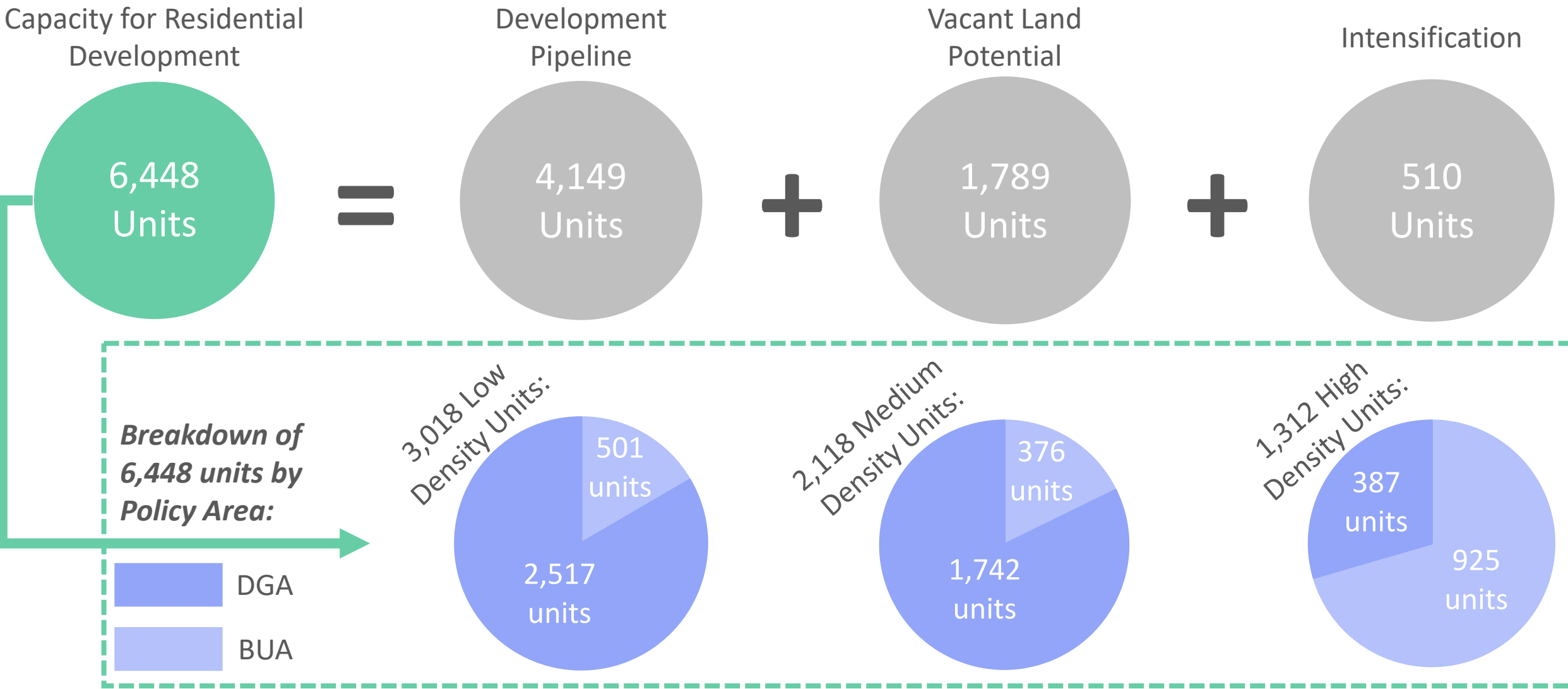
Project Findings

Historic Residential Demand

Port Colborne Residential Permit Information: New Housing Units from 2011 to 2021



Capacity for Residential Growth – Pipeline and Additional Unit Potential



Employment Growth: Changes to the Economic Context

- Total employment appears to have outperformed expectations, 2021 Census employment estimated to be somewhat higher than regional allocations (before 2021 Census was released)
- Impact from COVID Pandemic apparent in shift to working from home
- Overall decline in “regular place of work employment” over the 2016 to 2021 period

Category	2016	Share	2021	Share	Shift
Total Place of Work (Commuting Flows)	4,835	84%	4,410	67%	-17%
Work at Home (Census, Labour Force)	310	5%	1,105	17%	11%
No Fixed Place (Census, Labour Force)	615	11%	1,080	16%	6%
TOTAL	5,750	100%	6,595	100%	0 %

Understanding Employment Growth: Updated Employment Forecast

Updated Forecast of Total Employment by Major Type for the City of Port Colborne, 2021-2051

Employment Type	2021	2051	Growth
Major Office Employment	0		
Population-related Employment	3,470	6,141	2,671
Employment Land Employment	2,209	4,260	2,051
Rural Employment	915	1,360	445
Total	6,594	11,761	5,166

Applying the 2021 Activity rate of ~32% to the estimated built-out population of 36,800 results in a total 2051 employment of approximately 11,760



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Growth Management Implications

Growth Management Implications: Residential Growth



- Potential for the City to **outpace the expectations for growth** anticipated by the Region in the short- to medium-term
- City will likely **exceed the Region's population and housing forecast** for 2051
- Translates into a **different pace of growth** over the next decade, as compared to the City's historic growth patterns
- Changing landscape expected to the 2051 planning horizon
 - Will see a broad mix of built forms, higher densities, and continued intensification
 - Relative affordability and housing cost “spillovers” from central GTA communities a key consideration
- Important to ensure the community is well-positioned to take advantage of a **growth scenario that could be higher** than current Regional allocations

Growth Management Implications: Employment Growth

- City has **already achieved forecasted 2036 employment of 6,590** (based on 2021 Census), as set out in the initial Regional distribution
- Anticipated **growth across all of the major employment sectors**, with the exception of major offices – however rise of ‘hybrid’ work model bodes well for mixed-use development
- **More rapid population growth anticipated to drive more population-related employment** (retail, institutional, work-at-home jobs, etc.)
- **Growth in marine-related jobs** likely to arise from the planned federal investment in canal-related infrastructure
 - Potential **knock-on effects on retail activity** re: cruise-ship businesses and supporting marine-related uses (i.e., distribution and logistics)
- **Providing a suitable and appropriate supply of employment lands** to accommodate new business investment is key





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Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

Define and implement the City's vision for growth.

- Implement Niagara Region OP's minimum population allocations, density targets and intensification targets in the Port Colborne OP
- Assign “aspirational targets” for long-term growth management strategy

Recommendation 2:

Establish a robust urban hierarchy that identifies priority areas for growth and an intensification strategy through the OP Review Process.

- Precisely delineate priority growth areas (including nodes and corridors)
- Support the City's vision and principles for growth
- Provide the municipality with focus for infrastructure and community facilities investment,
- Communicate the structure, priority areas, and series of policies for growth.

Recommendation 3:

Identify policy opportunities to diversify the City's housing stock.

- Add/modify policies in the OP to:
 - support the development of affordable housing;
 - implement targets for new affordable units and thresholds for affordability;
 - introduce housing mix targets for new Greenfield developments;
 - introduce targets for redevelopment within intensification areas; and
 - support additional residential units to conform with the most recent changes to the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990*
- Broaden the range of permitted uses in residential land use categories to maximize flexibility

Recommendation 4:

Develop a framework for assessing compatibility of redevelopment and intensification at the periphery of identified Intensification Areas, Nodes, and Corridors, and other priority areas for growth.

- Help to manage neighbourhood change in a context-sensitive and appropriate manner
- Balance the need to preserve locally significant cultural, built, and natural heritage assets while allowing for:
 - Appropriate neighbourhood change; and
 - compatibility impacts of adjacent or nearby intensification to be mitigated

Recommendation 5:

Align the employment lands planning framework with the economic development strategy.

Be “investment-ready”:

- Support a suitable and appropriate supply of employment lands to accommodate new business investment
- Provide an appropriate range and mix of industrial parcel sizes and configurations for a variety of employment uses
- Ensure that connections to utilities and municipal servicing are in place
- Develop a short- and long-term phasing strategy to provide the necessary infrastructure to facilitate growth
- Prepare a “shovel-ready” database to support economic development through a user-friendly dataset that categorizes the employment land status

Recommendation 6:

Build staff capacity.

- Adequately respond to development pressures
- Juggle timely responses to incoming development applications
- Prepare important policy direction through the City's New OP, Secondary Plans, and other strategic initiatives

Recommendation 7: Monitor progress.

Refine the development tracking database to allow for more consistent monitoring and reporting among departments and to the Region.

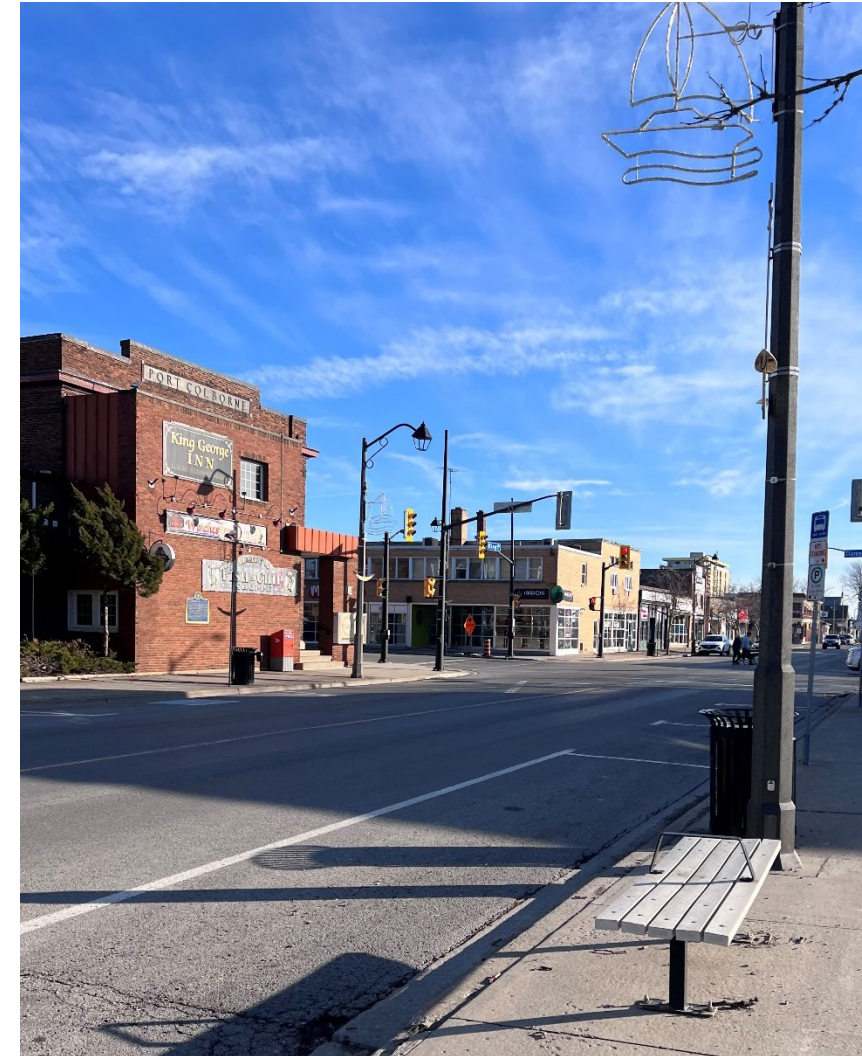


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Next Steps

Next Steps

- Initiate the Official Plan Review Process to prepare the New Official Plan for the City of Port Colborne
- New Official Plan to take direction from 2023 PPS once finalized in the Fall
- Recommending to start with a process of engagement to set the stage for what Council and the community want the City to look like in 25yrs+
- Update the City's Development Charges By-law
- Update the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan



THANK YOU!

