



A Green & Resilient City Discussion Paper

our Niagara Falls plan

A green and resilient city has complete communities within a *Natural Heritage System*. The *Natural Heritage System* provides connectivity among natural heritage features to the support natural processes required to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of native species, and ecosystems. A green and resilient city has less environmental impact and provides climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. A green and resilient city contains a significant amount of green spaces, including woodlands, wetlands, parks and trails.



Things to Think About



Protect & Enhance Natural Systems

- Clearly define the city's Natural Heritage System to ensure that policies are consistently interpreted and applied.
- Establish a policy framework that protects woodlands of all sizes.
- Include policies about trees in the City with targets for canopy coverage and policies for protecting urban trees and tree replacement.
- Consider the Niagara Region's minimum buffers for rural areas on development on lands in the urban area that have not been developed before
- Use Environmental Impact Studies to determine the buffers for redevelopment occurring beside natural heritage features.
- Invest in restoring, enhancing, and incorporating supportive ecological features into the urban landscape.



Urban Forest and Tree Preservation

- Consider protections for non-significant woodlands and other treed features to increase urban tree canopy. Establishing a tree canopy target for the City should be considered.
- Consider compensation for tree removals.



Water Resources System

- Use or imitate natural stormwater management systems as much as possible.
- Watershed and subwatershed studies should set criteria and guidance for managing surface water and ground water quantity and quality, as well as watercourses.
- Recognize unique water resources, such as karst features.
- Consider policy that recognizes the increased risks of water contamination that come with climate change.



Innovation and Resiliency

- Strategically arrange key infrastructure and transportation access options for emergency services, based on flood risk, to improve ability to intervene and recover from flooding events
- The network of green spaces (parks, trails) should be enhanced while new impervious surfaces, such as surface parking lots, should be minimized.
- Infrastructure maintenance and rehabilitation projects should be given priority based on the sites that are most vulnerable to climate change.
- Prepare design standards to adapt the built environment to climate change-related consequences.



Climate Change Mitigation & Resilience

- Combat heat islands with strategies like green roofs and increased tree cover.
- Explore opportunities to support renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Invest in studies and projects that will improve the water quality of urban runoff.
- Include management and monitoring plans for the City's water systems considering a changing climate.

