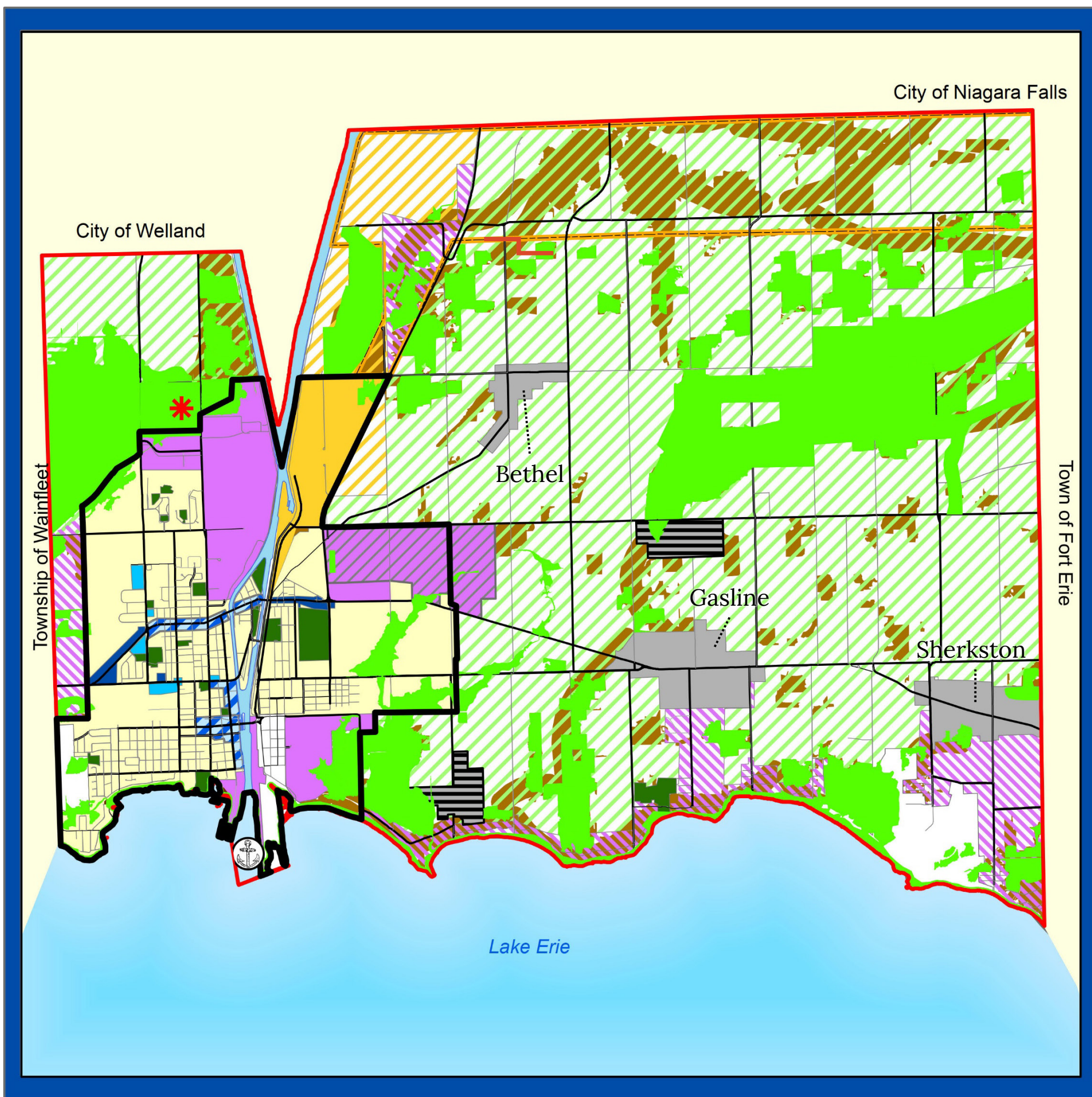


PORT COLBORNE 2056: OUR NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

Port Colborne is growing, and we need a new roadmap to guide change while building on what we love about our city. Our Official Plan is the primary tool used to guide land use and development over the long term—specifically how, where, and at what pace we will grow, from now until 2056.

CURRENT LAND USE PLAN



Our current Official Plan was approved in 2013. Since then, the Province has introduced major policy changes to address the housing crisis and streamline approvals.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?



New Rules: We must align with the new Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 and recent legislation like the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* (Bill 23).



New Authority: The Region of Niagara is no longer the approval authority for local planning. The City of Port Colborne now prepares and implements its own Official Plan, with final approval by the Province.



New Horizon: Our current Official Plan is outdated, and this initiative allows us to plan for Port Colborne's long-term future through 2056.

WHY DO WE NEED AN OFFICIAL PLAN?

Our Official Plan is an important decision-making tool that helps to:

- ✓ Guide future development of housing, industry, and commercial areas
- ✓ Protect our natural heritage systems and preserve our prime agricultural areas
- ✓ Attract future investment into the community
- ✓ Identify where and when we need to plan for future water, sewer, parks, and community facilities
- ✓ Provide direction for other important municipal tools, such as our Zoning By-law, Development Charges, and various master plans

WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

WINTER ENGAGEMENT



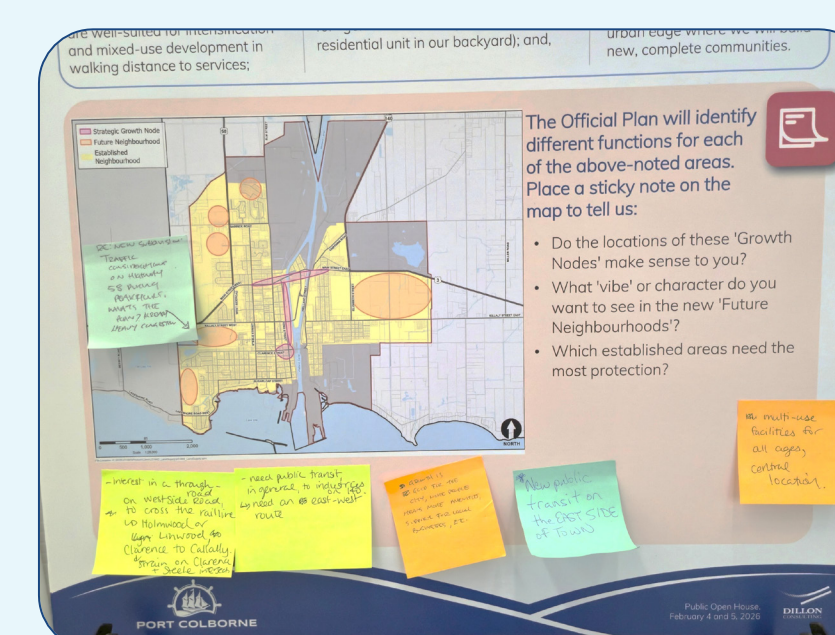
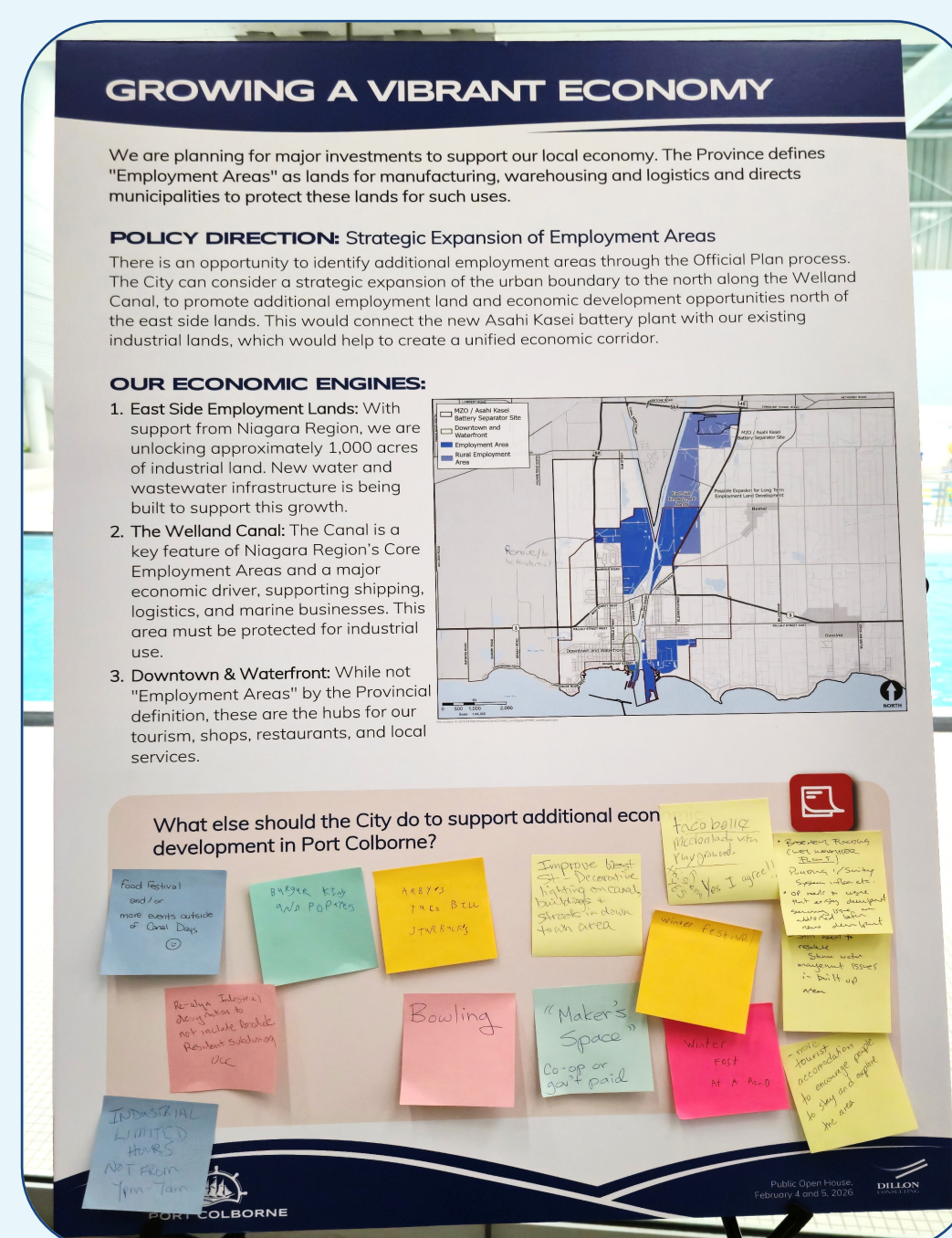
In February 2026, we hosted two public Open Houses to provide the community the chance to share feedback and ask questions about drafting the New Official Plan. As part of this round of engagement, online feedback forms were made available on the project website, and outreach with Indigenous communities took place.

WHAT WE HEARD



Community feedback focused on five core areas:

- Growth and Infrastructure Management
- Housing Options and Affordability
- Environment and Water Resources
- Agriculture
- Economic Development



Residents expressed a desire for the New Official Plan to:

- Balance the infrastructure needs of existing residents with the infrastructure needed to support growth.
- Improve movement throughout the city, particularly on Highway 58 and Killaly Street East, and improve/expand public transit.
- Meet housing needs by expanding housing choice and affordability.
- Maintain and expand public access to the waterfront, while also focusing on protecting the shoreline, source water, and natural heritage systems.
- Support local economic activities such as farm stands, events, and markets.
- Support opportunities for new local grocery stores, diverse restaurants and tourist accommodations.

OFFICIAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

There are eight (8) objectives that guide the broad direction for how Port Colborne is set to grow and change from now to 2056.



Growth Management and Complete Communities

Focus new homes, jobs, and people into our urban areas and along main streets to build vibrant neighbourhoods where residents have easy access to everyday needs.



Housing and Community Well-Being

Provide a wider mix of housing choices, including affordable and attainable homes, to improve quality of life and ensure residents have the services they need.



Economic Prosperity

Support job growth by protecting our industrial, highway, and marine lands for our industries, while transforming the Downtown and Waterfront into lively, year-round destinations for culture, community, and tourism.



Infrastructure, Mobility and Efficient Development

Direct new growth where municipal services (like water, sewer, and roads) already exist or are planned, creating a highly connected, walkable city that also supports the smooth movement of goods.



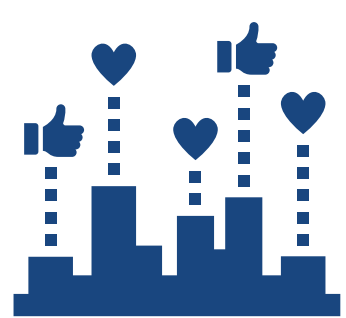
Indigenous Relationships and Engagement

Consult early and meaningfully with Indigenous rightsholders to identify areas of significance and work together on shared goals.



Natural Environment, Climate and Agriculture

Protect our local farmland and natural spaces, and encourage building practices that prepare our community for climate change and keep our environment healthy over the long term.



Cultural Heritage, Identity, and Sense of Place

Celebrate what makes Port Colborne special by designing welcoming public spaces and preserving our historic sites and heritage buildings.



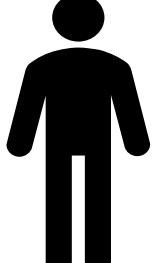
Implementation and Responsiveness

Keep the Official Plan practical and up-to-date for residents, City staff, and Council by regularly reviewing the community's evolving needs.

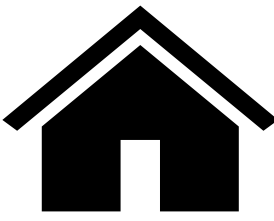
PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Port Colborne and Niagara Region are making strategic investments in new public infrastructure. Over the next 30 years, the City has the potential for significant population, housing, and employment growth.

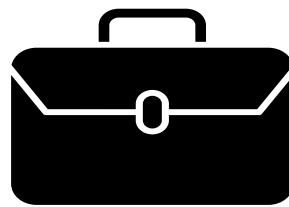
The 2056 Forecast



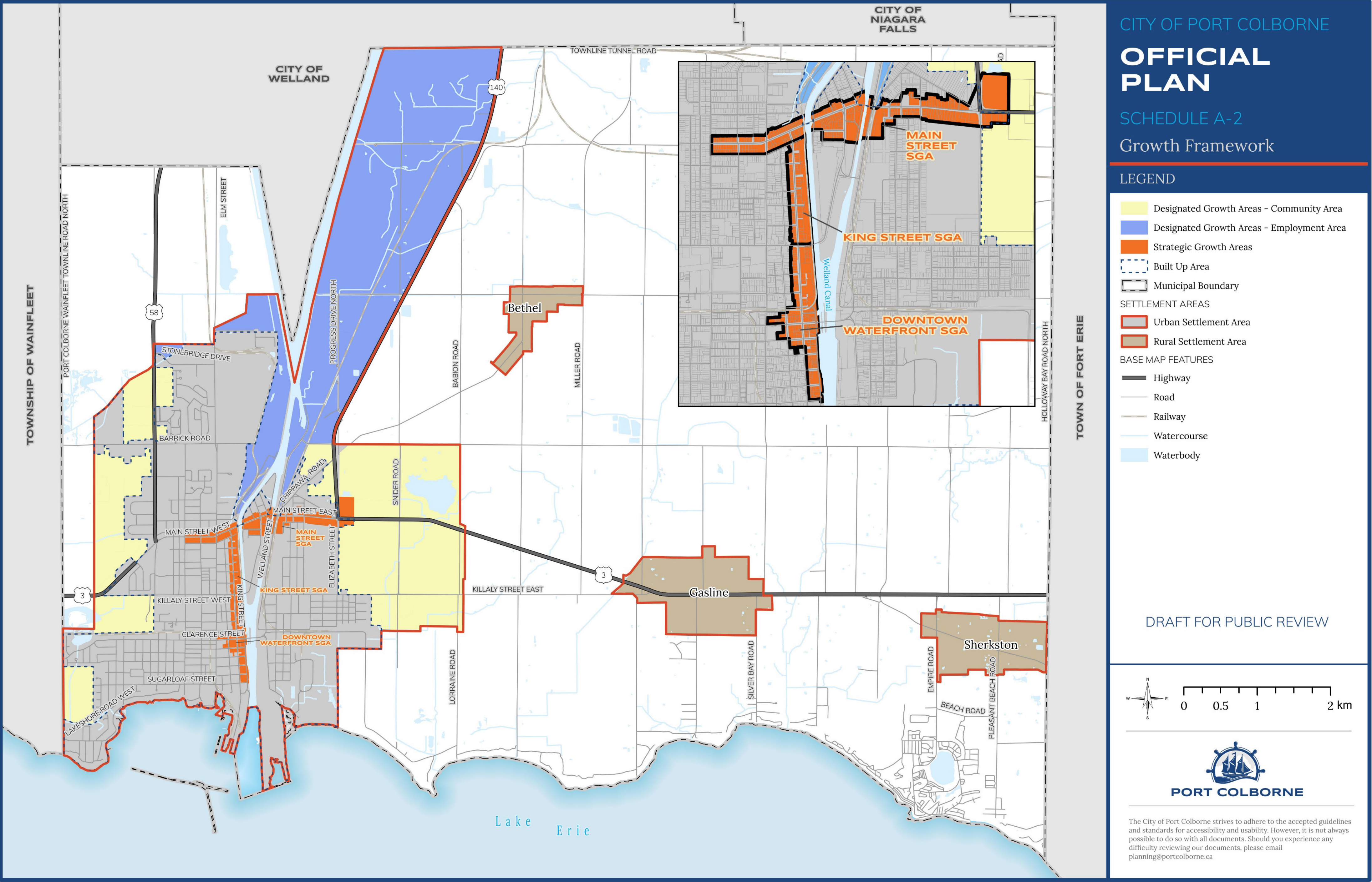
~29,130
Total Population
↑ ~7,000 people



~12,735
Total Homes
↑ ~3,450 households



~10,200
Total Jobs
↑ ~3,000 jobs



Schedule A-2: Growth Framework shows Designated and Strategic Growth Areas.

- Growth in Port Colborne will be concentrated in the Urban Settlement Area, with most future housing and mixed-use development directed to Strategic Growth Areas (shown in orange on Schedule A-2 above) to accommodate greater building heights, densities, and a broader mix of uses.
- Port Colborne plans to build 30% of all new homes within existing, already-developed neighbourhoods.
- To support long-term growth in jobs, industry and investment, the draft Official Plan proposes the expansion of the City's Employment Area to include the Asahi Kasei and adjacent lands, south of Highway 58A and west of Highway 140.

Have we identified the right locations for future growth in Port Colborne / do the proposed boundaries of the Strategic Growth Areas make sense?

Feel free to write on a sticky note and place it below!



Do you think the approach to expanding Employment Lands, and the lands selected to be included in this expansion, makes sense?

Feel free to write on a sticky note and place it below!

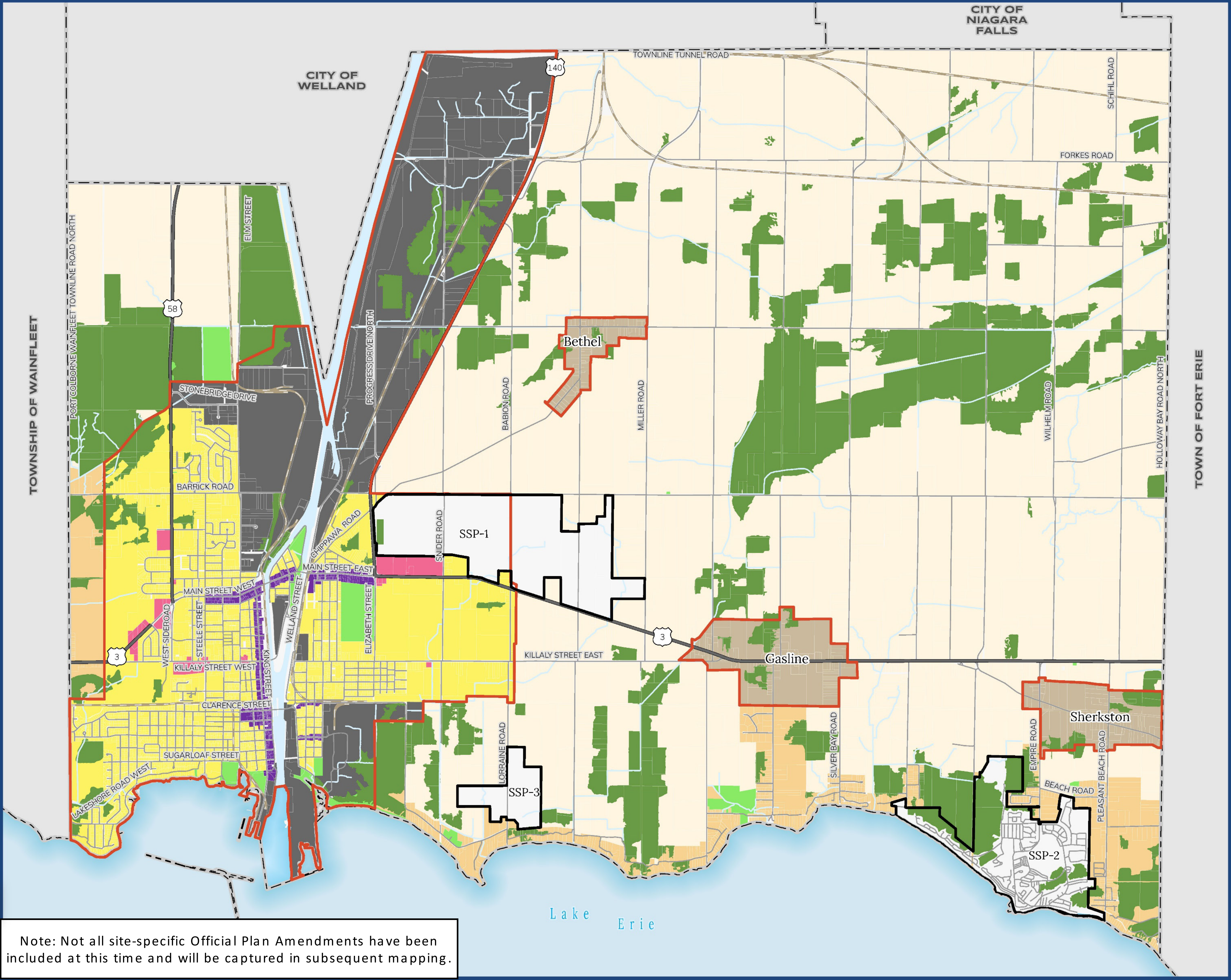


LAND USE PLAN

The draft Official Plan includes a new land use schedule that identifies where residential, mixed-use, commercial, employment, agricultural, rural, and open space uses are planned across Port Colborne. It also shows the Natural Heritage System*.

Do the land use designations on Schedule A-3 make sense to you?

Use a sticky note to let us know.



CITY OF PORT COLBORNE

OFFICIAL PLAN

SCHEDULE A-3

Land Use

LEGEND

- LAND USE DESIGNATION
- Rural
 - Agriculture
 - Residential Neighbourhoods
 - Commercial Area
 - Mixed Use Area
 - Employment Area
 - Open Space
 - Natural Heritage System
 - Site Specific Policy Area
- SETTLEMENT AREAS
- Urban Settlement Area
 - Rural Settlement Area
- BASE MAP FEATURES
- Highway
 - Road
 - Railway
 - Watercourse
 - Waterbody
 - Municipal Boundary

Visit our project webpage to explore documents, review frequently asked questions, and learn more about Port Colborne's New Official Plan.



*Please see Schedule C-1 and Map 3 on the "Natural Heritage System" board for information on this land use designation.

Note: Not all site-specific Official Plan Amendments have been included at this time and will be captured in subsequent mapping.

Schedule A-3 (Land Use)
shows a range and mix of land uses in the city

LAND USE PLAN

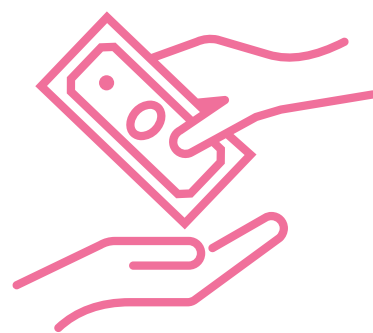
Land use designations are categories assigned to different areas of the city that outline their main purpose or “planned function”, the types of built forms and activities allowed, and the rules guiding future development.

The draft Official Plan has updated land use designations to reflect current objectives and future growth.



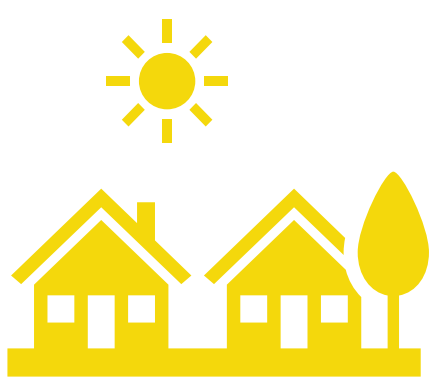
Mixed-Use Areas

- Planned to accommodate compact, higher-density development (e.g. triplexes, apartments) and economic growth (e.g. retail, restaurants, hotels).
- Planned to regulate building height limits, considering restrictions between 2 and 8 storeys.
- King Street and the East Waterfront will allow standalone uses, while Main Street and the Downtown Waterfront will require mixed use buildings (i.e., commercial at grade, with residential on top).



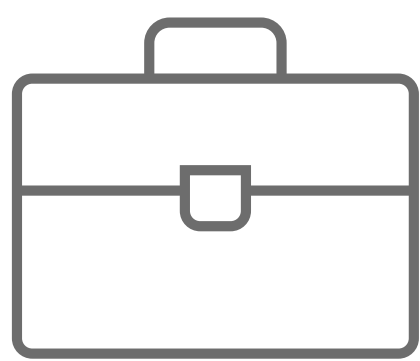
Commercial Areas

- Planned to support commercial uses that offer goods and services to the community.
- Permits uses that: meet daily needs (e.g., day-to-day retail, services); require space to support higher traffic volumes (e.g., larger-format retail, auto sales/services, restaurants with drive-throughs); and support tourism, recreation, and leisure (e.g. hotels/motels, private clubs, golf simulators).



Residential Neighbourhoods

- Planned to promote complete communities with diverse housing, public facilities, smaller-scale parks, and smaller-scale commercial uses (e.g., cafes, daycares).
- *Existing neighbourhoods:* Supports gentle intensification (Additional Dwelling Units, duplexes, triplexes) that respects existing neighbourhood character.
- *New neighbourhoods:* Requires diverse housing, connected roads, and central parks to prevent sprawl.



Employment Areas

- Planned to promote economic diversification and industrial activities (manufacturing, warehousing, goods movement) with subordinate retail/office space.
- Prohibits sensitive land uses (e.g. residential) to protect long-term industry operations and access to major transportation routes like the Welland Canal and highway corridors.



Agriculture

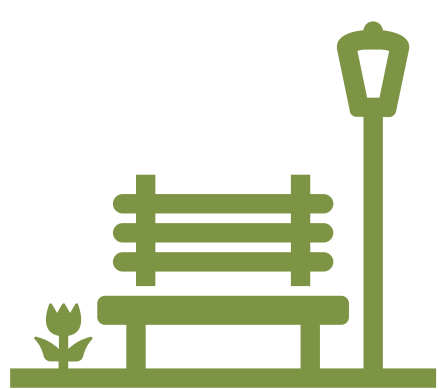
Planned to protect the prime agricultural land base by:

- Preventing land fragmentation to support long-term farming;
- Limiting development to agricultural operations, agriculture-related uses, on-farm diversified uses (e.g., farm stands, markets), home occupations, one principal farm-related dwelling, and one Additional Dwelling Unit; and,
- Requiring all development to comply with Minimum Distance Separation formulae.



Rural Areas

- Planned to accommodate low-intensity development consistent with rural character and historic development patterns.
- Requires development to be compatible with the countryside and capable of being supported by sustainable private water and septic systems.



Parks and Open Space

- Connected active and passive recreation networks. Permitted uses include community parks, trails, cemeteries, and Indigenous ceremonial activities and gathering structures.
- Schedule A-3 only maps major parks in the City, but parks are also permitted in the Residential Areas.



LAND USE PLAN: TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

MIXED-USE AREAS

The draft Official Plan identifies four Mixed Use Areas with different planned functions. These areas, mapped on Schedule A-3, are where we plan to direct the most growth.

- The Downtown/Waterfront and Main Street Mixed Use Areas are intended to develop with active ground-floor commercial uses and residential uses above; and,
- The King Street and East Waterfront Mixed Use Areas are intended to accommodate a broader mix of residential, commercial, employment, and community uses which may or may not be in multi-use buildings.

Looking at Schedule A-3, do you think the Mixed-Use Areas are in the right spots, and have the right functions assigned? Are there other areas of the city that should support this type of growth?

Use sticker dots to mark your choice.

Yes

No

If you answered “No” what areas should be reconsidered and why? Use a sticky to let us know.

SMALL BUSINESSES

To help create walkable neighbourhoods, the draft Official Plan allows small-scale businesses (like corner cafes or home-based hair salons) to open in residential areas.

Do you think small businesses belong in residential areas?

- If yes, what kinds of shops would work best, and what rules should we consider for these businesses (e.g. requirements for building size and design, traffic and parking, hours of operation, etc.)?
- If no, what are your main concerns? Are there specific business uses you would not want to see?

Use a sticky note to let us know.



SHAPING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Provincial policy requires municipalities to accommodate more housing and a broader range of housing types. The draft Official Plan sets the framework to guide where this housing can go and how new development should fit within existing neighbourhoods. It has policies that:

- Distinguish between Established Neighbourhoods and New Neighbourhoods;
- Direct the highest intensity development to Strategic Growth Areas and key corridors;
- Support a range of housing options throughout the city;
- Require developments to demonstrate compatibility with surrounding properties;
- Limit high-density residential development on local roads; and,
- Require site design, transitions, servicing, parking, access and neighbourhood context to be considered.

Did we identify the right considerations and criteria for evaluating whether a new residential development is compatible in or beside an Established Neighbourhood (e.g., similar building heights / scale, appropriate transition to neighbouring properties, privacy features, landscaping buffers)?

Use a sticky note to let us know.



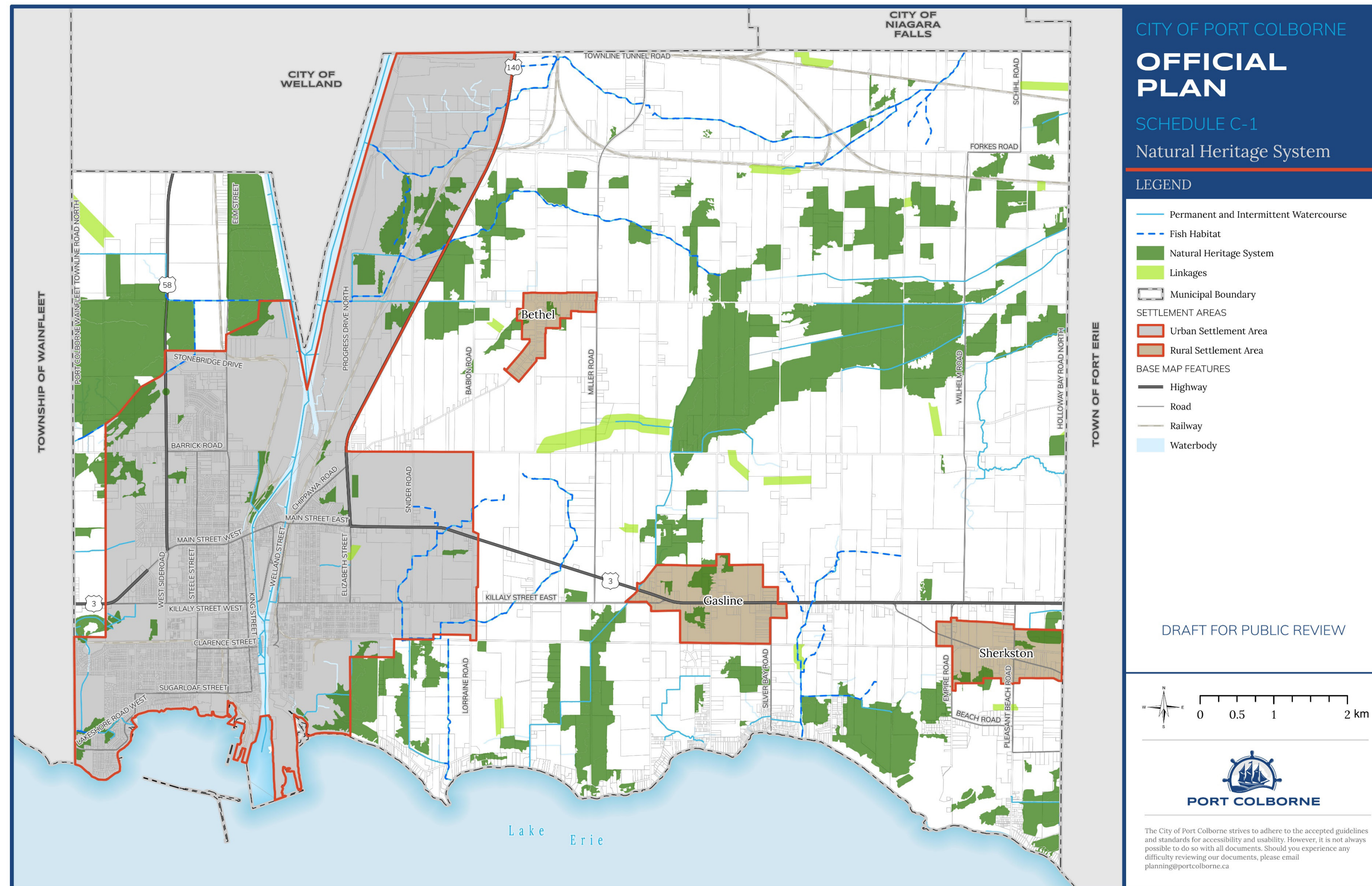
FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND RURAL VILLAGES

The draft Official Plan allows a mix of residential, agricultural, small-scale commercial, and open space uses within our Rural Settlement Areas (Bethel, Gasline and Sherkston).

To help our Rural Settlement Areas prosper, what types of uses should be added, preserved, or avoided? Use a sticky note to let us know.

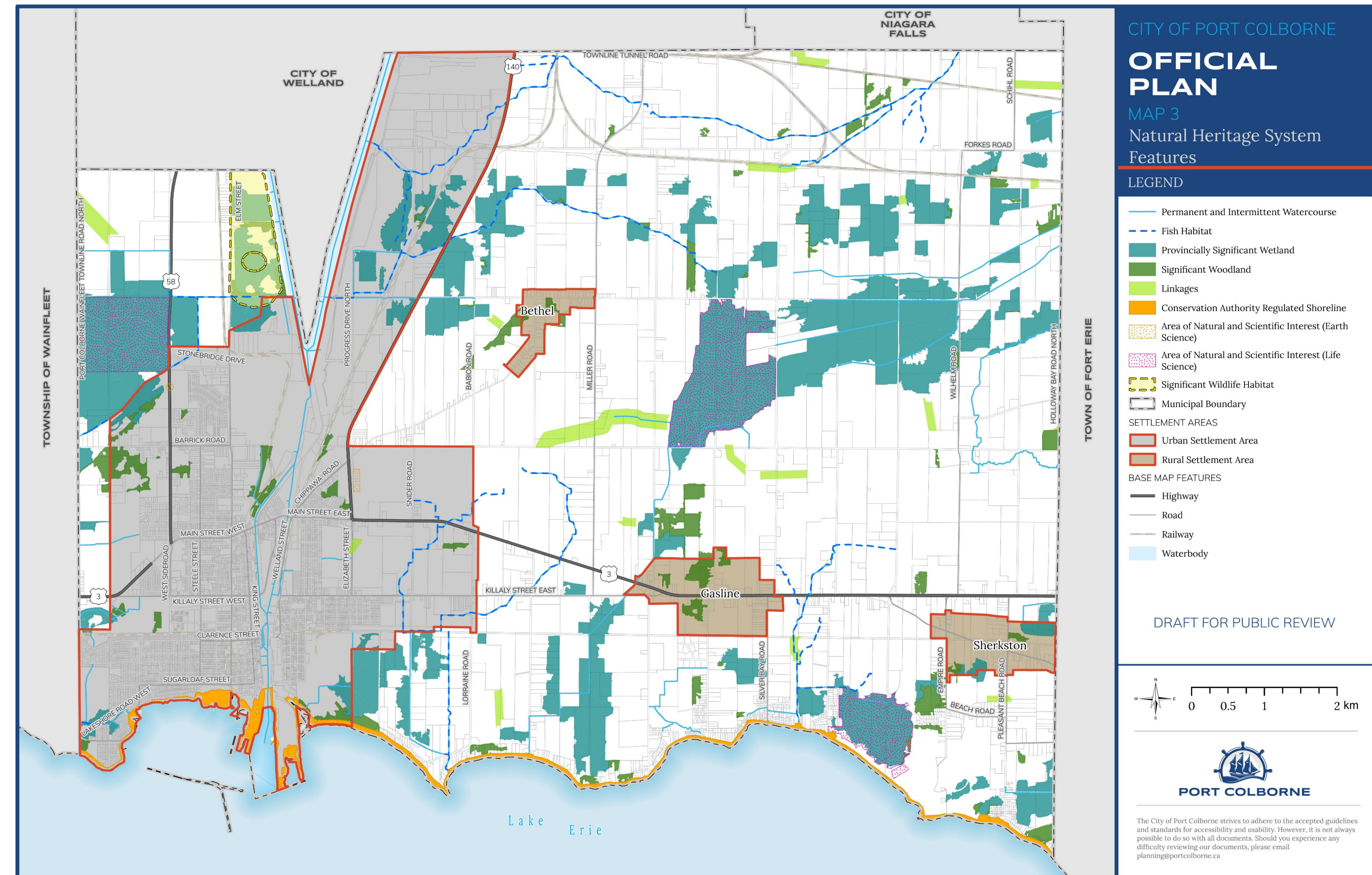


NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM



Schedule C-1 (Natural Heritage System)

shows the land and linkages (in **green**) that make up the Natural Heritage System.

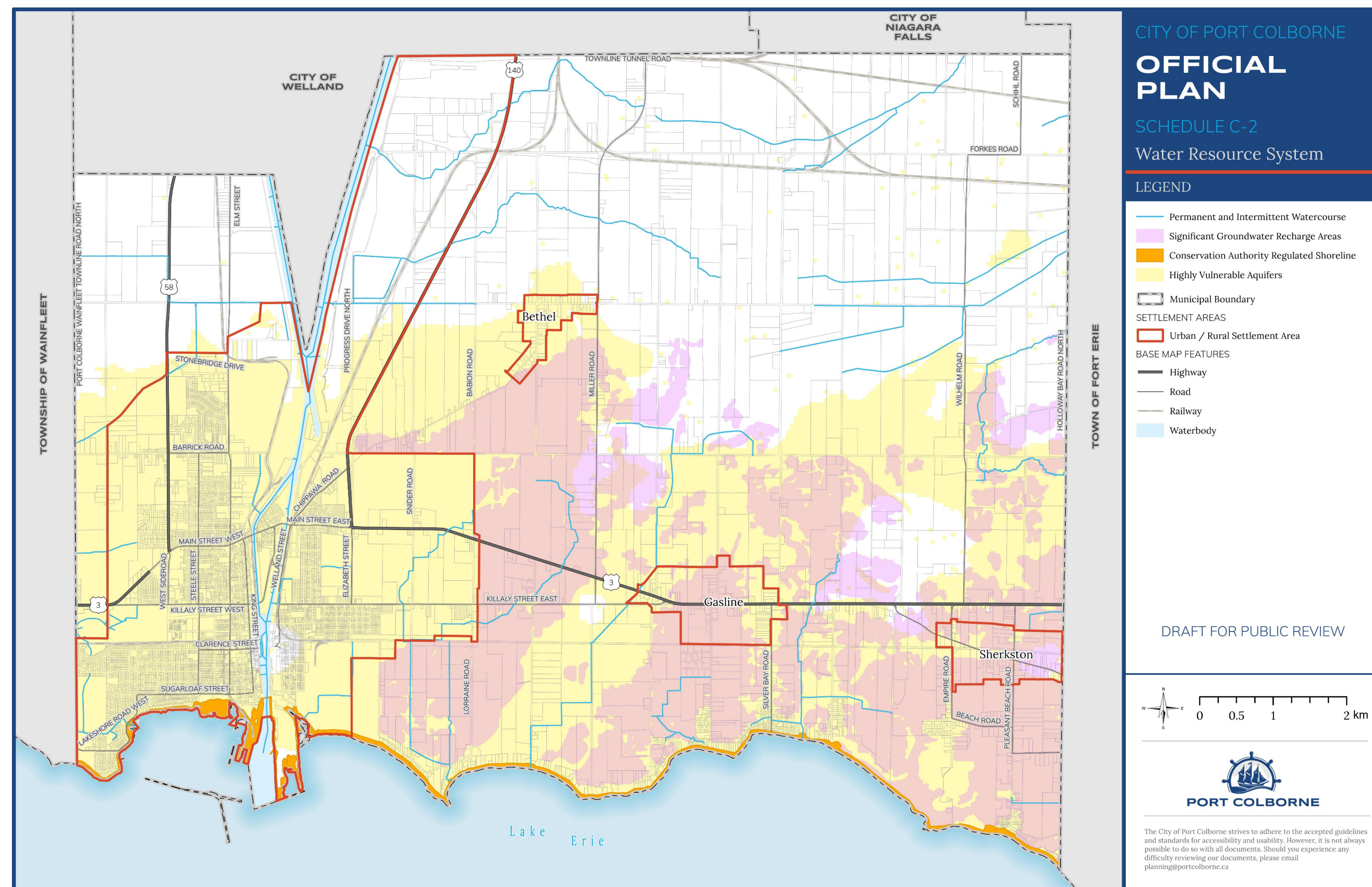


Map 3: Natural Heritage System Features

shows the features of the Natural Heritage System.

- Development is generally not permitted within the Natural Heritage System unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features and how they function.
- Development is prohibited in Provincially Significant Wetlands.
- If previously unmapped natural features are discovered during the development approvals process, they must be properly evaluated by professionals and protected under the Official Plan's policies.
- Small-scale structures for passive recreation, like public trails, boardwalks, and picnic facilities, are permitted within natural areas if they are carefully designed to minimize environmental impacts.

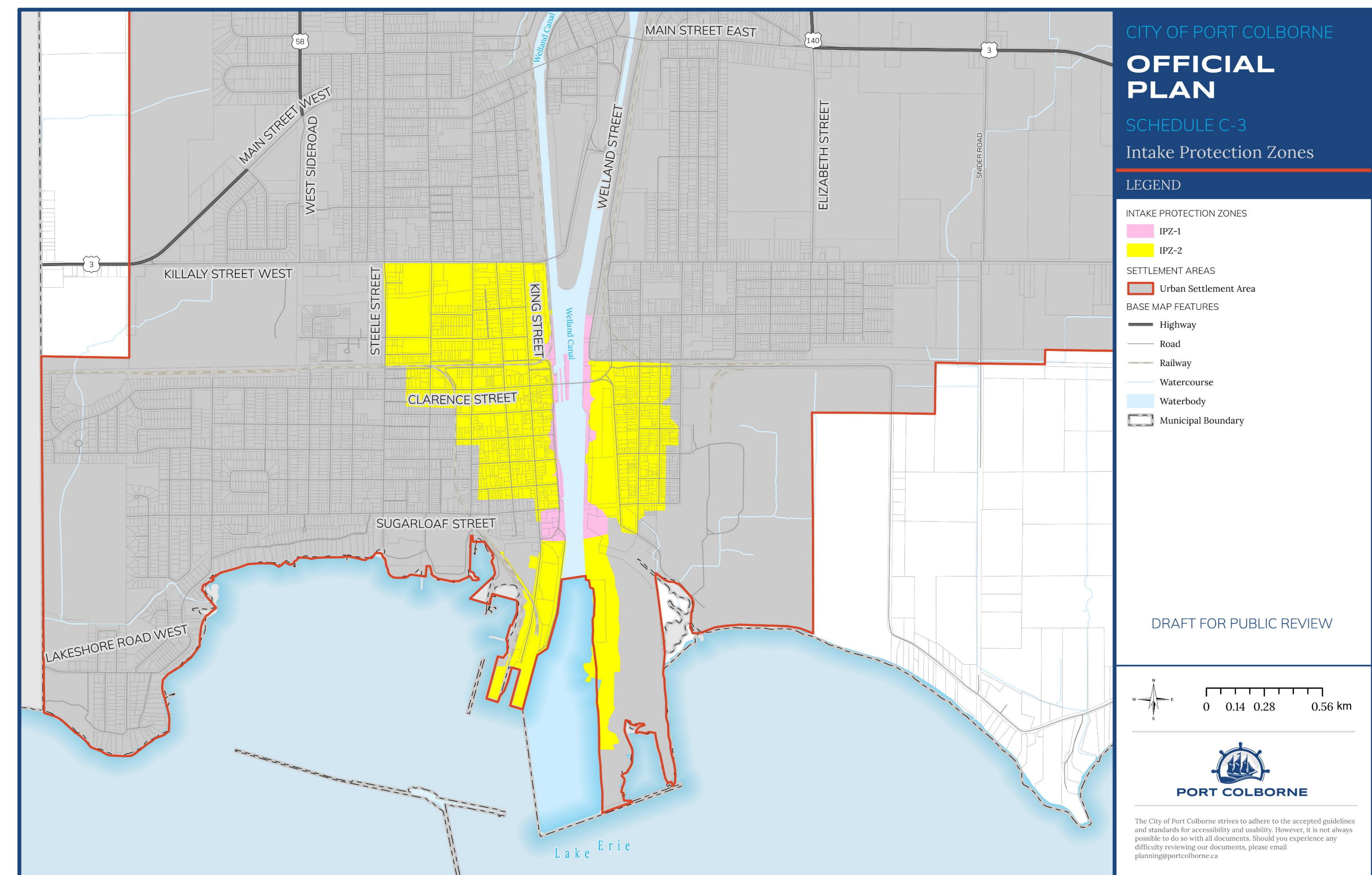
WATER RESOURCE SYSTEM



Schedule C-2: Water Resource System

shows the water resource system including watercourses, significant groundwater recharge areas, and highly vulnerable aquifers.

- The policies of the New Official Plan protect the Water Resource System to ensure the long-term health, quality, and quantity of the city's water.
- New development is required to be designed to prevent groundwater contamination and carefully manage stormwater runoff to protect sensitive water resources.
- Policies are in place to protect the city's municipal drinking water sources, restricting any land uses that could pose a significant threat within identified Intake Protection Zones.
- The Official Plan uses a "watershed planning" approach which coordinates development and infrastructure based on the natural boundaries and overall health of local watersheds.

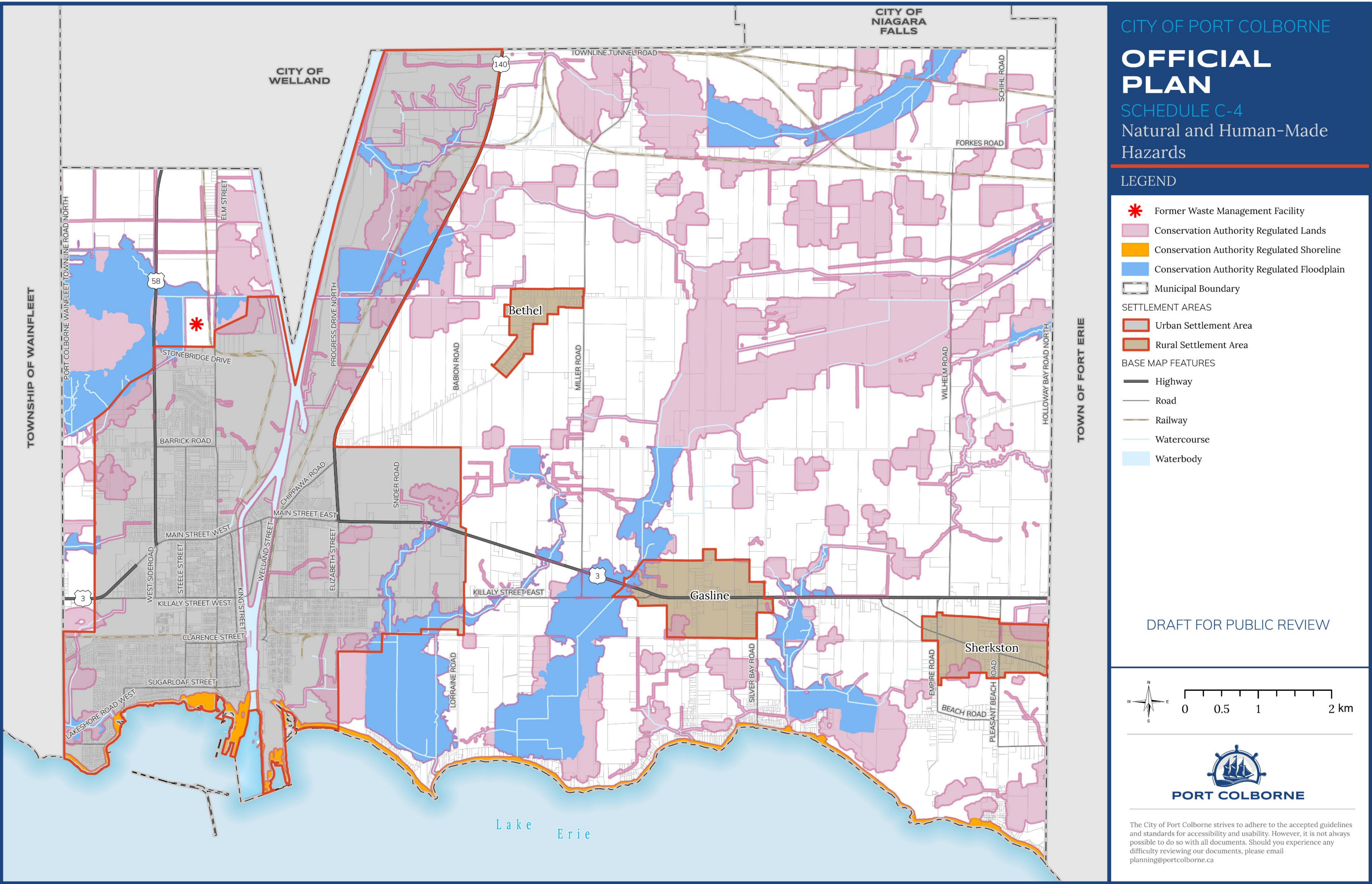


Schedule C-3: Intake Protection Zones

highlights intake protection zones (i.e., vulnerable areas surrounding the city's water intake pipes).



NATURAL AND HUMAN-MADE HAZARDS



Schedule C-4: Natural and Human-Made Hazards

shows regulated shoreline, floodplains, and lands regulated by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. It also shows the former waste management facility (*).

- Natural and human-made hazard areas present a risk to human health and safety and/or to property.
- Development is directed away from identified hazards (e.g., contaminated sites, hazardous substances, excess soils, wildfires).
- Flooding is a key risk that policies in the Official Plan attempt to mitigate by limiting development in the floodplain.

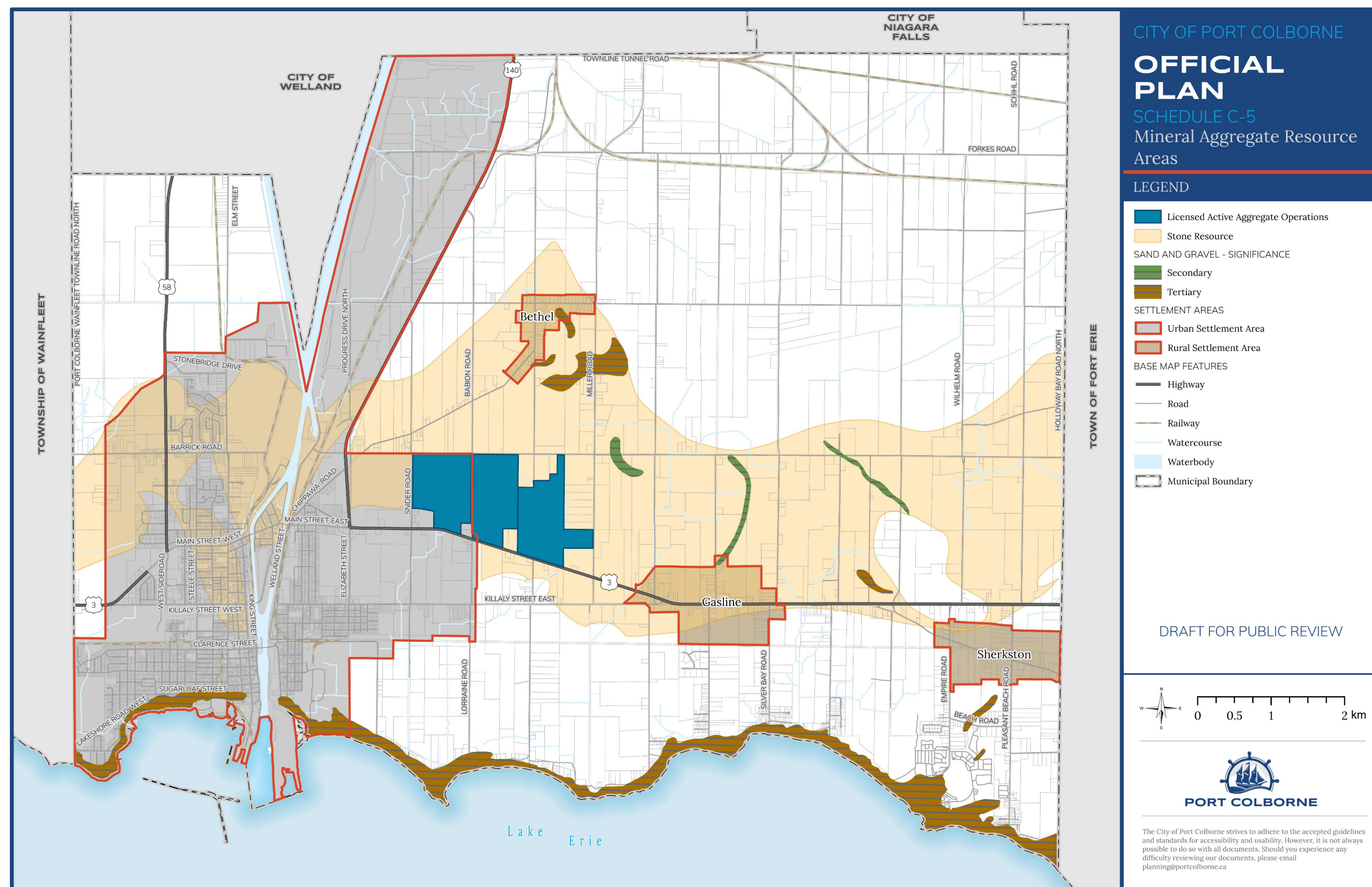
The draft Official Plan prohibits new development and site alteration within regulated floodplains and dynamic beach hazard areas along Lake Erie.

Do you feel these policies strike the right balance between protecting public safety and allowing reasonable use of private waterfront property?

Feel free to write on a sticky note and place it below!



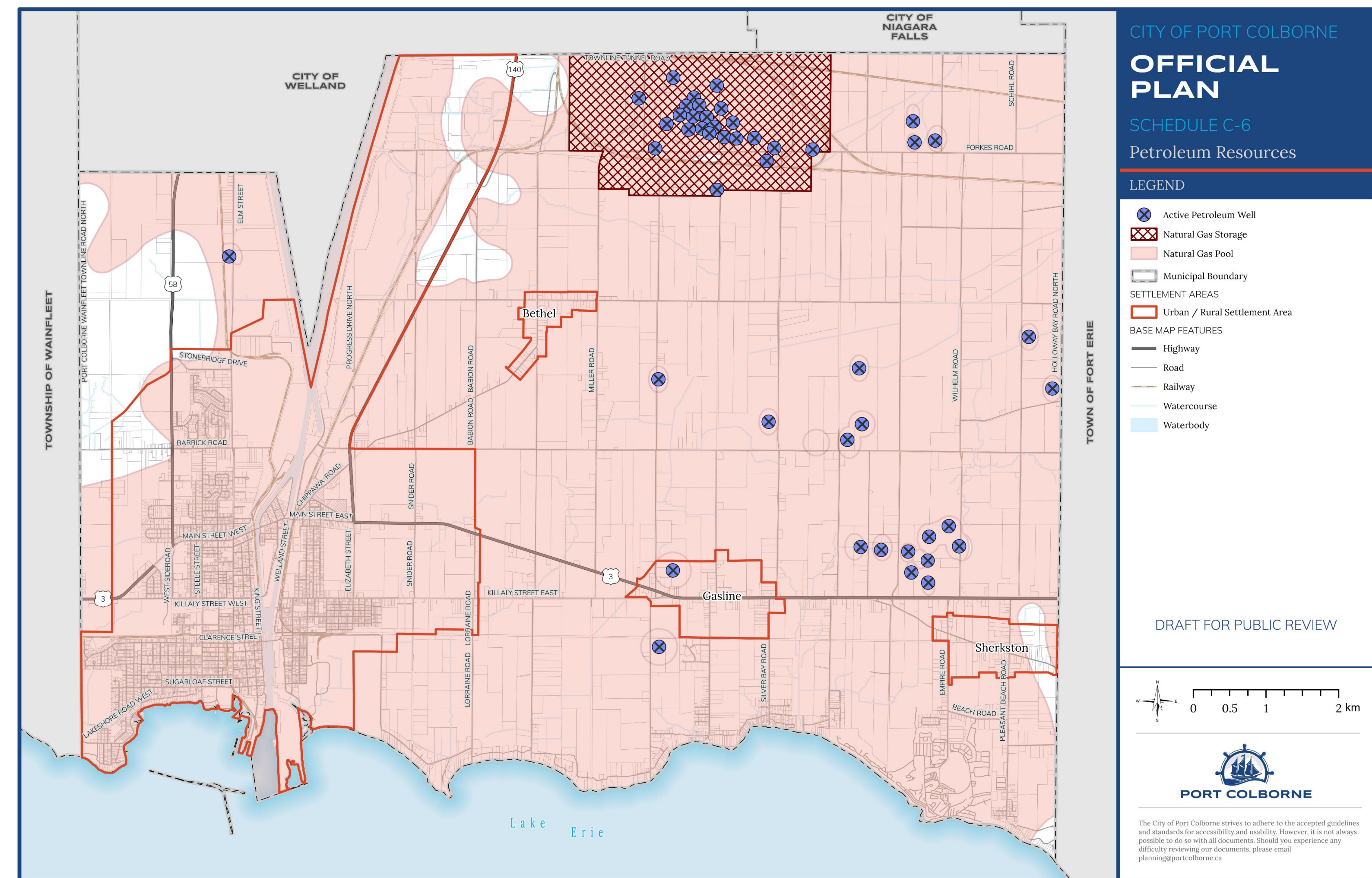
MINERAL AGGREGATE and PETROLEUM RESOURCES



Schedule C-5: Mineral Aggregate Resource Areas

shows licensed active aggregate operations, stone resources, and secondary and tertiary sand and gravel.

- The New Official Plan contains policies to protect mineral aggregate resources (sand, gravel, stone, and shale) for long-term use.
- Development in proximity to known resource areas is only permitted under certain conditions.
- New mineral aggregate operations must not negatively impact adjacent land uses and are not permitted within settlement areas.



Schedule C-6: Petroleum Resources

shows active petroleum wells, natural gas storage, and natural gas pools within the municipal boundary.

- A significant portion of lands within Port Colborne's boundaries contain petroleum resources, which include oil, gas, and salt and formation water resources.
- The policies in the Official Plan protect petroleum resource operations from nearby development and/or activities that would impede resource use (active or future).
- There are also policies to guide the proper decommissioning of abandoned petroleum wells, as per the *Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act*.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



PORT COLBORNE





OFFICIAL PLAN

July 2026

DRAFT

Your feedback today will help us refine the Draft Official Plan, which will be used for public review in advance of the Statutory Public Meeting this Fall.

Stay Connected!

Visit our project webpage to explore documents, review frequently asked questions, and learn more about Port Colborne's New Official Plan.



www.portcolborne.ca/newofficialplan

