

The St. Catharines - Thorold
Prosperity Council

Paths to Prosperity



Abbreviation Reference

Economic Development Offices (EDO)

Niagara Artists' Centre (NAC)

Niagara College (NC)

Niagara Centre for the Commercialization of Research & Innovation (NCCRI)

Niagara Centre for Environmental Stewardship (NCES)

Niagara Economic Development Corporation (NEDC)

Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex (NHBRC)

Niagara Health System (NHS)

Niagara Workforce Planning Board (NWPB)

St. Catharines Economic Development & Tourism Services (EDTS)

Small & Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs)

Vineland Research & Innovation Centre (VRIC)

The St. Catharines – Thorold Prosperity Council

The Mayor of St. Catharines, Brian McMullan and the St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce formed the St. Catharines – Thorold Prosperity Council in June 2007 to examine ways in which to develop long-term, sustainable economic prosperity. The volunteer council - comprised of business people and academic leaders - was mandated to create an action plan to build prosperity within our communities.

As part of the process, the council examined civic-driven prosperity plans from other communities to gain insight into the best practices of those cities and regions that have been successful in creating long term economic vision plans. From there, we looked at our economic assets and opportunities and constructed a chart outlining a path for economic prosperity moving forward.

The Paths to Prosperity is the resulting report that positions St. Catharines and Thorold as communities with opportunities to build economic sustainability into the 21st century. It is about creating new opportunities, organically growing business and jobs and building the foundations for vibrant, prosperous communities for the next 30 years and beyond.

The council, chaired by Rob DePetris, includes business and academic leaders as well the Mayor of St. Catharines, Mayor of Thorold, St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce, St. Catharines Economic Development & Tourism Services, Niagara Economic Development Corporation and Niagara Workforce Planning Board.

Chair

Rob DePetris

Senior Tax Manager, Deloitte

Current Members

Sam Baio

CEO, West 49

Steve Cook

Vice President,
Credit Bureau Services Canada

Henry D’Angela

Mayor City of Thorold

Patrick Gedge

CEO, Niagara Economic
Development Corporation

Barry Katzman

President, Mike Weir Wines

Dr. Jack Lightstone

President, Brock University

Paul McCuaig

Former Senior Group Publisher,
Sun Media Niagara Publishing Group

Brian McMullan

Mayor City of St. Catharines

David Oakes

Director, St. Catharines Economic
Development & Tourism Services

Trudy Parsons

Executive Director, Niagara
Workforce Planning Board

Dr. Dan Patterson

President, Niagara College

Tom Rankin

President, Rankin Construction

Walter Sendzik

Executive Vice President and
General Manager, St. Catharines –
Thorold Chamber of Commerce

Al Simpson

Partner, Partridge Iggulden LLP

Betty Lou Souter

CEO, Community Care/Chair,
Niagara Health System

Mike Watt

Vice President & General
Manager, Walker Industries
Holdings Limited





The idea for the St. Catharines-Thorold Prosperity Council originated from a need to establish a vision for our City and to examine opportunities which could provide a catalyst for economic growth. Shifts in the economy mean communities like St. Catharines and Thorold can no longer rely on manufacturing alone to fuel the local economy. Instead we need to diversify our economy to ensure continued success.

To do so we need to come together as a community and make a plan for the future.

The St. Catharines-Thorold Prosperity Council has been established and is made up of a cross section of dedicated, civic-minded business and community leaders. While they are from diverse backgrounds, they all have one goal in mind – making St. Catharines and Thorold the location of choice for new investment and developments.

The Council has done extensive work in establishing avenues for this new investment and has identified five paths to prosperity. These are: Interactive Media Development, Commercialization and Incubation of Innovation, Growing the Green Market, Capitalizing on Tourism and Culture, and Building Health and Wellness Opportunities. I look forward to pursuing these avenues for the future.

The work of the St. Catharines-Thorold Prosperity Council would not be possible without the contributions of its members. I would like to thank Council Chair Rob DePetris, Former Vice-President of Silicon Knights, for his work in leading the council, as well as the St. Catharines-Thorold Chamber of Commerce for lending staff support. I also extend great appreciation to all of those who serve on the St. Catharines-Thorold Prosperity Council and who contributed to this report.

No doubt the future of St. Catharines and Thorold is bright, but only through our continued work together can we ensure success.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian McMullan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian McMullan, Mayor

Introduction

Communities in Transition – A Vision for the Future as Part of a Strong Niagara

First, as matter of record, Niagara is in sound economic shape moving forward. Many people will challenge this assertion, but there is good reason to be optimistic about Niagara's future. There are a number of developments taking place over the next ten years that will completely change the course of Niagara and at the same time alleviate some of the more immediate challenges facing the community.

Although there have been a tremendous amount of job reductions due to declining large scale-manufacturing, Niagara's infrastructure will undergo a transformation that is generational in scale. The amount of construction that will take place in Niagara over the next ten years may not replace

the lost manufacturing jobs – but it will definitely have an enormous impact on employment across the region.

Niagara's infrastructure development projects includes:

- \$150 million expansion of the QEW through St. Catharines to be complete by 2011. When the expansion is finished Niagara will have an expanded highway system that offers the most efficient link between Southern Ontario and eastern United States.
- \$600 million state-of-the-art health care complex will be built in St. Catharines in the next four years.
- \$100 million new Niagara Convention Centre in Niagara Falls set to open in 2011.
- \$50 million expansion of Niagara College's Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake campuses.

- \$100 million Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex built at Brock University.
- \$100 million Brock University Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts and Centre for the Arts built in downtown St. Catharines.
- \$15 million St. Catharines Aquatics Centre.

In total, more than \$1 billion dollars will be spent in Niagara on major infrastructure projects over the next ten years – from roads to health care to academic

**Niagara's
infrastructure
will undergo a
transformation that
is generational
in scale**

institutions to civic buildings. Each project creates an abundance of jobs – and many developments will contribute to the employment base of Niagara for decades to come. The opportunity is now to reposition Niagara – and create the foundation for the next generation of prosperity.

Niagara is stronger than we think

Niagara – often situated in the bottom third of most socio-economic rankings in Canada – is actually in a position to better handle today's current economic challenges than many other parts of Canada. There are a few people that might not agree – but take a look at Niagara's advantages beyond the infrastructure projects.

We have a tourism industry built around a natural wonder of the world that contributes to more than one-third of Canada's overall tourism revenue drawing millions of visitors to Niagara each year.

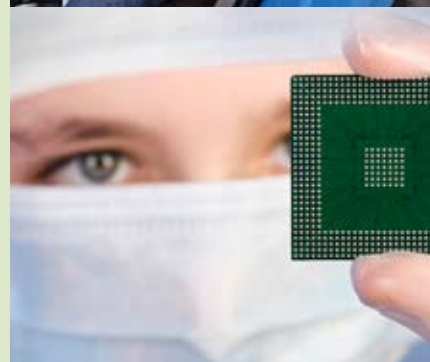
Niagara is the fruit belt of Canada. Unlike other regions of the country that produce one staple product, Niagara has a diverse range of tender fruit and produce – including a thriving wine industry that supplies more than 80 per cent of Canada’s wine industry. With the protection of the agricultural lands by the Ontario government, there are tremendous opportunities to grow Niagara’s market share in agricultural products.

In the new knowledge-based industries, Niagara is the interactive gaming capital of Ontario. The industry is a \$42 billion dollar industry worldwide – and Niagara is home to the largest game developer in Ontario. Interactive gaming will soon supplant film as the largest entertainment industry in the world – and Niagara is poised to be a dominant player in the sector.

In post secondary education – Niagara has a college that is ranked number one in student satisfaction for the past four years and a university that produces world-class research with plans to build a \$100 million state-of-the-art natural health and biosciences centre.

And Niagara has a strong advanced manufacturing sector. Although traditional manufacturing is proving to be a challenge for Niagara, there are a number of companies that are developing new products for a global market. Companies like Shark Marine, ASI Group, TIW Steel Plate Work, and Niagara Precision – to name only a few – are leaders in their fields.

Finally, as Richard Florida noted in his book *Who’s Your City*, Niagara is situated between two major economic zones – the GTA and Buffalo-Rochester. When measured as a mega-region, it’s



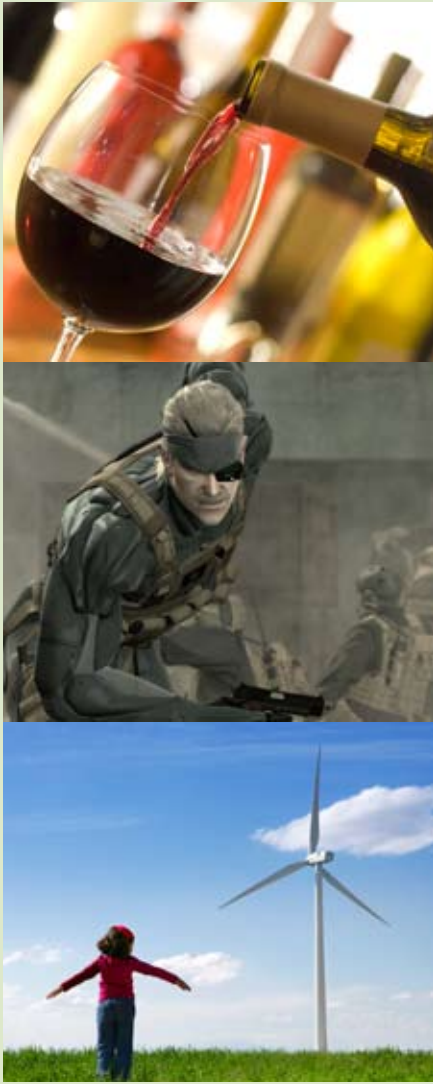
the fourth largest economic zone in North America. In Canada, TorBufChester – as Florida calls this economic zone – is the largest mega region with Niagara located right in the middle.

St. Catharines and Thorold are communities in transition

Once populated with dozens of large scale manufacturing companies in the auto, steel and forestry industries, St. Catharines and Thorold have felt the effects of a shrinking manufacturing sector. Vacant industrial lots at one time employed tens of thousands of workers. The cities reaped the benefits of a robust workforce, and a seemingly endless industrial output. Now, the factories largely sit idle, and vacant industrial lands are being redeveloped for commercial and residential opportunities. Those large scale industrial-age jobs are not coming back.

This is not to say that manufacturing is not an important part of the future for our communities. General Motors will continue to play a significant role in the manufacturing industry in Niagara, and small and medium size manufacturing companies will continue to supply parts and products for industries across North America. In fact, the recently created Niagara Industrial Association has been formed to create an industry-wide collaborative effort to open new markets and provide the support mechanisms for advanced manufacturers in Niagara. With a skilled workforce and the infrastructure in place, advanced manufacturing will continue to be an important part of Niagara's future.

Still, the exodus of jobs in the traditional manufacturing industries (along with their above average incomes) combined with challenges to attract new business has



impacted on Niagara's economic growth over the past decade. In fact, with the additional challenges facing the tourism and agriculture industries in Niagara and the region's inability to retain and attract young, educated people, it's clear that our communities must undertake a transformation – there simply is no other option.

Over the past year and half, the Prosperity Council has come to better understand the issues that have had a negative impact on the local economy. We understand where we have come from as a community – and more importantly what we currently have – and it is also plainly evident that an action plan is required to reposition St. Catharines, Thorold and indeed Niagara as a place of prosperity.

To this end, the council focused on five areas – paths as we have called them:

- 1 Organic Business Acceleration and Incubation
- 2 Capitalizing on Interactive Media Cluster Development
- 3 Building on the Foundations of Health & Wellness
- 4 Culture + Creativity + Tourism = Opportunity
- 5 Linking into Green Opportunities

Each path has the potential to contribute sustainable economic growth and opportunity for the next 30 years and beyond. Within each path, the council outlined actions that need to be taken to fully implement the objectives of the paths. And, we also included timelines and champions for the actions because without champions – there will be little success.

The Paths to Prosperity is indeed a transformational plan.

Paths to Prosperity

The five paths to prosperity represent the framework for the established goals and measurements recommended by the Prosperity Council.

To ensure the success of the five identified paths to prosperity, we must work collaboratively and urgently on the actions for each path. These paths are catalyst pointers – not fully detailed plans. It will take the work, and will of the community – including business, academia, community groups, and citizens – to maximize the potential synergies captured within each path to prosperity.

Path One – Organic Business Acceleration and Incubation

Provide existing businesses with the support and tools to build business capacity and to develop an infrastructure to incubate businesses within the community.

Success Measures:

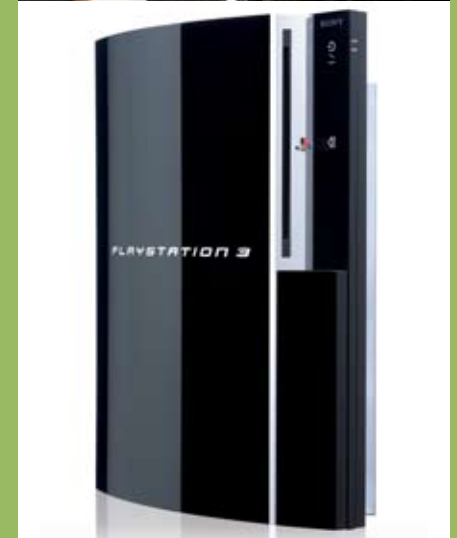
- Growth of existing businesses
- Increase in start-up businesses
- Integration of business, government and post secondary institutions in business incubation and business development
- Commercialization of research from Niagara's post-secondary institutions

Path Two – Capitalizing on Interactive Media Cluster Development

Establish St. Catharines – Niagara as the centre of interactive media development in Canada.

Success Measures:

- nGen as a self-sustaining incubation centre for interactive media development
- Increased number of businesses connected to interactive media sector
- Post secondary institutions and interactive media community fully integrated





Path Three – Building on the Foundations of Health & Wellness

Capturing economic opportunities with state-of-the-art medical facilities, through pharmaceuticals and nutraceutical research and connecting with health and wellness lifestyle trends.

Success Measures:

- Integration of new local hospital serving St. Catharines, Thorold and Niagara-on-the-Lake and regional healthcare facilities with healthcare focused businesses
- Expansion of pharmaceutical and nutraceutical companies and commercialization of research in these fields from Brock and Niagara College
- New business development in targeted emerging markets of health and wellness

Path Four – Culture + Creativity + Tourism = Opportunity

Substantially increasing economic activity in tourism, and strengthening and growing arts and culture in the community.

Success Measures:

- Establishment of a new performing arts facility in downtown St. Catharines in conjunction with the relocation of the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts to the urban centre of St. Catharines
- Increase in tourism-related businesses and visitors in downtown St. Catharines
- Integration of tourism related activities between communities related to the War of 1812 Bicentennial and Welland Canal Heritage Corridor

Path Five – Linking into Green Opportunities

Building Niagara's environmental assets to become a leader in the Green Economy.

Success Measures:

- Niagara is recognized as a green community
- Government and public institutions adoption of green policies that anchor Niagara's green identity
- Post-secondary integration of green-focused programming and skills training
- Increase in the number of green-focused businesses and approaches to business

Path One: Organic Business Acceleration and Incubation

This path is comprised of two concepts that are mutually inclusive – to expand established business capacities in the community, and to create the infrastructure and environment that facilitates business start-ups.

I - Organic Business Acceleration

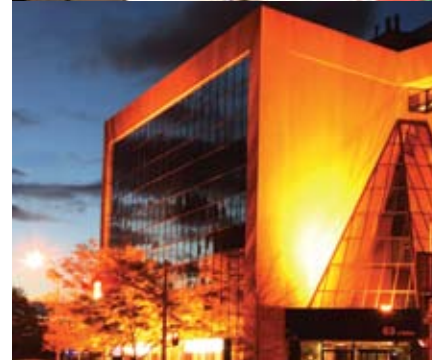
An effective means in which to grow economic capacity is to focus on the growth of existing companies within the community. Setting the course for business expansion by providing the right environment to assist businesses to build capacity can have an immediate net impact on the prosperity in the community.

The following objectives have been established to focus on building business capacity:

1.0 Ensure an 'Open for Business' Environment

Municipal and regional government play an important role in facilitating business development. Whether through competitive taxes, development application processes, and land planning policies or through economic development services and a business-friendly culture, cities can have an impact on business development. As it becomes increasingly competitive to attract and retain business, municipalities that embrace and encourage an "open for business" culture will be more prosperous.

To create an open for business environment, municipalities in Niagara must begin by removing red tape and bureaucracy. By-laws, zoning regulations, tax regimes and development processes need to be streamlined. In fact, there should



be a concerted effort to codify all regulations related to development and business investment in Niagara – creating one, uniform level of codes, regulations and standards. Removing restrictive, time-consuming processes and duplicated regulations costs business and delays employment opportunities.

St. Catharines has taken steps to coordinate a one-stop shop for businesses with the introduction of the on-line program BizPal in spring 2008. The interactive program provides all required applications and information for developing and expanding business in the city through the BizPal portal. The program is good for business and it should be expanded by the Region to include all applicable forms and applications for businesses from all municipalities in Niagara. As well, the city and the Region

must continue to adopt the latest technology related to facilitating the process of business development.

In terms of creating a business-friendly culture, the Development Process Review Taskforce of St. Catharines released a report in September 2008 outlining a series of recommendations to improve the process of development in the city, and ensure a business-friendly culture at city hall. The report focused on expediting development applications, improving communication and customer service within city hall, and implementing streamlined processes that remove duplication. City council adopted the recommendations, and it is imperative that the city develops a long-term strategy that includes measurements and progressive reporting to ensure the city is truly open for business.



In Thorold, economic development is currently managed between Niagara Economic Development Corporation (NEDC) and the office of the Mayor. With brownfield redevelopment, an abundance of greenfield space and opportunities for port developments along the Welland Canal, a more focused approach is required to generate a business development environment in Thorold. Thorold and the NEDC must develop a business plan for the city and include an implementation strategy. The plan should be linked into economic development plans in cities bordering Thorold, and the overall NEDC business strategies to ensure co-ordination and co-operation on projects and planning that will benefit all of Niagara.

Finally, municipalities and the region must work collaboratively to develop a business friendly environment throughout Niagara.

This includes removing duplication in business development processes, ensuring business-related taxes are competitive and creating incentives to retain and attract business.

2.0 Target Local SMEs for Growth

Local small and medium sized enterprises (SME) are the future of Niagara's economic growth and prosperity. It is more efficient and effective to retain business than it is to attract business. For example, there are 4,500 businesses in St. Catharines classified as SMEs - if each company were provided with the tools to expand its business and hire an additional five people – the impact would be significant. Although not that simple, as a community, we need to do more to ensure local companies – small, medium and large – have access to tools for growth.

The primary means through which businesses grow is access

to capital for expansion, research and development, and to enter new markets. Currently Niagara lacks access to levers of capital for SMEs. While other regions in southern Ontario have built networks and developed the mechanisms for businesses to access capital, Niagara lags behind. Developing improved access to capital includes:

- Catalogue all available financial resources for business and providing the tools for business to access capital investments.
- Develop a Niagara angel investment and venture capital network for businesses to access.
- Improve awareness and access to all forms of government incentives and programs aimed at expanding businesses.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of Niagara College's Workforce Development, which is targeted at SMEs.



In addition to access to capital, entrepreneurs and small businesses require additional support. Statistics demonstrate that 75 per cent of start-ups do not last more than five years – but studies show that if there is access to networks, capital and suites of services, the success rate increases. In Niagara, there is a need for incubation space, shared suites of services, mentoring, and networking. The contributions of small business enterprise centres are important, and more support is required to increase the capacity and access to services for start-ups, and SMEs.

3.0 Next Generation Entrepreneur Development

Both Brock University and Niagara College have well established business programs and faculties. Brock's Faculty of Business has a strong entrepreneurship program, as does Niagara College with its

Business and Entrepreneurship program. Each year, students at both institutions participate in business plan development programs. This presents an opportunity for the business community to work with graduating students to encourage and develop next generation entrepreneurs. Through the establishment of links between the business community and business programs at post secondary institutions focusing on entrepreneurship development, Niagara has the ability to nurture emerging entrepreneurs, creating new companies and new jobs.

II - Commercialization of Research

Niagara has two competitive assets that are currently under-utilized by business and municipalities. Both Brock University and Niagara College are outstanding post

secondary institutions that have the infrastructure to support and generate new companies.

Commercialization of research at post secondary institutions is providing communities across North America with new, highly innovative companies that are linked within the new knowledge based economy. The potential to incubate companies in Niagara through the commercialization of research is a largely untapped asset – and one that can provide economic growth and long-term stability in the region.

The following objectives have been established to focus on the commercialization of research:

1.0 Creating a Culture of Commercialization at Brock and Niagara College

After an examination of the networks and existing infrastructure for the

commercialization of research and development being conducted at Niagara’s post secondary institutions, it is apparent that there is a need to better link the business community with the academic community. From a review of other regions with a strong post secondary presence and a high degree of commercialization of research from their academic institutions, it is evident that a central body or organization focusing on connecting the research with business development was a key factor in creating a culture of commercialization.

The formation of an organizing body in Niagara is required to establish the foundation and infrastructure required to build and support the commercialization of research. This body should be comprised of Brock, Niagara College, and the Vineland



Research and Innovation Centre (VRIC) as well as a cross section of business people with the experience to build a Niagara Centre for the Commercialization of Research and Innovation (NCCRI). This operation would be responsible for building networks that include retired executives, business professionals, venture capitalists, investors and government that would provide the suite of professional services and access to capital of create the complete cycle – from research to business development.

2.0 Enhance Research and Innovation Infrastructure and Capacities at Brock University, Niagara College and Vineland Research & Innovation Centre

While research and development is taking place at Brock, Niagara College and VRIC, there is a need for expanded facilities and



investments in new technologies. With the development of the NCCRI there is need to ensure that both post secondary institutions have the capacity to expand their research and development.

A critical piece of the infrastructure will be the building of the Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex at Brock University. All levels of government and business must work together to ensure the construction of the complex that will provide the seeds of innovation and development for generations to come.

In addition to the complex at Brock, space for research and development must be enhanced at Niagara College and VRIC. It is important that Niagara builds an advocacy model that includes academia, business and government to advocate for advanced research

grants and investments based on centres of excellence and potential for commercialization at all of Niagara's post secondary institutions.

In conjunction with this approach, the academic institutions must work immediately to ensure Intellectual Patent agreements at Brock, Niagara College and VRIC facilitate the commercialization of research and to immediately align courses and instructors in applicable fields with the mandate of supporting NCCRI.

Path Two: Capitalizing On Interactive Media Cluster Development

Interactive media is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Global demand for digital games, which represents the industry's largest segment, is a \$42 billion industry worldwide, and it is projected to grow 10 per cent annually during the next five years. In addition to economic growth projections, the industry is almost exclusively populated with employees that have a university or college degree, and who earn above average salaries.

Niagara's connection to interactive media is strong. Silicon Knights, a global industry leader and the largest gaming developer in Ontario, is located in downtown St. Catharines. Brock University and Niagara College have launched programs aimed at supplying the talent required for an expanded interactive media industry in Canada. And, Niagara is situated close to other colleges and universities in southern

Ontario and upstate New York providing a large talent pool from which to draw.

As interactive gaming continues to grow, more communities will be exploring ways in which to become part of the industry, and now is the time for Niagara to emerge as the centre of interactive media in Canada.

The following goals have been set to establish Niagara as the capital of interactive media in Ontario:

1.0 Create the Niagara Gaming Institute

In partnership with Brock University, Niagara College and Silicon Knights, the Niagara Gaming Institute will bring the programs related to digital gaming under one organization and combine them with a strong industry presence in Silicon Knights. The Institute will allow for the development of a campus where research in interactive media can

be combined and enhanced with commercial and practical applications through Silicon Knights. Students can attend classes and work in the industry through various co-op opportunities. Concentrating efforts through a central institute, which can be built in the same complex as Silicon Knights, will allow for a flourishing of creative ideas putting Niagara on the world map as a centre for learning and creativity in digital gaming.

2.0 Develop a Sustainable Plan to Strengthen the Clustering of Interactive Media

Led by St. Catharines, NEDC, Brock University, Niagara College and Silicon Knights, a business plan must be developed which sets out timelines, commitments and metrics to strengthen interactive media in Niagara. As part of the plan, EDO offices, sector specific businesses and



academic institutions must immediately forge stronger ties and involvement in organizations such as Ontario's Technology Corridor, Toronto Region Research Alliance, the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance, and other Ontario industry and government led initiatives. This will ensure Niagara is linked into programs to bring development and growth to Ontario.

Playing a leadership role, Niagara's interactive media team must work with a broad group to make the Ontario proposition to foreign business investment attractive in this sector. This process begins with NEDC and St. Catharines EDTS working with the abovementioned organizations and forging partnerships with them to ensure Niagara is promoted as an interactive media hub to the worldwide market.



3.0 Anchoring Interactive Media at Brock and Niagara College

Around any knowledge-based industry cluster there must be strong academic institutions. Niagara needs to strengthen its post-secondary institutions' capacities in the field of interactive media. There has been a strong start at both Brock and Niagara College with the development of specific programs aimed directly at training and engaging students in the interactive media sector. The Interactive Arts and Sciences Program at Brock has taken a fresh approach of combining the humanities with today's and tomorrow's technologies. As well, Niagara College's new media programs, ability to adapt and its entrepreneurial aspirations through such off shoots as the Centre for Advanced Visualization has clearly established it as a significant contributor to the interactive cluster forming in Niagara.

Further development at Brock and Niagara should include:

- Generating national and international awareness of their interactive media programs.
- Creating more innovation and research opportunities aimed at interactive media.
- Increase in faculty dedicated to programs with a greater breadth and knowledge in the industry.
- Securing an additional Canada Research Chair at Brock in the field of Interactive Media.
- Exploring more commercial opportunities for the Centre for Advanced Visualization

There must also be a greater degree of collaboration and cooperation between Brock and Niagara to work on joint programs and to ensure they are meeting – and will meet – the expanding needs of the industry.

The academic institutions must also work in collaboration with other post secondary institutions in Ontario, which may offer some similar programs. In this way, Brock and Niagara can strengthen their niches in the interactive media cluster to not only build a strong Niagara presence, but also a stronger Ontario presence, which ensures greater coverage across the interactive media field.

In addition, Niagara's academic institutions should consider the interactive media programs of our American neighbours in upstate New York and consider the ways in which to partner with their academic institutions to help create a strong regional interactive media hub.

4.0 Incubating Next Generation Interactive Media Companies

As we build the interactive cluster in Niagara, we need

to encourage the growth of industry specific companies and to provide an outlet for the commercialization of research at Niagara's academic institutions. Niagara has taken an important step in creating the infrastructure to incubate next generation interactive media companies with the launch of nGen in 2008. In partnership with Silicon Knights, Brock University, Niagara College, St. Catharines Economic Development, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, Interactive Ontario and the Niagara Enterprise Agency, nGen's mandate is to provide the services, and start-up space for entrepreneurs in the interactive field. Currently, it is supported with the assistance of Ontario's Creative Partnership Fund, which is administered by the Ontario Media Development Corporation.

To build the interactive cluster in Niagara, nGen must be



successful. To accomplish this, the following must take place:

- Secure Niagara-based investment funds and private investment into nGen.
- Active involvement of the business community providing a suite of incubation services to the nGen companies.
- Launching of a venture capital investment series aimed at attracting investment from Niagara and beyond into the projects emerging from nGen.
- Key members must continue to provide leadership to nGen through involvement and financial assistance to ensure its long-term viability.

Path Three: Building Foundations of Health & Wellness

The prosperity of a community is not solely determined by its economic outputs. In today's competitive business environment – attracting and retaining business is more than just an exercise in lower taxes. Studies have shown that businesses are attracted to communities that are healthy, vibrant and active. The building of a new hospital in St. Catharines will act as a positive catalyst for our community. It will become an anchor and a symbol of health care advancement in Niagara. Whether raising a family or enjoying retirement, the new health care complex will be viewed as an important component of a community that is vibrant, healthy and prosperous.

Along with providing state-of-the-art health care, the new complex presents an opportunity to generate economic development, and investment both surrounding the new facility, and as an output

of the new and expanded services offered at the complex.

In addition, health and wellness research will provide significant commercial opportunities over the next 30 years and Niagara has the opportunity through Brock, Niagara College and VRIC to participate in these opportunities.

The following goals have been established to focus on generating economic opportunities from a concentration on health and wellness research and the new health care complex in St. Catharines:

1.0 Position Niagara as a Health & Wellness Centre for Research and Training

With the construction of a new state-of-the-art hospital, and regional health care facilities, St. Catharines has an opportunity to reposition itself as a centre of health and wellness in Niagara. Along with the Hotel Dieu Shaver



Rehabilitation Centre, there is a foundation from which to expand and develop new opportunities in the field of medicine and healthy living.

With an expansion of health care infrastructure and investment in new medical technologies at health care facilities, it is important for the Niagara Health System, and Hotel Dieu Shaver Rehabilitation Centre to forge even stronger links with Niagara College and Brock University as a means to strengthen the overall health care profession. Currently, Niagara College is a leader in health care training in a number of essential areas – and continuing to build and expand its programs will provide the skilled workforce that will be required in the coming years as Niagara's health care system grows.

In addition to expanded health care training programs,

it is imperative to invest in infrastructure that supports medical research. Attracting and retaining medical professionals is becoming increasingly competitive – and those regions that are successful have modern health care facilities, vibrant communities and access to medical research sites. From nursing to pharmacy to physiotherapists to physicians and medical specialists, there is an opportunity to further develop research capacities at Niagara's post secondary institutions as a means to support the medical profession in the region.

The Jack and Nora Walker Canadian Centre for Lifespan Development Research at Brock is an example of a leading research centre that can act as a catalyst to attract and retain medical professionals. It is unique because it brings together in a central location 62 faculty members



from seven of Brock's faculties, and more than 40 not-for-profit community organizations, to study human development from early childhood to old age. Linking the Canadian Centre for Lifespan Development Research further into the medical community could advance the depth of the research, and at the same time provide an environment for academic and medical professionals to collaborate on leading research that is much in demand.

2.0 Supporting Business Development in Medical and Related Sciences

The commercialization of medical and related sciences is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Driven by technology, government investment and increased connectivity between universities and businesses, the highly skilled, knowledge-driven

sector is emerging as the next generation of anchor industries that can sustain and help regional economies. Medical and related science industries include pharmaceuticals and nutraceuticals as well as traditional medical devices and biotech drug discovery. With two post-secondary institutions and the VRIC, the infrastructure is developing to support medical and related science business in Niagara. The development of the Natural Sciences and Biosciences Complex at Brock University will be an additional catalyst that launches Niagara's future in the medical and related sciences industry.

Currently in St. Catharines and Thorold there are companies that have successfully transitioned research in medical sciences into commercial companies. Companies such as Biolyse Pharma, The Mentholatum Company of Canada and Norgen Biotek are part of the medical

and related sciences sector – and each company has established itself within its field. Both Norgen and Biolyse started as research companies in Niagara and have evolved into commercial entities with successful products that are recognized around the world. The impact of knowledge-based companies in medical sciences on the economy of Niagara cannot be underestimated.

The Ontario government has created an incentive plan with its 10-year tax-free plan for companies that commercialize research from Ontario's post-secondary institutions. With the capacity to grow industries in the medical and related sciences in Niagara, the provincial government's investment in the Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex, and with the success of company's like Norgen

and Biolyse - regional government and business organizations must develop a comprehensive plan focused on building the medical and related sciences sector. The following are recommendations to accelerate this:

- Advocate for federal funding for the Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex.
- Link medical and related sciences at Brock and Niagara College into the Niagara Centre for the Commercialization of Research.
- Create a business case for the development of medical-related devices in Niagara by working with the Niagara Industrial Association to market Niagara's skilled workforce, and manufacturing infrastructure as a competitive asset for the production of high quality, low cost manufacturing.

3.0 Develop a Blueprint for the Development of State of the Art Health and Wellness Clusters Related to the new Health Care Facilities

With the building of the new hospital serving St. Catharines, Thorold and Niagara-on-the-Lake, and the additional regional care facilities that will be located at the site, it is critical to create an advisory panel comprising of health care, government, education and business to concentrate on developing health and wellness business opportunities with a fixed mandate and timeline. This should be led by NEDC and EDTS and must include an economic impact study of the new hospital and regional health care facilities. The study should identify gaps and opportunities in health care and wellness services in Niagara and the means in which to close

the gaps, and implement the opportunities.

In addition, St. Catharines must establish municipal planning policies with targeted incentives for health care related facilities, institutions and enterprises surrounding the new city hospital and regional health care facilities.

Path Four: Culture + Creativity + Tourism = Opportunity



Culture connects communities. It's a deeply rooted connection that comes from shared histories, experiences, pursuits, beliefs and languages. It's a thread that when weaved together creates a fabric that is strong and unique – it is what defines us. Niagara's culture is a wonderful collection of threads that when woven together create a colourful mosaic that captures the essential spirit of the community. In Niagara, culture is not bound by municipal borders – it's more profound than simply a line on a map. It's about a shared history of battles and victories, innovation and cultivation – it's about a shared sense of place.

Art acts as a reflection of a community. Cultivating art and more importantly – artists - strengthens the foundations of a community. Niagara is fortunate to have an established artists community. In fact, the Niagara

Artists Centre is the longest operating artists centre in Canada. Along with a collection of eclectic theatres, museums and art galleries – Niagara's creative spirit is flourishing.

And tourism is the attraction of people to communities. Drawn by the power of the Falls, millions of people visit Niagara annually. From the Falls to the natural beauty of the land to the idyllic settings of wineries and towns to Niagara's historical significance in Canadian history - people are attracted to Niagara. Tourism contributes significantly to Niagara's prosperity – and combined with Niagara's shared culture and growing creativity – there is an abundance of opportunity.

1.0 Strengthening Niagara's Cultural Assets

Celebrating Niagara's unique characteristics strengthens the region's identity and creates opportunities for economic

growth. There are a variety of festivals and events that act as time-specific attractors for the region. Festivals such as the Niagara Wine Festival series, Winter Festival of Lights and Canal Days attract hundreds of thousands of visitors – and act as economic generators. Government and business must continue to work with festivals and events to ensure long-term success and sustainability.

With the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 approaching, communities must work together across Niagara to renew and invest in attractions and tourism development. The three-year international celebration will bring a renewed interest in the region with a potential drawing power of millions of visitors. For example, in Thorold there are number of prominent heritage sites related to the War of 1812. A plan must be developed to invest in the sites,

and create legacy projects that will generate long-term cultural and tourism assets for the city and the region.

Concurrently with the investment and development of the 1812 celebrations and sites, cities along the Welland Canal must work collaboratively to redevelop the Welland Canal Heritage Corridor. The rich history of the Welland Canal system presents a unique opportunity to showcase the innovative history that has come to define the region. With natural physical connections, the heritage corridor represents an opportunity to create an attractor that will strengthen Niagara's tourism infrastructure. The corridor should be developed in conjunction with the preparations of the 1812 celebrations as a means to extend the tourism experience.

The development and reinforcement of Niagara's culture assets must be a collaborative

between business, academia, community organizations and all orders of government.

2.0 Intensify the Creative Sectors in Downtown St. Catharines

With the relocation of Brock University's Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine & Performing Arts to downtown St. Catharines, there is a tremendous opportunity to adopt a cultural planning model to identify clusters of creative sectors and activity for the downtown area. With the Downtown Creative Cluster Masterplan (release date set for early 2009), the city will have a guiding document that must form the foundation of the redevelopment of downtown St. Catharines. Steps for consideration include:

- Immediately evaluate cultural assets and creative organizations in the community and establish a creative hub



anchored by the School of Fine & Performing Arts and a new performing arts centre.

- Develop an approach to support and expand creative industries that includes business, the creative community and government.
- Develop a plan that employs land planning policies and fiscal incentives to encourage the clustering of creative class industries – including the arts, cultural industries, new media, design and other creative focused sectors.

3.0 Leveraging Tourism as an Economic Asset

St. Catharines and Thorold have unique tourism attractors that can be strengthened and better linked into the larger Niagara tourism strategy. By focusing on the development of tourism infrastructure that positions the cities to be destinations within

Niagara – more economic activity will be generated, which will strengthen the Niagara tourism brand at the same time. The cities should take a leadership role in combining tourism efforts through the natural link of the Welland Canal ensuring that marketing materials and visitor’s guides cover both cities. As well, the cities along the Welland Canal must create a tourism masterplan focused on the heritage of the Welland Canals.

In St. Catharines, the city should establish a tourism office in downtown St. Catharines that is accessible by visitors – and the Old Court House would be an ideal location. With the completion of the conversion of St. Paul St. and King St. to two-way traffic, St. Catharines Downtown BIA and the city’s economic development office must prepare a wine tourism marketing strategy in conjunction



with Wine Council of Ontario with the re-routing of the wine route through downtown St. Catharines. At the same time the EDTS must implement targeted land development strategies in the downtown aimed at attracting tourism-oriented businesses.

Path Five: Linking into Green Opportunities

Niagara has a long history of generating green power and it continues to be the single largest source of green energy production in Ontario. Hydropower once provided a competitive advantage for Niagara as it powered the industrial base that became the economic backbone of the region. Although Niagara's large scale manufacturing base has been greatly diminished, it is still very much a leader in hydropower development – which should be utilized as an anchor in Niagara's transition into the green sector of the economy.

The green economy is not a fad. New technologies and increased pressure to move beyond fossil fuels will continue to provide the seeds for innovation and business development. As companies and governments examine ways to reduce carbon footprints, and to gain competitive edges, the



green economy will continue to grow. Niagara is in a position to re-establish itself as a green community – and to take a leadership role in growing green business opportunities that will not only strengthen the local economy – but also create a place in which business will relocate, invest and flourish.

In addition, people want to live in green communities. By becoming such communities, St. Catharines and Thorold will provide additional reasons for individuals and businesses to come and stay.

The following goals have been established to focus on linking into green opportunities:

1.0 Re-claim Niagara as a Green Community

The large industrial base that once defined Niagara helped to erode the area's image as a green community. With the creation of

the Greenbelt Act by the Ontario government, the generation of hydroelectric power on Niagara's rivers and on the Welland Canal, the construction of a co-generation plant at AbitibiBowater by Northland Power, the building of a wind farm in Wainfleet and the strong image of Niagara's wineries, Niagara can re-claim its position as a green community. In doing so, the region - along with its municipalities - must catalogue its green assets to support the assertion that Niagara is a leading producer of green energy, sustainable projects, brownfield redevelopment and environmentally sensitive land use policies. This in turn will reposition Niagara – and become an anchor to attract green-sector focused business – and businesses looking to be a part of a green community.

2.0 Region and municipalities must adopt green focused initiatives to reinforce Niagara's green position

To be green, municipalities must act green. Greening cities is an example where public and private partnerships come together to produce long-term benefits, and generate immediate economic activity. The Council explored a number of initiatives that should be considered as a means to strengthen Niagara's green index, such as:

- Create incentive programs to switch Niagara's taxi services to hybrid/flex fuel.
- Create incentives for builders to construct environmentally sensitive, LEED certified homes.
- Establish a made-in-Niagara public transit system to move people between communities in an environmentally sensitive system.

- Implement policies for the creation of Green Incubation Parks.
- Implement regulations that all new municipal and regional building are leading green design/build structures.
- Create a position at the Region - Chief Green Officer (CGO) to manage Niagara's green growth.
- Regional government, local municipalities, public institutions and businesses to adopt green focused procurement strategy.
- Commit to running all municipal buildings on green energy by 2020.

These are only a selection of the recommendations that should be explored and more work needs to be undertaken in consultation with environmental groups, communities, businesses and institutions to further advance the greening of Niagara's communities.



3.0 Develop Centres of Excellence in the Fields of Green Technology and Agriculture at Brock University/Niagara College and Vineland Research and Innovation Centre

Niagara has three institutions with the capacities to generate innovative research and development for the green sector. There is a tremendous opportunity to work with the institutions to develop areas of excellence and expertise that will not only provide opportunities for commercial applications, but can generate leading edge green products that can be manufactured in Niagara and exported to the world.

In examining the opportunities at Niagara's research institutions, the areas that should be considered to further develop Niagara's green capacities include:



- The building of the Natural Sciences and Biosciences Complex at Brock University to provide the space required for the development of green-focused research and development.
- Develop chemical process focused engineering department at Brock and secure a Canada Research Chair in Environmental Studies.
- Develop LEED certified training and apprenticeship programs at Niagara College.
- Develop green technology programs and research base for alternative energy at Niagara College
- Utilize environmental graduate students from Niagara College's Environment and Geomatics Centre for greening projects with local industry and communities.
- Build a focused, defined alliance

between Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture, Vineland Research and Innovation Centre and Niagara College forging a national centre of excellence in grape, wine, and tender fruit research and development.

- Build stronger collaboration between agricultural sector, greenhouse industry and post-secondary institutions to ensure alignment of research needs and trained workforce.

In terms of small measures that can have even greater impacts, Niagara College, Brock and VRIC must ensure that their marketing material promotes the green assets of Niagara. As youth are a driving force in environmental movements, re-claiming Niagara as a green community should be reinforced in the student attraction packages produced by public institutions.

4.0 Establish a Niagara Centre of Environmental Stewardship

Based on Niagara's environmental assets, there is an opportunity to develop a centre focused on environmental stewardship. Led by environmental organizations, business, government and academia, the NCES will be a centralized organization that focuses on fostering, leading and measuring Niagara's green outputs and impacts. The NCES will act as an agent for environmental stewardship, strengthen Niagara's core environmental assets and working collaboratively with existing agencies like the Niagara Escarpment Commission towards the greening of Niagara.

5.0 Develop Green Business Enhancement Strategy

Simply being green will not be enough to attract business and

investment to the community. There needs to be a coordinated effort by economic development agencies to create a Green Business Enhancement Strategy with input and direction from business. The strategy must focus on positioning Niagara within the new green economy, identifying the region's core competitive assets in emerging green sectors, and devising a plan that will attract and build new businesses within those sectors.

6.0 Strengthen Niagara's Agriculture Industry

Agriculture in Niagara is a competitive green asset – one that will only grow in importance as countries look to build self-sustaining food sources. The provincial government has taken important steps in protecting Niagara's valuable tender fruit lands with the Greenbelt Act. With a strong wine industry, and

an impressive greenhouse sector, the foundation is in place – but there is much more work that must be done to build the economic capacity of Niagara's agriculture industry. The closing of the Cadbury Schweppes grape juice processing plant in St. Catharines and the Cangro canning factory in Niagara-on-the-Lake has created a broken link in the loop from the fields to the store shelves. The links need to be rebuilt, and new business models launched to ensure long-term sustainability for agriculture. The following are recommendations that can enhance the competitive agricultural assets in Niagara:

- Develop an economic investment strategy aimed at attracting agriculturally based business to locate to Niagara, and provide incentives for the development of market-ready local food products.

- Expand Niagara College's precision agriculture research program to develop high technology solutions for sustainable agriculture.
- Increase collaboration between Niagara College, Brock and VRIC to develop leading organic and sustainable agricultural practices through focused research and committee leadership.
- Launch a multi-media 'Made in Niagara' local food campaign with established measurement targets to ensure success of campaign.
- Create Niagara local food web site designed to catalogue Niagara's agricultural assets, and educate consumers about local farming, and food production in the area.
- Launch VQA-only wine stores in strategic locations along Niagara's wine route.
- Capture current VQA restaurant sales and consumer sales in Niagara - and set aggressive targets to increase VQA sales in Niagara.
- Strengthen Niagara Wine Festivals and ensure local food component is expanded at all local festivals.
- Develop marketing campaigns around farmer's markets in Niagara, and allocate resources to develop an on-line component to increase awareness about local foods offered at markets.

Path One: Organic Business Acceleration and Incubation

- Build capacity of entrepreneurs to start and expand businesses
- Improve access to capital for SMEs
- Integrate business, government and post secondary institutions in business incubation and business development
- Commercialize research at Brock University, Niagara College and Vineland Research and Innovation Centre

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
<p>1. Commercialize research and innovation from post secondary institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a roster of companies/professionals interested in being a part of a suite of service providers at Niagara Centre for the Commercialization of Research and Innovation (NCCRI). (SUMMER '09) Leaders: Chamber, EDO ▪ Form an Incubation Advisory Council with the goal of launching a NCCRI. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, Chamber ▪ NCCRI to establish a network including Brock, Niagara College, retired executives, business professionals, venture capitalists, investors and government to provide an infrastructure support network for incubation centre. (FALL '09) ▪ Ensure Intellectual Patent agreements at Brock, Niagara College and VRIC facilitates commercialization of research. (FALL '09) ▪ Seek and secure financial support for the development of a Niagara Incubation Fund as seed funding for start-ups at NCCRI. (SPRING '10) Leaders: NCCRI, Chamber, EDO. ▪ Brock and Niagara College to immediately align courses/instructors in applicable fields with mandate of NCCRI. (FALL '10) ▪ Secure location for NCCRI. (WINTER '10) Leaders: City of St. Catharines, Brock
<p>2. Enhance research and innovation infrastructure and capacities at Brock University, Niagara College and Vineland Research & Innovation Centre (VRIC).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure funding from all orders of government and the business community for the building of a Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex at Brock University. (SPRING '09) Leaders: Brock ▪ Develop collaboration methods to create increased awareness about research at Brock University, Niagara College and VRIC within the local business community. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, VRIC ▪ Ensure defined incubation space be made available at the Niagara Health & Biosciences Research Complex and the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre. (WINTER '10) Leaders: Brock, VRIC ▪ Build an advocacy model that includes academia, business and government to advocate for advanced research grants and investments based on centres of excellence and potential for commercialization at post secondary institutions. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, EDO, Chamber
<p>3. Develop process to transition post-secondary graduates with entrepreneurial ideas into start-up businesses in Niagara.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen links between business community and business programs at post secondary level. (SPRING '09) Leaders: Chamber, Brock, Niagara College, Niagara Workforce Planning Board (NWPB) ▪ Link business community into student business plan competitions with a goal of providing start-up assistance to at least two plans per year. (SPRING '09) Leaders: Chamber, EDO, Small Business Enterprise Centre
<p>4. Target local SMEs to increase output and competitiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve access to capital through working with investment community and all orders of government - and ensuring the business community is fully aware, and can access modes of capital investment opportunities. (SPRING '09) Leaders: Chamber, EDO ▪ Ensure the long-term sustainability of Niagara College's Workforce Development Program. (SPRING '09) Leaders: Niagara College, NEDC ▪ Programs like BizPal should continue, and access to additional municipal and region business services should be advanced in keeping with new technology to support customer service. (SPRING '09) Leaders: EDO ▪ Catalogue all available services for businesses and ensure that information is provided with advanced technologies. (SUMMER '09) Leaders: EDO, Small Business Enterprise Centre
<p>5. Ensure an "open for business" approach at city hall.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a strategy to strengthen and support existing businesses combined with a plan to attract new strategic businesses based on proven competitive assets analysis. (SPRING '09) Leaders: EDO ▪ Implement recommendations from Open For Business Report by the St. Catharines Development Process Review Taskforce. (FALL/WINTER '09) Leaders: St. Catharines City Council/CAO ▪ Develop a business development plan for Thorold. (FALL '09) Leaders: City of Thorold, NEDC, Chamber ▪ Create a multi-media marketing campaign that highlights St. Catharines/Thorold as open for business - include profile in Perspectives - a community profile insert into the Globe & Mail. (FALL '09) Leaders: EDO ▪ Establishment of land planning policies with targeted incentives for the creation of innovation parks/incubation sites. (WINTER '10) Leaders: City of St. Catharines and City of Thorold

Path Two: Capitalizing On Interactive Media Cluster Development

- Establish St. Catharines - Niagara as the capital of interactive media development
- Anchor nGen as the incubation centre for interactive media
- Strengthen links between interactive media sector and post secondary institutions

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
1. Develop a long-term strategic business plan to build and strengthen the cluster of interactive media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of business plan to include Chamber, Brock University, Niagara College, interactive media businesses and regional and municipal government with timelines, targets and metrics to measure success. (SUMMER '09) Leaders: nGEN, NEDC and St. Catharines EDTS ▪ Include interactive media cluster in Downtown St. Catharines in official land planning policy. (FALL '09) Leaders: City of St. Catharines
2. Ensure the success of nGen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a suite of incubation services provided by the local business community. (SPRING '09) Leaders: nGEN, Chamber ▪ Secure Niagara-based investment funds and private investment into nGen. (SUMMER '09) Leaders: nGEN, NEDC, St. Catharines EDTS, Chamber ▪ Launch a venture capital investment series with nGen aimed at attracting investment from Niagara and beyond into projects under the supervision of nGen. (FALL '09) Leaders: nGen, NEDC, St. Catharines EDTS ▪ Identify and strengthen links of Brock's Faculty of Business and Niagara College business programs to nGen. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock and Niagara College ▪ Work with nGen to identify potential entrepreneurs in the sector. (WINTER '09) Leaders: NEDC, Brock, Niagara College
3. Position Niagara as a centre for interactive media by forging stronger ties and involvement in organizations such as Ontario's Technology Corridor, Toronto Region Research Alliance, and Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordination between NEDC and St. Catharines Economic Development office to ensure participation within identified interactive media organizations. (WINTER '09) Leaders: NEDC, St. Catharines EDTS ▪ Host meetings and forums organized by identified organizations to showcase and create awareness about interactive media capacity and encourage involvement in organizations by Niagara-based interactive media companies. (SPRING '10) Leaders: nGEN, NEDC ▪ Launch the Niagara Gaming Institute in partnership with Brock, Niagara College, Silicon Knights and associated business/organizations with purpose of promoting, researching and guiding the overall development of Niagara's interactive gaming industry. (FALL '10) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, NEDC, NWPB
4. Strengthen Niagara's post-secondary institutions capacities in the field of interactive media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generate greater national and international awareness for Brock University and Niagara College programs aimed at Interactive Media. (FALL/WINTER '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College ▪ Increase faculty at post secondary institutions with breadth and knowledge in Interactive Media. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College ▪ Refine and strengthen commitment to programs to meet needs of Interactive Media Cluster. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College ▪ Brock and Niagara College will work with nGen and local interactive media companies to ensure faculty at both institutions meet the current and future needs of the industry. (WINTER '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College ▪ Secure a Canada Research Chair for Brock University in the field of Interactive Media. (FALL '10) Leaders: Brock

Path Three: Building Foundations of Health & Wellness

- Integration of new hospital with healthcare focused businesses
- New business development in targeted emerging markets of health and wellness
- Expansion of pharmaceutical and nutraceutical companies and commercialization of research in those fields at Niagara's post secondary institutions

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
1. Position Niagara as a Health & Wellness Centre for Research and Training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Brock's Canadian Centre for Lifespan Development and Research as a centre of excellence in the area of studying human development. (SPRING '10) Leader: Brock, NHS, Hotel Dieu Shaver ▪ Working with health care professionals, develop a strategy to increase research capacities at Niagara's post-secondary institutions. (FALL '10) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, NHS, Hotel Dieu Shaver ▪ Develop process to connect post secondary research capabilities with new regional healthcare facilities. (FALL '10) Leaders: NHS, Brock, Niagara College, Hotel Dieu Shaver ▪ Ensure current post secondary health care training programs are linked and advanced at new facility and within community care clinics. (FALL '10) Leaders: NHS, Brock, Niagara College
2. Develop a blueprint for the development of state of the art health and wellness clusters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ St. Catharines Economic Development and NEDC immediately conduct an economic impact study on the new hospital and regional health care facilities. (FALL '09) ▪ Establish municipal planning policies with targeted incentives for health care related facilities, institutions and enterprises surrounding new Greater St. Catharines Hospital and Regional Health Care Facilities. (FALL '09) Leader: City of St. Catharines ▪ Create an advisory panel comprising of health care, government, education and business to concentrate on developing health and wellness business opportunities with a fixed mandate and timeline. (SPRING '10) Leaders: NEDC, Region, NHS, Hotel Dieu Shaver, Chamber, Brock, Niagara College ▪ Identify gaps and opportunities in health care and wellness services in Niagara. (WINTER '10) Leaders: NHS, NEDC, NWPB ▪ Identify community care clinic clusters in Niagara and ensure that land planning policies and city regulations expedite the creation and sustainability of clusters. Leaders: NHS, Region, municipalities
3. Supporting business development in medical and related sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate for the federal funding for the Natural Sciences and Biosciences Complex at Brock University. ▪ Create business plan for the development of medical-related devices in Niagara. (FALL '09) Leaders: NEDC, Niagara Industrial Association ▪ Link medical and related sciences at Brock and Niagara College into the Niagara Centre for the Commercialization of Research and Innovation. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, NCCRI
4. Re-image Niagara as a state of the art health & wellness centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop health industry focused marketing plan to attract health care professionals and associated businesses. (FALL '09) Leader: NEDC ▪ Conduct a needs assessment and quality of life survey with health care professionals working in Niagara to better understand needs and expectations of the sector. (SPRING '09) Leaders: NEDC, NHS, EDTS, NWPB, Hotel Dieu Shaver ▪ Launch a Niagara Health & Wellness on-line site marketing the Region as a destination for quality healthcare and wellness programming. (SPRING '11) Leader: NEDC
5. Develop a Niagara-wide physician recruitment plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consolidate municipal physician recruitment programs into a Niagara Physician Recruitment Plan. (WINTER '10) Leaders: Region, municipalities ▪ Enhance physician recruitment program with greater community involvement. (i.e.) Physician Welcome Committee. (SPRING '10)

Path Four: Culture + Creativity + Tourism = Opportunity

- Establishment of Brock’s School of Fine & Performing Arts and a Performing Arts Centre in downtown St. Catharines
- Development of creative cluster hub in downtown St. Catharines
- Increase in tourism-related business and tourist in downtown St. Catharines
- Creation and strengthening of tourism infrastructure and services connected to War of 1812 Bicentennial and Welland Canal Heritage Corridor development

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
<p>1. Strengthen Niagara’s cultural assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a strategic plan to revitalize War of 1812 sites in Thorold inconjunction with a Niagara-wide War of 1812 Bicentennial celebration preparations. (FALL '09) Leaders: War 1812 organizing committee, NEDC, City of Thorold ▪ Welland Canal cities to create a tourism masterplan focused on the heritage of the Welland Canals. (WINTER '10) Leaders: St. Catharines, Thorold, Welland, Port Colborne ▪ Strengthen Icewine Festival in Downtown St. Catharines. (WINTER '10) Leaders: EDTS, Chamber ▪ Secure designation of the the Old Welland Canal sites as a nationally recognized heritage site and develop plan to revitalize aspects of the old canal system. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Canal cities, local EDOs ▪ Create a catalogue of all festivals and events in Niagara and develop a year-round marketing campaign that highlights events and festivals - and include related business services as part of the marketing. (SPRING '10) Leaders: NEDC, local EDOs
<p>2. Intensify the creative sectors in downtown St. Catharines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop long-term strategic plan and timeline to implement the Downtown Creative Cluster Master Plan (FALL '09) Leaders: Downtown Revitalization Committee, EDTS, St. Catharines Culture Committee, St. Catharines and Area Arts Council, NAC. ▪ Develop a downtown marketing plan that includes incentives to encourage the clustering of creative class industries in the downtown. (WINTER '10) Leaders: EDTS, Downtown Revitalization Committee, St. Catharines and Area Arts Council, NAC
<p>3. Leveraging tourism as an economic asset</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete traffic conversion of St. Paul St. and King St. (SUMMER '09) ▪ Implement targeted land development strategies in the downtown aimed at attracting tourism-oriented businesses. (WINTER '10) Leaders: EDTS ▪ Move St. Catharines Tourism Services to the Old Court House and create a visitor’s storefront located within the Old Court House. (SPRING '10) Leaders: St. Catharines EDTS/ City Council ▪ St. Catharines Downtown BIA to invest in wine route gateway entrances into downtown St. Catharines. (2009/10) ▪ Launch a Tourism & Convention Bureau for St. Catharines/Thorold. (SPRING '10) Leaders: EDTS ▪ EDTS and BIA to prepare a wine marketing strategy in conjunction with Wine Council of Ontario with re-routing of wine route through downtown St. Catharines. (SPRING '10)

Path Five: Linking into Green Opportunities

- Niagara is recognized as a green community
- Increase in the number of green-focused businesses and approaches to business
- Post-secondary integration of green-focused programming and skills training
- Government and public institutions adoption of green policies

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
1. Re-claim Niagara as a Green Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create Green Quality of Life Index for Niagara. (FALL '09) Leaders: Region ▪ Region and municipalities to catalogue green assets to build business case that Niagara is a leading producer of green energy, sustainable projects, brownfield redevelopment and environmentally sensitive land use policies. (FALL '09) Leaders: Region ▪ Ensure that all marketing materials produced by Brock and Niagara College reflect and market Niagara's green attributes as a means to attract students and young professionals. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College ▪ Launch website focused on Niagara's green assets as a means to attract visitors, potential residents, and businesses seeking to be a part of a green community. (WINTER '10) Leaders: Region ▪ Launch a Green Tourism Marketing Campaign. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Region
2. Region and municipalities must adopt green focused initiatives to reinforce Niagara's green position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create incentive program to switch Niagara's taxi services to hybrid/flex fuel. (FALL '09) Leaders: Region, Municipalities ▪ Implement policies for the creation of Green Incubation Parks. (FALL '09) Leaders: NEDC, Region, Municipalities ▪ Implement regulations that all new municipal and regional building are leading green design/build structures. (FALL '09) Leaders: Region, Municipalities ▪ Create a position at Region - Chief Green Officer to manage Niagara's green growth. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Region ▪ Create incentives for builders to construct environmentally sensitive homes - LEED certified subdivision. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Region, Municipalities ▪ Establish a made-in-Niagara public transit system to move people between communities in an environmentally sensitive system. (SPRING '10) Leaders: Transit Commissions (Boards)/Region
3. Develop Centres of Excellence in the fields of Green Technology, Agriculture and Industries at Brock University/ Niagara College and Vineland Research and Innovation Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure the Natural Sciences & Biosciences Complex at Brock includes allocation of space for green-focused research. ▪ Advocate for increased research funding for agriculture at Niagara institutions and companies. Leaders: Chamber, NEDC, EDTS ▪ Build stronger collaboration between agricultural sector, greenhouse industry and post-secondary institutions to ensure alignment of research needs, and trained workforce. Leaders: NEDC, NWPB ▪ Build a focused, defined alliance between Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture, Vineland Research and Innovation Centre and Niagara College forging a national centre of excellence in grape, wine, and tender fruit research and development. (FALL '09) Leaders: Brock, Niagara College, VRIC ▪ Develop green technology programs and research base for alternative energy at Niagara College (SPRING '10) Leaders: Niagara College, NEDC ▪ Develop chemical process focused engineering department at Brock. (FALL '10) Leaders: Brock ▪ Secure a Canada Research Chair in Environmental Studies at Brock University. (FALL '10) Leaders: Brock ▪ Develop LEED certified training programs at Niagara College. (FALL '10)
4. Re-image Niagara as a state of the art health & wellness centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consists of business, government and academia, the NCEC will be a centralized organization that focuses on fostering, leading and measuring Niagara's green outputs and impacts. (WINTER '10) Leaders: Climate Action Now, Region, Brock, Niagara College, Niagara Escarpment Commission
5. Develop Green Business Enhancement Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase regional/provincial investment in green power projects in Niagara. (IMMEDIATELY) Leaders: Region, municipalities ▪ Identify and target green energy leaders and developers in the world, and design a plan to attract satellite branches and partnerships to Niagara. (IMMEDIATELY) Leaders: NEDC ▪ Region, municipalities, public institutions and businesses to adopt green focused procurement strategy. (SPRING '09) Leaders: Chamber ▪ Coordinated by Economic Development/Region create a Green Business Enhancement Strategy with input and direction from business. Action oriented strategy. (SUMMER '09) Leaders: NEDC, Region ▪ Advocate to the provincial government and Ontario Chamber of Commerce to develop a made in Ontario quota agreement for the investment and construction of green power units and infrastructure in Ontario. (FALL '09) Leaders: Chamber ▪ Host a Green Business Forum. (SPRING '10) Leaders: NEDC, EDTS, Chamber
6. Strengthen Niagara's Agriculture Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch a multi-media 'Made in Niagara' local food campaign with established measurement targets to ensure success of campaign. (SUMMER '09) Leaders: Region/Municipalities, Chamber ▪ Create a Niagara local food web site designed to catalogue Niagara's agricultural assets, and educate consumers about local farming, and produce production in the area. (FALL '09) Leaders: Region ▪ Develop marketing campaigns around farmers' markets in Niagara, and allocate resources to develop on-line component to increase awareness about local foods offered at markets. (FALL '09) Leaders: Region, municipalities ▪ Expand Niagara College's precision agriculture research capacity to develop high technology solutions for sustainable agriculture. (FALL '10) Leaders: Niagara College ▪ Increase collaboration between Niagara College, Brock and VRIC to develop leading organic and sustainable agricultural practices through focused research and committee leadership. (FALL '10) ▪ Develop economic investment strategy aimed at attracting agriculturally-based business to locate to Niagara, and province incentives for the development of market-ready local food products. (WINTER '10) Leaders: NEDC ▪ Launch VQA-only wine stores in strategic locations along Niagara's wine route. (SPRING '10) ▪ Set aggressive targets to increase VQA sales in Niagara. ▪ Ensure local food component is expanded at all local festivals.

Thanks!

Chimpanzee (www.chimpanzee.ca) for Design and Artwork.

Chris Beard and **City of St. Catharines Tourism Services** for Photography.

Additional thanks for their valuable input:

Mr. Phil Ritchie - Keefer Developments

Mr. Carmen Sferrazza - ASI Group

Dr. Barry Wright - Faculty of Business - Brock University

Dean Rosemary Hale - Faculty of Humanities - Brock University

Mr. Sean Kennedy - Vice President - Student & Community Relations - Niagara College

➤ **Secretariat of the St. Catharines - Thorold Prosperity Council**
Walter Sendzik, Executive Vice President & General Manager
St. Catharines - Thorold Chamber of Commerce

➤ wsendzik@sctchamber.com

➤ 905-684-2361

➤ www.sctchamber.com