

# The Brock-Lincoln Living Lab: Sustainability Action Plan

2019



Town of  
  
Lincoln

**Brock**  
University

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# Community Vision

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a place to  
**GROW**

a place to  
**PROSPER**

a place to  
**BELONG**

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## **A place to grow:**

Youth, aging in place, agriculture – growing crops, farming, greenhouse support, business growth, early childhood development (youth), proper planning and growing smart, growing your family here in Lincoln

## **A place to prosper:**

A place for small/medium businesses to succeed, opportunities, job creation, tourism, destination, local markets, festivals, beautification, industrial parks, prosperity, community vibrancy, innovation

## **A place to belong:**

Maintain community feeling, connectedness, more local events, support for families, history and heritage, local markets, local and unique festivals, moving around town, one community



# Message from Michael Kirkopoulos, Town of Lincoln CAO

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A Living Laboratory formally connects a community with a university research centre through a network of community leaders, policy makers, academic researchers, and students.

Lincoln's partnership with Brock is a shared commitment to exploring and investigating issues vital to the community's wellbeing in alignment with our Council priorities.

We have had significant success with this initiative since its establishment in 2017. From experiential learning opportunities to sustainability research, the Brock Lincoln Living Lab (BL-LL) has been a mutually beneficial relationship for both organizations. BL-LL gives the Town access to invaluable research specific to Lincoln, which helps guide future policy development and decision-making around environmental sustainability. For Brock, it enhances the educational experience for students by bridging the gap between theory and practice, giving them in-the-field experience.

Lincoln is proud to contribute to this innovative endeavour in building a resilient community and looks forward to continuing to grow this important partnership.

# Message from Greg Finn, Provost of Brock University

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In 2017, Brock University was proud to sign the official agreement with the Town of Lincoln to officially launch what is now the Brock-Lincoln Living Lab (BL-LL).

One of the University's four strategic priorities is to enhance the life and vitality of communities in our local region and beyond. Our partnership with Lincoln is a perfect opportunity to pursue this commitment further. While Brock researchers work alongside Lincoln's leaders, helping guide the Town's smart development, the collaboration also provides invaluable experiential learning for our students.

This action plan for the BL-LL outlines the steps that both parties will take to assist Lincoln in becoming a sustainable and complete community. We know that we will see positive outcomes from this plan, because we have learned that progress can be made quickly when we work together with community partners.

It is a priority for us at Brock to nurture strong and productive relationships with community partners to assist in building community capacity through evidence-based decision-making processes.

We will continue to build upon our successful partnership with the Town of Lincoln!

# Introduction

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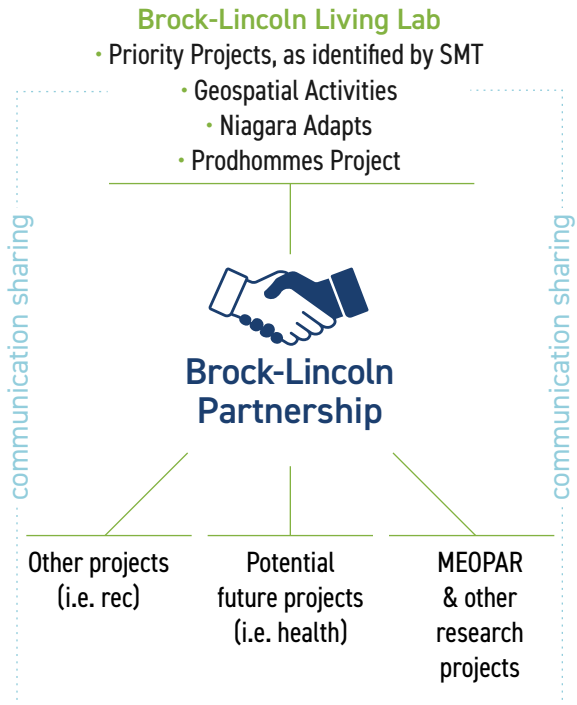


The Town of Lincoln is strongly committed to be a sustainable community. A sustainable community balances social well-being, resource protection, economic opportunities, and environmental responsibilities to meet the needs of the present without compromising the quality of life for future generations. Sustainability is also an ongoing and dynamic process which requires the Town of Lincoln to navigate changes.

In 2017 the Town of Lincoln and Brock University came together to form the Brock-Lincoln Living Lab (BL-LL). This collaborative venture focuses on community sustainability. The assets of the Town of Lincoln were initially inventoried and then information was collected through an environmental scan, providing insights into the internal and external influences shaping the community now and in the future. Against that backdrop, faculty from Brock facilitated two workshops in which the Town of Lincoln's Senior Management Team came together to discuss criteria constituting success, prioritize projects relating to sustainability, and devise an operational action plan for the Brock-Lincoln Living Lab.



This operational action plan has three parts. It begins by framing sustainability in terms of the seven dimensions set out in the Town of Lincoln Official Plan and identifying the projects prioritized by the Senior Management Team. The second part sets forth the requirements for taking actions on priority projects. The final section highlights key touchstones for success. This brochure is meant to provide a summary of the larger operational action plan for the Brock-Lincoln Living Lab.



# Project 1: Community Hub

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The focus of Project 1 is to develop a sustainable community hub. Community hubs are a space that offer co-located or integrated services such as education, health services, social services, business development and/or municipal services.

## Goals

The project consists of the following goals: co-ordinated planning and partnerships, client-focused service delivery of integrated community services and infrastructure/public properties that maximize community benefit. This project is scheduled to be completed by Quarter 3 of 2020.

- **Groups involved:** CAO, CCO, Brock-Lincoln Living Lab team, Niagara Region Public Health, Economic Development Officer, Council, and community funding stakeholders
- **Action items for success:** Outlining return on investment, creating project framework and securing physical space



# Project 2: Economic Development Strategy

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The focus of Project 2 is to develop a sustainable economic development strategy. This strategy would promote jobs and growth for the Town of Lincoln for the long term.

## Goals

Goals of the project include: town economic development policies, business retention and expansion, innovation and entrepreneurship, and workforce development/marketing to attract talent, visitors and investors.

The timeline for the project is 2018-2023 based on the 5-year strategy.

- **Groups involved:** Economic Development Department, all members of the Senior Management Team, provincial ministries, and federal ministries
- **Action items for success:** Associated workplans/frameworks for implementation of the Economic Development Strategy, Innovation and Partnership and Post-Secondary Research Partnership and Small Business Growth

# Project 3:

## Tourism Strategy

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The focus of Project 3 is to develop a sustainable tourism plan for the Town of Lincoln. This plan consists of two parts to be developed by the end of 2019. The first part is a general tourism strategy and the second is an action plan.

### Goals

The main goal of this project is to make Lincoln one of the top sustainable tourism destinations in Niagara.

- **Groups involved:** Public Works Staff, Community Services and the Economic Development/Planning Team
- **Action items for success:** Development of a tourism strategy for Lincoln, develop tourism action plan

# Project 4: Water for Agriculture

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The focus of Project 4 is to develop an updated and sustainable agricultural irrigation system. This project is a four-part plan which includes: implementing an action plan, implementing a financial plan, changing the town regional official plan policies, and considering options for the irrigation system and the use of municipal water. This project would help to ensure that farmers don't run out of water during the summer months. Although expanding municipal water lines is expensive, water is a crucial resource and central to the region's sustainability.

- **Groups involved:** Region and Town Planning, Public Works, Agricultural community, Senior Management Team
- **Action items for success:** Changes to town regional official plan policies, Options for irrigation, Options for use of municipal water, Development of Financial Plan for Implementation

# Project 5: Infiltration/ Inflow Reduction Program

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The focus of Project 5 is to improve the current storm water system. Urbanization and climate change are increasing the infiltration/inflow demands on the water system. Project 5 is a two-part plan to address this excess storm water. First, a town wide strategy will be developed by studying an ongoing assessment that is currently taking place in a pilot area. Then, best practices will be developed to minimize basement flooding, overflows to the environment, reduce treatment costs and increase the system capacity for growth. The first part of the plan is scheduled to be completed by Quarter 2, 2020 and the second by the end of the five-year project timeline.

- **Groups involved:** Manager of Environmental Services & Public Works, town consultants, Niagara Region
- **Action items for success:** Ongoing assessment (currently in a pilot area-want to expand Town wide), Develop best practices to minimize basement flooding, overflows to the environment, reduce treatment costs and free up system capacity for growth

# Project 6: Urban Tree Canopy



The focus of Project 6 is to develop an inventory of the urban tree canopy for the Town of Lincoln with the use of geospatial technologies. An urban tree canopy shows the woody vegetation found on urban streets, residential properties and parks. An urban tree canopy inventory is important in order to monitor the municipality's ecological health and to identify preferred sites for tree plantings. This project is expected to take three years.

- **Groups involved:** ESRC, Brock University, Department of Community Services and Geospatial Niagara

- **Action items for success:** Develop an MS PowerPoint presentation on the importance of the UTC, Apply for Match-of-Minds funds to support a research assistant to develop and implement a digital UTC inventory database using the Tree-o-Code Niagara platform, Develop and populate a spreadsheet template of the existing UTC data for the Town, Import the spreadsheet template into the Tree-o-Code Niagara database.

# Project 7: The 'Prudhommes Project'- *Experimenting and Learning Together to Build Resilience in a Settled Landscape*

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The Prudhommes Project in the Town of Lincoln is a multi-phase development project located in the Twenty Valley watershed on the Lake Ontario waterfront. It will eventually be home to about 1,200 residents and will be one of the largest developments in Ontario. The project provides a unique opportunity for The Town of Lincoln, Brock University, and the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre to work together with FBH Ontario Incorporated to create a showcase for Canadian resilient landscapes. The Prudhommes Project will engage in a six-stage process to establish a basis of performance regarding low-impact development, stewardship, community well-being, and natural assets. The project will then take careful consideration to feedback in order to allow for learning and adjustments. The entire process will likely take up to three five-year cycles.

- **Groups involved:** The Town of Lincoln, Brock University, the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, FBH Ontario Incorporated
- **Action items for success:** Develop MOU and initiate project, Scope and resource project, Implementation of six-stage process

# Project 8: Niagara Adapts

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Project 8 is a partnership of seven municipalities in the Niagara region and Brock University's Environmental Sustainability Research Centre designed to build climate solutions in Niagara. The partnership supports collaborative climate change adaptation assessment, planning and implementation and the development of the Town of Lincoln's Corporate Climate Adaptation Plan (CAP). The purpose of a CAP is to prepare the Town of Lincoln to adapt to anticipated climatic change and extreme weather, in order to minimize the severity of the resulting impacts.

- **Groups involved:** Shannon Fernandes, Climate Change Coordinator; Gillian Harris, Environmental Services Manager; and Niagara Adapts Leads Dr. Jessica Blythe and Dr. Ryan Plummer, the Town of Lincoln Adaptation Steering Committee, SMT, Council, Stakeholder Advisory Group, and the Lincoln community
- **Action items for success:** Develop a Climate Adaptation Plan, Operational or Institutional Changes, Preparatory work leading to the implementation of climate adaptation initiatives



*The Brock-Lincoln Living Lab in action*



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**Lincoln**

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