EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employment lands studies provide the backbone by which information is disseminated to local politicians, councils, decision makers, and citizens (Dempwolf, 2012). Without these studies and strategies, an inherent lack in informed decisions made regarding the present and future use of employment lands within a community would be the norm (Dempwolf, 2012). The purpose of this project is to provide a better understanding of the components of a good employment lands plan through the development and application of an employment lands evaluation framework and toolkit. This research project aims to answer the following questions:

1. In a post-industrial society, what does good planning within an employment lands context look like?
2. Do Canadian employment lands plans represent the latest cutting edge concepts and ideas regarding planning for employment lands within a post-industrial society?

In order to answer the research questions posed for this project, an evaluation methodology with four main objectives was established and carried out. The objectives of this research and evaluation are as follows:

1. To develop a set of criteria to inform a comparative framework in order to determine the degree to which a municipal employment lands plan conforms to the latest ideas and outlines for industrial lands plans developed in the United States,
2. To apply this framework to the comparative assessment of the Region of Niagara's Gateway Employment Lands Study (2011) and the Region of Waterloo's Industrial and Business Park Vacant Land Inventory and Demand Analysis (2006) and provide an evaluation of the two plans with recommendations for future employment lands analysis in these municipalities specifically,
3. To present recommendations for criteria to be included in future employment land plans released by other municipalities throughout Ontario, more generally, and
4. To provide recommendations regarding the utility of adapting an employment land study evaluation toolkit within the province of Ontario.