

ONE NIAGARA NOW



Who Is One Niagara Now?

ONE
NIAGARA
NOW



- We are a not for profit Ontario Corporation founded by; community and civic leaders, business owners, academics committed to supporting real change in Niagara
- We are experienced with the failings of our current governance model.
- We love this region and are passionate about Niagara and its potential
- We are deeply concerned about our future generations

Our Current Situation

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- **Population** - 450,000
- **126** elected officials
- **Only 3** full-time
- **1 elected official** for every **3,476 people**
- **12 independent** councils + **1 regional** council
- **Each** council with their own agenda, strategic plan and goals
- **Each** fighting for funding, economic development and social services

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Our Unfortunate Reality

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No Team Niagara

- Parochialism and two tiers of government
 - Internally divided, internally focused
 - We need to clear our agenda
 - We fight each other for crumbs, the cake goes elsewhere
- No coordinated branding of Niagara
 - Niagara Falls vs NOTL vs Niagara Bench/Twenty Valley
 - Increase in tourism or other sectors has not offset manufacturing losses
- Confusing for business – Niagara is not “Open for Business”

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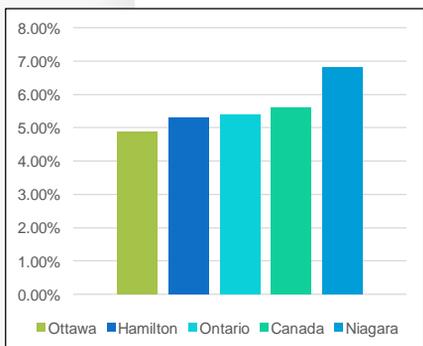
Bureaucracy, Red Tape & Waste Overload



- Up to **4 approvals** required for development projects
- **6 of 7 top employers** are public sector
- **2x development charges** (City and Region)
- **Infighting/Competition** over **jobs** & corporate **locations** because of tax base
- Regional snowplows driving past snow covered roads because it's a city road (vice versa)
- Streets being ripped up by 2nd layer of government after being paved by the other
- Integrated transit not ready until 2021. 10 years to do.
- Soft and hard costs associated with slow development in the area

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Our Unfortunate Reality



Jobless Rate

We are not growing

- Negative job growth
- Marginal population growth (0.4% annually over 22 years)
- Low household incomes
- Low youth retention
- Municipal lines on a map are completely irrelevant

Employment Rate

- Perennially high jobless **rates 6.8%** (Dec 2018)
- **Lowest** rate in GTHA in 2016

Housing

- **Wait list** for affordable housing **13 years** (NRH)
- **Shelters** at **100%** capacity & **rental vacancy** is **0.5%**

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Our 50 Year Old Governance Structure



We are over governed

- **Population** ~ 450,000
- **126 elected officials** for **138 positions**, only **3 full-time**
- **1 elected official** for every **3,476 people**

Wainfleet
1 elected official
for every
1,593 residents

Niagara-on-the-Lake
1 elected official
for every
1,946 residents

Toronto
1 elected official
for every
105,060 residents

If we could have resolved our challenges under the current governance model it would have happened by now

We Need An All-Star Team Niagara.

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Our Bold Vision



Unleashed Economic Potential

- Support job creation and retention
- Attract brightest minds
- Speed of decision making and implementation
- Better navigation of services and regulations
- For Ontario to be open for business, Niagara needs to play its part
- Further leverage our 14M annual visitors, supported by a common goal and direction is a game changer
- A true mega region partner
- Better positioned to deal with the large migration to Niagara from the GTA, and the coordinated infrastructure this will require.

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Our Bold Vision



Niagara open for business

Accountability & Value for taxpayers

- Concise decision making for the people
- Coordination of services
- Better use of taxpayer money – no duplication of services
- One song sheet

We Need To Be Honest & Brave for Future Generations

Niagara is The Front Door to Ontario

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The Only Solution



People Live In Communities But Work In Cities

Our economy doesn't stop at insignificant municipal, regional boundaries, why do our services?

The Solution

- Niagara is a community of communities
- Use current fed/prov ridings as "boundaries" for equal representation
- Each of the 4 ridings to have up to 6 wards each balancing decision making across (N,S,E,W), urban/rural, small vs. large.
- Up to 24 full time elected councilors, and one mayor (allowing greater representation than Hamilton)

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The Solution



ONE TIER - ONE CITY - ONE NIAGARA

This Means:

- Increased transparency and accountability: Everyone knows who their councilor is and what they do. No more finger pointing.
- Increased speed of decision making:
 - One body, One Agenda.
 - No more triple majority votes.
- We attract stronger political leadership to drive the economy.

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The Only Solution



ONE TIER CREATES

The 5th largest city in Ontario and 11th largest city in Canada

We are a city "Open for Business"

How could any number other than **ONE** be considered more effective?

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The Solution



- One** service provider, Planning and Economic Development Department
- One** coordinated transit provider, proper investments in airports, canal and GO transit.
- One** development charge and common interpretation of the building code
- One** affordable housing and social services plan
- One** vision, one official plan and one set of By-Laws
- One** growth strategy
- One** infrastructure improvement/replacement strategy
- One** phone number to call for services, no gaps
- One** administrative team, with top talent and experience working together
- One** relationship to the GTHA and Mega Regions. We are the center-point of TorBufChester

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ONN Polling Results



- **65%** say we have TOO MANY politicians
- **77%** want ONE Transit Provider
- **73%** believe the current system is broken
- **ONLY 5%** say the Niagara Region is effective as is

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Potential Objections



Niagara is too BIG!

Many examples around the province of geographically larger cities (ie. Sudbury, Timmins, Ottawa)

Niagara is Unique

No different than others experiencing amalgamation (ie. Hamilton, Sudbury, Timmins) all with one mayor. We need best in class

Not Representative

Current representation is 1 part time elected official for 3,476 – new model is 1 full time elected official for 25,000 people

Taxes will Increase

Area rating tax policies have been put in place to make up for differing service deliveries in urban and rural areas

Why only One Niagara?

Any other form requires a second tier for; police, waste, water, etc. Parochialism will continue, gaps remain, finger pointing and fighting remains, and we will still have multiple agendas. We will suffer all the cost and disruption of a semi-amalgamation only to be left with the same problems on a slightly larger scale. We will be too small to compete with other regions and thrive for the next 50 years.

Identity Loss

Communities will always exist. We've already gone through amalgamation in 1971, going from 26 cities to 12 with NO loss of identity (ie. Stevensville, Vineland, Beamsville, Fenwick, St. Catharines, Chippewa, etc.)

"Lost" Reserve Funds

Policies can be put in place to ensure historic reserves are kept in their respective communities

Thank you.

What do you need from us to help make this a reality?

