



OFFICE OF THE LORD MAYOR

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A Message from Lord Mayor Betty Disero Regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Niagara-on-the-Lake

-June 6, 2022- I recently attended a Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) Ambassador training session, and after a presentation by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Committee (DEI), I thought it important to share some of my thoughts.

Diversity means that everyone is unique. We know that. We are all unique - when and where we were born, our physical features, thoughts, and values. There are no two people exactly alike.

Inclusivity means that everyone, even though we are all unique, has a voice at the table.

Equity ensures that everyone at the table has an equal voice and is treated with an equal measure of dignity, respect, and civility, even (especially) when there is a disagreement.

When the DEI Committee explained its mission, I realized that the DEI Committee's mandate is not only to ensure that Council is inclusive and fair to all but also to spend time teaching community members how compassion and respect for one another are vital in our everyday lives and in the way we approach each other.

But what about our own personal thoughts and actions regarding diversity, equity, and inclusivity?

I began to think:

- Are we, each one of us, inclusive?
- Do we celebrate our diversity?
- Do we try to ensure everyone is included and has an equal opportunity to all share in the wonderful benefits and beauty of our Town?
- Are we thinking this way all the time?

Niagara-on-the-Lake has won travel awards for being friendly. We are kind and welcoming to visitors from all over the world – people of varied locations, races, cultures, religions, and identities. Our visitors are diverse, and the kindness we show them is part of our Town's character and personality; it is our livelihood, and we are proud of that reputation.

It is equally important that we are kind to each other and appreciate that everyone living in Niagara-on-the-Lake is unique. Everyone born here or who has moved here has a specialness to them. We may not always agree with each other, but we owe it to one another to listen, show respect, and appreciate that everyone has a unique contribution to make to our community.

As I learned from the DEI Committee, we are all unique, we should all have a voice, and each voice should matter. Each of us should have the full opportunity to love this Town and all it has to offer.

Betty Disero
Lord Mayor