



MEDIA RELEASE

Niagara-on-the-Lake Advocates for Local Issues at 2022 AMO Conference

For Immediate Release

September 22, 2022

From Sunday, August 14 to Wednesday, August 17, Town Staff and Council members represented Niagara-on-the-Lake in-person at the 2022 Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) Conference in Ottawa. Town representatives met with five provincial ministries to discuss key local priorities.

The following Town representatives participated in delegation meetings:

- Lord Mayor Betty Disero
- Councillor Erwin Wiens
- Marnie Cluckie, Chief Administrative Officer
- Kirsten McCauley, Director of Community Development and Services
- Kevin Turcotte, (A) Director of Operations
- Victoria Steele, (A) Town Clerk and Manager of Legislative Services

"I look forward to attending the annual AMO Conference because it presents an excellent network opportunity for municipal, provincial, and federal leaders," stated Lord Mayor Betty Disero. "Thank you to each Minister, Parliamentary Assistant, and Ministry Staff that met with us to learn more about the Town's unique local priorities."

"AMO is an excellent forum for municipal governments, and those who attend greatly benefit from the four days of attending various learning experiences," stated CAO Marnie Cluckie. "The chance for local government to network with colleagues and other government officials to help solve challenges and to learn about new opportunities is incredibly valuable."

The following is a high-level summary of topics discussed during the delegations.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Irrigation Systems Strategy and Master Plan – Parliamentary Assistant Amarjot Sandhu, Ministry of Infrastructure

All Niagara-on-the-Lake representatives attended a delegation with PA Sandhu and continued to advocate for the Town's unique municipal infrastructure system to be eligible for infrastructure opportunities and grants. Town Staff will continue to work with Provincial and Federal elected officials to advocate for grant criteria that include Niagara-on-the-Lake's unique irrigation system.



Niagara-on-the-Lake Tourism and Hospitality Sector – Minister Neil Lumsden, Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport

Niagara-on-the-Lake representatives met with the Minister to request the Province recognize the vital relationship between cultural heritage and the Town's tourism economy, continue supporting the sector through grant opportunities, and seek long-term planning initiatives for temporary patios. The Minister was understanding of the critical role tourism plays in Niagara-on-the-Lake and committed to follow up with further directions regarding patios.

Niagara Region Irrigation Project – Minister Lisa Thompson, Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs

Lord Mayor Betty Disero, Councillor Erwin Wiens, and CAO Marnie Cluckie joined representatives from the Region of Niagara, St. Catharines, and the Town of Lincoln to request Provincial support for potential irrigation solutions, including funding for infrastructure studies as required. Moving the strategic plan forward requires additional research and support to ensure a sustainable solution is identified.

Abandoned Operating Cemeteries – Minister Kaleed Rasheed, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery

Councillor Erwin Wiens and Director Kevin Turcotte joined West Lincoln's Mayor Dave Bylsma, Councillor Cheryl Ganann, Councillor William Reilly, Regional Councillor Albert Witteveen and CAO Bev Hendry, and Lincoln Mayor Sandra Easton and CAO Mike Kirkopoulos to discuss abandoned operating cemeteries.

Specifically, the delegation advocated for the Province to develop a program that accurately funds costs associated with taking over and maintaining a cemetery, change legislation to provide relief to rural municipalities that cannot bear the costs downloaded to overburdened taxpayers, and allow municipalities the opportunity to choose whether there is any historical/cultural significance justifying taking it over.

Bill 109 and Housing – Associate Minister Michael Para, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Lord Mayor Betty Disero, CAO Marnie Cluckie, Director Kirsten McCauley, and Town Clerk Victoria Steele met with the Associate Minister to request fulsome consultation of concerns raised by local municipalities regarding *Bill 109 – More Homes for Everyone Act* and to undertake additional consultation on other recommendations of the Housing Affordability Taskforce Report. It was noted many municipalities delegated on this item and it was a common topic at many of the conference's workshops and breakout sessions.



In addition to five delegations, Town representatives attended keynote speaker presentations and breakout workshops which covered a wide range of topics, including climate change; strengthening indigenous relations; creating diverse, equitable and inclusive communities; housing affordability; representation of youth in politics, and much more.

For immediate alerts, follow the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

Media contact:

Marah Minor, Community Engagement and Communications Coordinator
905-468-3266 | communications@notl.com