



MEDIA RELEASE

Niagara-on-the-Lake Advocates for Town Priorities at 2023 AMO Conference

For Immediate Release

August 29, 2023

Town Council and Staff represented Niagara-on-the-Lake and took part in important delegations at the annual Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) Conference held in London, Ontario, this year from August 20 to August 23. One of the objectives of attending AMO is for Town representatives to bring forward local issues and advocate for support through working with provincial ministries.

The Town engaged in four delegations to increase awareness and advocate for Niagara-on-the-Lake's strategic priorities. The following Town representatives participated in delegation meetings:

- Marnie Cluckie, Chief Administrative Officer
- Victoria Steele, Strategy and Government Relations Officer
- Erwin Wiens, Deputy Lord Mayor/Councillor

"The AMO Conference provides an opportunity for Niagara-on-the-Lake representatives to network with other government officials and experts in various municipal and provincial sectors," stated Deputy Lord Mayor/Councillor Erwin Wiens. "On behalf of Town Council, thank you to the Ministers, Parliamentary Assistants, and Ministry Staff who met with us. These conversations are valuable as we advocate for our community priorities and seek support from other levels of government to help us achieve our goals."

"I always find it beneficial to attend the AMO Conference each year to learn from others and share the great work the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake is doing," stated CAO Marnie Cluckie. "During the conference, I had the honour to present alongside representatives from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) and CloudPermit. We shared how the Town has streamlined the building permit process and how this modernization project has greatly increased efficiency, streamlined approvals, and provided an excellent customer experience for residents and builders. Niagara-on-the-Lake should be very proud as it is seen as a leader in modernization."

The following is a high-level summary of topics discussed during the four delegations that Town representatives attended:

Niagara Irrigation Project – Minister Lisa Thompson, Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)

Niagara-on-the-Lake representatives attended a joint delegation with representatives from the City of St. Catharines, the Town of Lincoln and the Niagara Region. At this delegation, representatives requested that the Province provide support for potential irrigation solutions, including funding for infrastructural studies, as required. A special thank you was provided to OMAFRA for its continued support of the Niagara Irrigation Project through Staff participation in the Niagara Irrigation Steering Committee.

Connecting Communities through Safe Sustainable Cycling - Associate Minister Stan Cho, Ministry of Transportation

This delegation included the request from Town Representatives for funding to update the Town Cycling Map regularly and to create consistent safety guideline documentation to distribute to stakeholders (i.e., bike rental companies, migrant workers, residents, and



wineries). The Town highlighted the connection between active transportation and the wine industry, noting the economic opportunities residing within the Niagara cluster. Town Staff and Ministry Staff will explore opportunities to partner together to achieve the requests.

Preserving Heritage to Protect our Tourism Economy - Minister Michael Ford, Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

Niagara-on-the-Lake representatives attended a delegation to request additional time to designate properties listed on the Municipal Register (prior to January 1, 2023). Minister Michael Ford noted a commitment to protect and celebrate heritage while striking a balance with housing and growth.

Irrigation Systems Strategy and Master Plan – Minister Kinga Surma, Ministry of Infrastructure

In another delegation, Town Representatives once again requested that municipal infrastructure be recognized and eligible for infrastructure funding opportunities and grants (i.e., the Town seeks \$60,000 in funding to implement an innovative Bluetooth metering program for irrigation.) Town Staff and Ministry Staff will coordinate a meeting to review upcoming projects within the 10-year Irrigation Action Plan to determine potential funding opportunities. Minister Kinga Surma articulated that the Province would like to fund irrigation and is meeting with the Federal Ministry of Infrastructure to coordinate alignment.

The AMO Conference also included a presentation from the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario and Ontario Regional Chief Hare. Also, Town representatives attended sessions about:

- Women's Leadership, Municipal Services Corporations: Experiences in Service Delivery
- Serving Indigenous Peoples: Collaborating for Better Outcomes

The Town thanks AMO and the City of London for hosting an excellent opportunity to connect, learn and grow within municipal government. Niagara-on-the-Lake continues to address and discuss critical issues, advocate for strategic priorities and collaborate with provincial ministries to enhance the overall fabric of the community.

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