



OFFICE OF THE LORD MAYOR

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0

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A Statement from Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa Regarding Amalgamation

For Immediate Release

January 19, 2024

In light of the unanimous motion passed by Council during the December 12, 2023, Special Council Meeting, I had the privilege of representing Niagara-on-the-Lake's position against regional amalgamation at the Regional Governance Review Session on January 10, 2024.

During my presentation, I strongly emphasized our request to the Province to prioritize funding for shared services at the local level, advocating for municipalities to explore efficient service delivery options tailored to our community's needs.

As the Lord Mayor, I want our community to know that I am advocating for a focus on shared services rather than amalgamation for the Niagara Region, including Niagara-on-the-Lake. While amalgamation is often viewed as a means to access a larger pool of resources, our Town's unique identity, distinct heritage, and small-town charm must be preserved.

Niagara-on-the-Lake has achieved success in shared services, such as:

- Shared Economic Development Resources
- Aligned Climate Change actions and responses
- Support for physician recruitment
- Identification and enhancement of healthcare infrastructure
- Leveraging Planning Services
- Coordinating Chief Building Officer approaches
- Transparent procurement coordination
- Joint projects with the Conservation Authority
- Shared EMS and Fire dispatch
- An integrated transit system

Our community, with its strong financial health, thrives on shared services for efficiency. The emphasis on shared services, rather than amalgamation, ensures that Niagara-on-the-Lake remains a distinct town with a rich heritage, small-town allure, and world-class tourism.

Preserving our heritage, history, and unique character is essential, as these elements contribute significantly to our economic and cultural vibrancy.



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I am committed to advocating for the continuation of shared services to enhance the Town's future while safeguarding its invaluable heritage and strengthening governmental relationships throughout the Niagara Region and beyond.

I sincerely thank the Niagara Region for allowing me to make this delegation to the Committee and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Council Members for their steadfast support throughout this process.

Cogeco will rebroadcast the meeting on their channel on Saturday, January 20, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. I encourage you to watch the meeting and stay informed.

Sincerely,

Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa