



## NEWS RELEASE

# July Council Update: Decisions and Updates

For Immediate Release

July 22, 2025

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake held its regularly scheduled Council meeting this evening, July 22, 2025, covering presentations, motions, by-laws and various items of Town business.

Below is a summary of Council's discussions and decisions. To view the meeting agenda, including links to reports, presentations, and a video recording, please visit [www.notl.com/council-government/meetings-agendas-minutes](http://www.notl.com/council-government/meetings-agendas-minutes).

### Council Recognition:

Council recognized the following groups and individuals:

- **U13 Thunderhawks Lacrosse Team:** Council presented certificates to the players and coaches, recognizing the team's win in the 2025 Mike Jones Memorial Tournament.
- **Donna Herrington, The Herrington Group Ltd:** Donna Herrington, on behalf of the Join Accessibility Committee, presented Accessibility Here Awards to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Centre and local businesses, including Southbrook Winery, Jackson Triggs Winery, and Bank of Montreal (BMO), NOTL Branch.
- **J.B. Hopkins, Parks Supervisor:** Council recognized J.B. Hopkins for 25 years of service with the Town.

### Lord Mayor's Report:

Deputy Lord Mayor Wiens, on behalf of Lord Mayor Zalepa, provided a [report](#) highlighting the Lord Mayor's participation in a range of community events throughout July, including Canada Day celebrations at Simcoe Park and Fort George, the St. Mark's Cherry Festival, and the opening of new tennis and pickleball courts at Queenston Heights Park.

The report also spoke to Lord Mayor Zalepa's attendance at the physician recruitment dinner, the unveiling of a roadside memorial for Ashley Marie Vaillancourt, and a charity



event at Reif Estate Winery in support of McMaster Children's Hospital. Other notable events that the Lord Mayor participated in include a photo-opportunity for the start of Phase 3 of the Heritage Trail construction, Brock University's 60th anniversary celebration, and the NOTL Regular Season Swim Meet. Additionally, the Lord Mayor took part in a live interview with CKTB's Gene Valaitis and attended the unveiling of the Wind Phone at the Community Centre.

### **Presentations & Delegations:**

- **Jon Martin & Jill McCourt, TASC:** Late Summer Flower Events.
- **Paul Ciapanna, Partner, KPMG:** 2024 Financial Statements and Audit Findings Report, [CS-25-017](#)
- **Bruce Zvaniga, Former Interim CAO:** 18 Months of Strategic Action, [CAO-25-032](#)
- **Andrea Kaiser, Regional Councillor:** Niagara Regional Council - Quarterly Update
- Additional delegations were made regarding Short Term Rental limits, and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's request for financial support related to its expansion project.

### **Decision Highlights:**

#### **Committee of Adjustment Appointments**

- Council appointed Chris Van de Laar and Natalie Early to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Committee of Adjustment/Property Standards Order Appeals Committee for the remainder of the term of Council or until a successor is appointed.

#### **World Hepatitis Day**

- Council declared July 28, 2025, as World Hepatitis Day in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

#### **Museum Project Funding**

- Council approved a conditional \$500,000 pledge to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum, subject to the outcome of its federal grant application and directed Staff to explore funding options as part of the 2026 budget.

#### **2025 Discretionary Grant Committee Allocations ([CS-25-011](#))**

- Council approved the 2025 Discretionary Grant Committee's recommended allocations, awarding a total of \$43,013.98 to five eligible organizations.

#### **2024 Development Charges Reserve Fund Statement ([CS-25-012](#))**



- Council approved the 2024 Development Charges Reserve Fund Statement, confirming \$12.7 million in available funding for future growth-related projects and ensuring compliance with the *Development Charges Act*.

#### **2024 Capital Project Closure Report ([CS-25-013](#))**

- Council approved the 2024 Capital Project Closure Report, including the transfer of the favourable variance of \$3,537,996.40, the transfer of surplus funds to identified 2025 projects, and the creation of a new capital budget for hydrant replacements.

#### **2024 Building Permit Fees Annual Financial Report ([CS-25-014](#))**

- Council approved the 2024 Building Permit Fees Annual Financial Report and authorized a transfer of \$144,987.46 from the Parking Reserve to offset the Building Reserve deficit.

#### **2024 Year-End Deficit ([CS-25-016](#))**

- Council approved the 2024 year-end operating budget deficit of \$578,897 or 1.8% to be funded through the Parking Reserve, ensuring compliance with the *Municipal Act's* requirement to balance the annual budget.

#### **2024 Financial Statements and Audit Findings Report ([CS-25-017](#))**

- Council approved the consolidated financial statements and the Audit Findings Report for the year ended December 31, 2024, for The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

#### **Rural Road Speed Limit Reduction and Traffic By-law Amendment ([OPS-25-021](#))**

- Council approved the reduction of all posted 80 km/h speed limits on Town-owned roads to 70 km/h, the adoption of a new policy establishing 70 km/h as the maximum speed limit, amendments to the Traffic By-law, and the installation of updated slow-moving vehicle signage funded through the Region's Vision Zero program.

#### **Official Plan Update – First Draft of Official Plan ([CDS-25-104](#))**

- Council approved the release of the first draft of the new Official Plan, as amended, for public and agency consultation, and directed Staff to engage with advisory committees, community groups, Indigenous communities, and the public, with a second draft and public meetings to follow in Fall 2025. A news release with further details will be distributed soon.

#### **14795 Niagara River Parkway – Notice of Intent to Demolish ([CDS-25-105](#))**



- Council approved the Notice of Intent to Demolish the remains of the structure at 14795 Niagara River Parkway, after the property was severely damaged as a result of a fire on April 16, 2025, subject to an agreement with the property owner to salvage and donate historic materials, and authorized execution of the agreement to support future commemoration efforts.

#### **Short Term Rental By-law Amendment – Limits ([FES-25-013](#))**

- Council deferred amendments to the Short Term Rental By-law to the October 2025 Council Meeting.

#### **Information Package:**

Council received information reports regarding an update on the [water distribution systems](#), the [2025 AMO proposed delegations](#) and the implementation of [the StopGap ramp accessibility initiative](#).

#### **Motions:**

##### **Discretionary Grant Program – Moved by Councillor Mavridis**

Council approved a motion to sunset the current Discretionary Grant Program and directed Staff to develop a new Community and Youth Initiatives Grant Program to be launched in 2026. The new program will prioritize community-led programs and events that benefit Niagara-on-the-Lake residents, enhance youth development and leadership opportunities, encourage collaboration among local non-profits, schools, and service groups, and ensure equitable access to funding through a transparent application and evaluation process. Staff will report back to Council by Q4 2025 with a draft framework, including eligibility criteria, application procedures, evaluation metrics, and budget recommendations.

#### **By-laws:**

Council approved by-laws to amend the Town's Traffic and Parking By-law by reducing speed limits on all municipal roads previously set at 80 km/h to 70 km/h, along with technical updates to Schedule "W" – Speed Limits on Highways.

#### **Next Council Meeting:**

Please note that there is no Council meeting in August. The next Council meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Community members are invited to attend in person at Town Hall, located at 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Virgil, or tune in via the Town's livestream. Agendas and minutes are available on the Town's website at [www.notl.com/council-government/meetings-agendas-minutes](http://www.notl.com/council-government/meetings-agendas-minutes).



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