



Niagara Region CAO

Position Profile

April, 2021



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Legacy Executive Search Partners

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Introduction

I am delighted to present this Candidate Brief for the **Chief Administrative Officer** position prepared on behalf of the Niagara Region and the Selection Committee.

The Candidate Brief includes background information on The Niagara Region, the Position Profile, Duties and Responsibilities, Position Specifications, the Timeline and Organizational Charts.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like additional details about the position or need clarification on any aspect of the search process. Further information about The Niagara Region can be found at [www.https://www.niagararegion.ca](https://www.niagararegion.ca).

On behalf of Legacy Partners and the Region of Niagara, I would like to thank you for your interest in this position and assure you of my prompt and fullest attention at all times.

Yours Sincerely,



Sincerely,

Kartik Kumar, Partner

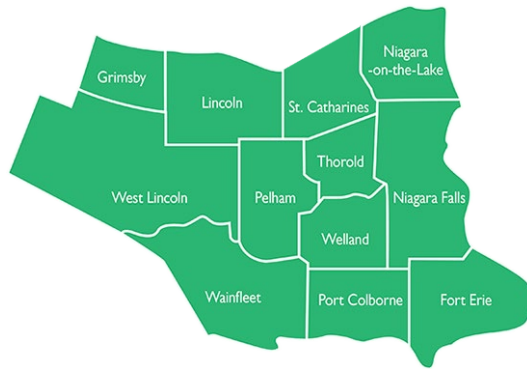


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Region of Niagara: Overview



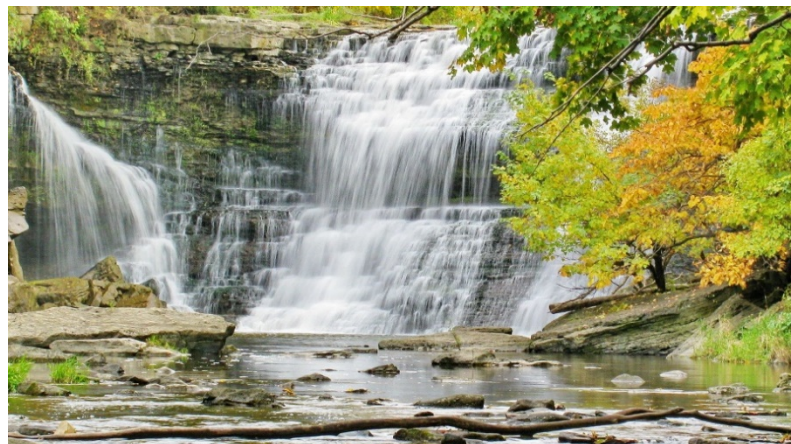
The **Regional Municipality of Niagara**, also known as the Niagara Region, is ideally located within Southern Ontario's Golden Horseshoe between Toronto and the US border. The region is comprised of 12 municipalities: Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Thorold, Welland, St. Catharines, Fort Erie, Grimsby, Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham, Wainfleet and West Lincoln. Niagara is approximately 120 km away by car to Toronto or sit back and relax on the Niagara Seasonal GO Train Service starting in 2021. There are

5 international border crossings into the United States as well as 7 airports within a one-hour drive that provide easy access from Niagara Canada to anywhere in the world.

The municipal government of Niagara region is made up of 32 representatives from the 12 area municipalities. The region has three urban centres, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Welland.

The regional headquarters is in Thorold, with over 3,600 employees at 100 work locations operating as a robust, efficient team to support and advance the quality of life for over 430,000 residents of the region.

Niagara offers residents an almost unbeatable quality of life, thanks to affordable home ownership, great schools and post-secondary education institutions, world class health services and a stress-free commute. The region has all the amenities of a large urban centre while still maintaining the signature warmth and character of a smaller rural community. Breathtaking natural landscapes,



the majestic Niagara Falls, water-filled fun on Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, the Niagara River and the Welland Canal, world-class wineries, Niagara trails, the Shaw Festival Theatre, 40 golf courses, scenic cycling and hiking trails, Canada's largest casino, fantastic shopping and concerts that make every weekend feel like an adventure.

Niagara is Ontario's second most competitive region for doing business. With over \$100 billion worth of trade making its way through the region each year, it is no wonder Niagara was Ontario's first designated Foreign Trade Z provincial and federal government. Manufacturing is big business in Niagara.

The sector employs over 17,000 people and it accounts for the largest portion of the region's GDP. Fondly known as Ontario's fruit basket, Agriculture is a fundamental pillar of Niagara's economy. In 2016, agriculture in Niagara contributed \$1.41 billion to regional GDP and contributed 19,900 jobs. Niagara is home to over 1,800 farms and agricultural operations.

With over 90 wineries in the region, Niagara is responsible for 90% of grape production in Ontario and is the largest wine producing region in Canada, making up 80% of Canada's total grape and wine production.

Tourism is huge in Niagara.

- Niagara Falls.
- Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- The Shaw Festival.
- The Niagara Wine Route.
- Canada's largest casino.

Niagara's tourist attractions, festivals and special events attract more than 13 million tourists who spend over \$2 billion annually making a significant contribution to the local economy.

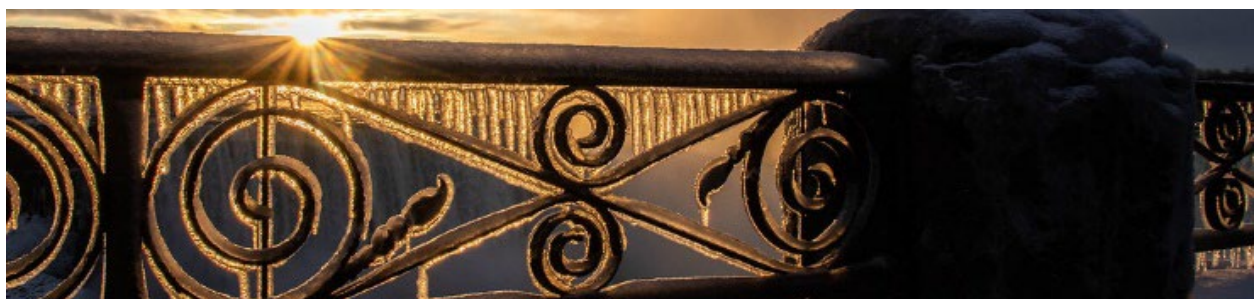
Niagara Region is a moment that takes your breath away, a memory that lingers. Every night of the year the three waterfalls that make up Niagara Falls are illuminated creating an unforgettable stunning masterpiece. However, it is the passion, the warmth, and the devotion of the citizens of Niagara that truly light up the region. It is just that special.

Source material:

Niagara region website: <https://niagararegion.ca/default.aspx>

Niagara region economic development: <https://niagaracanada.com/>

Newcomers to Niagara website: <https://welcomeniagaracanada.com/>



2019 - 2022 Council Strategic Plan

About the Plan

Niagara Regional Council has developed the 2019 - 2022 Strategic Plan. The plan provides focus and direction for the organization's work over the next four years. It includes four priority areas with objectives that define how we'll achieve these priorities.

To complement the Strategic Plan, an implementation plan was created. It contains the projects and actions that Niagara Region, as an organization, will execute to reach the objectives identified by Council.

The plan can be accessed here (click on the image below):



Position Summary:

CAO - Niagara Region - Job Description

Job Summary

Reporting to Regional Council, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is responsible for exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality. As the senior appointed official of the regional municipality, the Chief Administrative Officer shall lead and direct the members of the Corporate Leadership Team in carrying out the responsibilities of the Region, in accordance with the policies, plans and by-laws approved and established by Council, including the CAO Roles and Responsibilities By-law.

Responsibilities

Oversees the development and implementation of the Region's corporate multi-year business and financial strategies in support of Council objectives to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of services to the citizens of Niagara.

- Administers the business affairs of the Region and reviews the annual department business plans to ensure alignment to the Region's strategic direction and in support of Council's objectives.
- Establishes success indicators, measurement tools and standards to assess service delivery performance and stakeholder satisfaction, ensuring performance expectations are monitored and issues addressed.
- Ensures operational processes, policies and protocols are established and compliance is monitored, assessing changes in legislative/regulatory requirements, identifying potential areas of vulnerability and risk, and recommending to Council approaches to resolve issues and mitigate risks.
- Identifies controversial and politically sensitive issues that may impact the organization's success and reputation, assessing potential risks and developing strategies to address issues.
- Identifies and develops opportunities and strategies for cost efficiencies and improving quality and services delivered, ensuring continued alignment with Council's priorities.
- Provides Council with long-term financial impacts to the Region and taxpayers of current decisions / budgets.
- Monitors financial trends and opportunities in the external environment, assessing the impact on Council's objectives and the organization's viability.
- Ensures the integrity and accuracy of financial reporting systems and ensure the proper maintenance of sound financial controls.
- Engages the Corporate Leadership Team in budget strategies, decision-making and communicating service impacts to Council.

Develops, manages, and approves annual and multi-year Capital and Operating budgets for the business units reporting to the CAO, ensuring support of Council's objectives, financial transparency and accountability, budget adherence, and identifying and explaining variances and financial reporting is effectively managed in compliance with corporate financial policies. Authorize, administer, and reinforce the use of sound procedures relating to the acquisition of goods and services for the organization in accordance with the procurement policy and procedures. Approve the delegation of corporate/department budget ownership outside of established guidelines for commissioners and directors.

Accountable for strategic, long range people resource planning for the organization, supporting corporate culture and strategy, ensuring an engaged workforce resulting in optimal people performance by determining ideal organizational structures and systems that facilitate public sector values of transparency, accountability, inclusion and citizen-focused service.

- Implements the organization's people strategy of continuous improvement, learning and development, accountability for results, attraction and retention of top performers and recognition of achievements.
- Ensures employee performance, career development, and succession planning activities are created to facilitate employee growth and development.
- Recommends to Council the appointment, suspension, or dismissal of Commissioners.

Develops and manages relationships with internal and external stakeholders, ensuring strategic initiatives and governance, financial and performance expectations are managed and fulfilled.

- Provides advice and guidance to the Regional Chair, councillors, and Committees of Council in the development of public policy, ensuring that Council is provided with complete, impartial and accurate information for the purposes of making informed decisions and by-law approvals.
- Develops, establishes, liaises, and maintains relationships with the Federal and Provincial governments, the Region's local municipalities, other government agencies, and the residents of the Region in general.
- Represents and speaks on behalf of the Corporation in a manner consistent with the policies of Council to ensure the best interests of the Regional Municipality of Niagara are met.

Special Requirements

- In accordance with the Corporate Criminal Record Check policy, the position requires the incumbent to undergo a Criminal Records Check and submit a Canadian Police Clearance certificate.
- Supports emergency operations under the incident management structure in the position of Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Director, or will designate an alternate, and will have overall authority and responsibility for the activities of the EOC.
- Regional staff strive to enable the strategic priorities of council and the organization through the completion of their work. Staff carry out their work by demonstrating the corporate values of service, honesty, choice, partnership and respect.

Supervision

- Number of Direct Reports: 9-14
- Number of Indirect Reports: 2,000+
- Titles of Direct Reports
 - Commissioners of Departments
 - Regional Clerk
 - Directors
 - Executive Assistant & Administrative Lead

Working Conditions

- Typical office environment.
- Attend all meetings of Council and its Committees as required.
- Business travel required.
- Frequent evening and weekend commitments

The Ideal Candidate:

Overview

The CAO is responsible for providing corporate leadership for the general management of the corporation as well as participating in the overall stewardship of the municipality.



An Ideal CAO must be a high energy, dynamic and collaborative leader. In addition to having superior tact and diplomacy skills, they will have a strong sense of fairness and compassion, exceptional interpersonal and trust building skills, and the ability to build and support strong teams. They should also have proven ability to build strong relationships with Elected Officials, Regional Boards, Commissions, Agencies, other Municipalities, and the Provincial and Federal Governments.

They must demonstrate collaborative working relationships with the 12 Local Area Municipalities (LAMs), along with other key partners such as Agencies, Boards, and Commissions (ABCs).

In summary, they must have the ability to invite and welcome diverse perspectives in a respectful environment and unleash the potential, so that great ideas can emerge in order to address the challenges within the Region together.

Qualifications and Experience: (Key Competencies)

Competency 1	Minimum of a Post-secondary degree in Political Science, Public Administration, Business Administration or in a field directly related to municipal functions. Master's degree and an Executive Diploma in Municipal Management as recognized by the Association of Municipal Manager, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) is preferred.
Competency 2	Ideally 7-10 years experience in the Municipal Government/ Broader Public Sector/ Private sector; Strong business acumen and a solid understanding of private sector business strategies; prior CAO/City Manager experience in a large municipality/ Broader Public Sector organization is a definite asset.
Competency 3	Proven experience with organizational change-management within a complex unionized environment with competing priorities, and an ability to balance and understand both the priorities of the Region and its member cities and towns; strong collaboration and advocacy skills and a solid understanding of the Niagara Region and appreciation of the two-tier system of governance are key requirements.
Competency 4	Proven experience and achievement in organizational development through building large and diverse teams of at least 1000 employees; Strong strategic planning, teambuilding and delegation skills are key requirements.
Competency 5	Excellent oral and written communication skills and the ability to interact diplomatically and effectively with internal and external stakeholders, including Area Municipalities, other Regional Governments, Provincial Government, Federal Government, and the media and public at large; an ideal balance between vision, drive, direct and diplomatic communication style with strong consensus and relationship building skills is a key requirement.
Competency 6	Proven experience in fiscal and financial matters demonstrated by previously handling a budget of over a \$ 1 Billion. A solid understanding of fortune 500 companies and how to attract them to the Region. Minimum of 10 years senior municipal management experience leading large and complex portfolios and implementing multi-year business and financial strategies are preferred.

Executive Competency Library

Strategist

Develops a long-range course of action that aligns to Council Strategic Priorities. Has strong knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of their organization. Understands and acts upon rapidly changing environmental trends, opportunities, and threats.

- Sees the big picture, constantly imagines future scenarios and creates strategies to move organization forward.
- Is able to clearly and vividly articulate their desired future state in a way that is understood and meaningful to others.
- Uses financial information and data/information from multi sources to support decision-making and planning.
- Understands risks and accepts and pursues actions within an acceptable level of risk.
- Takes a collaborative approach to developing strategy to gather best thinking and ensure input and alignment from key internal and external stakeholders.

Change Leader

Always communicates a compelling rationale for change. Makes required adaptive responses both feasible and desirable to all stakeholders. Creates genuine motivation and commitment from others to act as sponsors of innovation and change, allocating required resources to support change.

- Serves as a catalyst for change. Continuously seeks ways to improve performance and the strategic orientation of the organization
- Effectively and consistently communicates messages about the need for change and the vision of the organization after the change
- Ensures provision of adequate resources for change efforts. Includes funding, technology and human resources
- Holds others accountable for cross organization cooperation and collaboration to support change.

Relationship Builder

Establishes relationships with, and influences a complex network of others, whose co-operation is required for organizational success. Stakeholders might include Council members, local area municipalities, provincial or federal representatives/employees, residents, current or future business partners, labour representative's Regional employees and other stakeholders.

- Takes responsibility for the development and the quality of internal and external stakeholder relationships.
- Understands stakeholder needs and concerns over the short and longer term to enable support and cooperation.
- Ability to apply different communication approaches for interacting and communicating to align to the thinking and perception preferences of others.

- Assesses personal behaviour from a cultural, technical and/or political perspective to objectively evaluate own impact.

Organization Guardian

Consistently holds self and others accountable for the continued growth and health of the organization. Makes decisions, often difficult, that are in the best interests of the Region.

Continuously promotes the Region both internally and externally.

- Does everything possible to continually grow a positive reputation for Niagara Region both internally and externally.
- Ensures accountability for continuous improvement for the purpose of cost effectiveness and quality of service.
- Champions and facilitates cross departmental integration.
- Ensures that innovation, collaboration, and best practices are reflected in products and services provided by the Region.

Business Acumen

The ability to manage human, financial, and information resources strategically with the purpose of enabling Council Business Plan and health of organization both over the short and longer term.

- Has a strong understanding of the Region's financial processes. Oversees the development and management of annual and multiyear budget.
- Protects physical assets and ensures the fulfillment of all regulatory requirements.
- Builds and manages workforce based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and resourcing requirements. Ensures integrity in all people practices.
- Ensures effective use of technology and technology systems to achieve results.

Navigates Complexity

Logically works through complex situations, problems, issues, and opportunities with the purpose of creating positive solutions or actions.

- Breaks down a complex situation into manageable parts in a systematic way.
- Seeks to understand root causes of difficult problems.
- Recognizes several likely causes of events, and/or consequences of actions.
- Deals constructively with problems that do not have a clear solution or outcome.
- Evaluates pros and cons, risks and benefits of different solution options.

Drives Engagement

Creates an environment where current and future employees consider the Region to be the employer of choice in Niagara. Current employees are motivated to do their best to help the organization achieve its objectives.

- Communicates vision and priorities to employees in a way that generates excitement, enthusiasm and commitment.
- Models desired behaviour including corporate values.
- Uses multiple strategies to promote organizational morale and productivity.
- Consistently keeps employees informed of key organizational information, activities and other elements that have an impact on the collective group.
- Invites input from others at all levels from across the organization.
- Makes people feel that their contributions are valued.

Niagara Region Stakeholder Input Summary

Summary of strengths based on stakeholder input:

Corporate	• Large reserves • Well-positioned for future growth and opportunities from an economic perspective • Dynamic opportunities exist and exciting transformation possibilities to grow Niagara's Region's economy and community assets/services. • Industry is transforming to create different economic outputs and cement the message of the Region being open for business. • Emerging economic transformation with the rare opportunity to plan and not let growth determine outcomes. • Efforts to attract foreign investors. • The newly established culture of 12 Municipalities working together for the good of the Region is very productive and has made a big difference. • Two-tier Region has created a new spirit of cooperation. • Mayors are very close and have a partner in the Region that can now facilitate projects. • Generation of new politicians have stepped forward and are instituting change. • Focused strategic priorities and a drive for results. • Clear budgets. • Good track record of cost containment. • Acknowledgeable Commissioners and accessible to Councillors for advice and information. • Passionate Councillors. • Clear direction from Council on key issues. • Relationships with stakeholders, community partners, and other levels of government are positive. • Team willingness to adapt to new ways of doing business.
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	• Previous CAO set the example of excellent leadership and built relationships with staff, community partners, and municipalities. • The previous CAO has done heavy lifting restructuring and leadership changes, and the Region is poised for change. • This position will appeal to a leader interested in exciting transformation as the communities are in transition. • Former CAO brought a collaborative approach to the Region. • Strong, talented, enthusiastic, and leading-edge staff support through EDOs. • Shared work history of senior staff/strong senior team/excellent collaboration • A work culture that supports change and continuous improvement • Immense pride and passion for the community • The new ERP system was delivered on time and budget. • Better customer service is being encouraged across the Region. • Strong long-term care and EMS in the Region • Excellent public works and public health services • Improvements in inter-municipal transit • Discussions over merging inter-municipal transit, including the airport. • More provincial recognition and support than in the past • The Region is catching the eye of the GTA. • Expansion of Go Transit
Regional	• Natural assets base • Fantastic weather • Local produce • Attractive lifestyle in Niagara Region • Availability to social services: excellent health care • Great post-secondary institutions • Easy access to big cities and the US border • Access to the high-speed train to New York City • Access to Niagara Falls restaurants and entertainment. • Beginnings of economic resurgence • Economic diversity • Potential for economic growth • The economic and residential boom is underway. • Opportunity to drive transformational change. • Francophone presence and cultural diversity • Low cost of living • Affordable housing • Active real estate market • Strong sense of community, including volunteer ethic. • Highly engaged community partners • Recreational opportunities

Summary of Opportunities and Challenges based on stakeholder input.

- Confusion and tension exist regarding the relative roles of the Chair and the CAO.
- An opportunity exists for Council to work with the CAO to clarify the respective Chair and CAO roles.
- Strong and insightful CAO has the opportunity to forge a productive relationship with the Chair
- Support good governance.
- Provide clarity concerning governance roles and responsibilities vs. administrative roles and responsibilities.
- Build an environment of trust and respect.
- Develop a clear role definition for the incoming CAO with Council and Staff
- Help Council to focus on their discussions to avoid off-the-rail discussions around the table
- Help Council to focus on policy review and development.
- Opportunity to focus on the business of Council collectively.
- Demonstrate respect for Regional Council.
- Opportunity for a good communicator to win the support of the Council through open lines of communication.
- Continue momentum around local municipalities and Region collaborating.
- Reduce representation of Mayors at Regional Council
- Continue to build collaborative relationships with the municipalities.
- Opportunity to build on the awareness of upper- and lower-tier tensions towards collaboration.
- Opportunity to develop a wider Regional sense and reduce parochialism.
- The CAO needs to be visible in each unique municipality at events to support Regional solidarity.
- Renewed focus on respectful interactions of Council and senior staff
- Provide leadership of staff to identify strengths in growth and visionary efforts and identify an effective succession plan.
- Challenge to increase diversity among senior staff.
- Changes in staff allow opportunities to develop new staff and foster new growth.
- Opportunity to support and mentor staff as there is a significant turnover in the Region.
- Maintain good staff competencies through skills training and clarity of roles.
- Create an atmosphere where staff are applauded and recognized for their contributions.
- There is an opportunity for the CAO to lead senior staff in supporting and responding to Council in timely and effective ways.
- Improve the fiscal accountability of the Regional organization.
- Challenge to keep infrastructure needs on-time and on budget.
- Move the strategic priorities forward: community systems, employment, growth, infrastructure, investment, and taxation.
- Balancing fiscal constraint with social support
- Continued focus on a balanced economic development among the Region and the municipalities.
- Investigate cost structures for water and emergency services.
- Consolidate regional services, where possible.
- Conduct a review of community services to ensure funding is being used to the best advantage.

- Ensure that financial health is in order.
- Perform a better job of selling Niagara Region.
- Convert strengths into economic revitalization.
- There is a need for business culture.
- Be open-minded to attract business opportunities and extend outreach.
- Enhance the focus on jobs and economic development.
- Help people understand that the organization is there to serve people and not for profit.
- Strength in social services
- Make housing more affordable.
- Increase cultural diversity.
- Improve regional transportation model and support for a mobile workforce.
- Go Train and transit coming to Niagara Region represents an opportunity that requires a coordinated strategy.
- Opportunity to enhance relationships with key stakeholders.
- Opportunity to promote the Niagara Region provincially and create strong networks with Queen's Park.
- Maintain and enhance relationships with LAMs.
- Fostering better media coverage

The Timeline

The Niagara Region is looking to make an appointment at the earliest opportunity. It is anticipated that the application deadline would be around *<date to be finalized>*

I trust that this Position Profile and full Candidate Brief have enabled you to decide whether the position of CAO at The Niagara Region is one that interests you. If you wish to be considered for the position, please forward a cover letter and your resume by email to Kartik Kumar at niagararegioncao@lesp.ca. Please be assured that any information that is shared with Legacy Executive Search Partners will be treated in the strictest confidence and shared only with the client for the purposes of this search.

Thank you once again for your interest.

Appendix

Niagara Region Organizational Chart



Org Charts for The Niagara Region

Please click on the [Org Chart below](#) to access additional Niagara Region Departmental Org Charts

