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November 25, 2021

To Niagara Regional Council,

OUTniagara, a non-profit organization that supports, unites and celebrates Niagara's sexual- and gender-diverse communities, strongly endorses an amalgamated and integrated transit service in Niagara being proposed in the Moving Transit Forward plan, and that this be moved forward on as soon as possible

A connected public transportation system would ease the challenges faced by Niagara's 2SLGBTQIA+ residents across multiple generations, many of whom already face isolation. An improved network would lead to more positive lived experiences for residents and their families as they would be able to more easily access essential medical, work, support, and social opportunities in other regional locations.

In a region-wide Community Strengths and Needs Assessment facilitated by Wisdom2Action for OUTniagara, transit was a key issue for folks.

Some of these responses were:

- "Better transportation for residents in rural areas"
- "Smaller communities have few or no local supportive groups or resources, and transportation between communities is abysmal."
- "Specifically for Port Colborne, you can't access anything or any services without transportation or it's a very tedious process to try to organize appointments."
- "Connect smaller cities to St Catharines so we all can participate in the community."
- "in my experience biggest challenge has been transportation to programs especially if reside in Fort Erie/Port Colbourne"
- "Lack of support, not knowing where to turn to get my child help, being in a smaller town with little to no public transport"
- "Access to reliable transportation...everything is spread over various cities and public transit is only available until 10pm Monday to Saturday"
- "Finding transportation to events on Sundays is a challenge especially if it is in another city and one doesn't have a car"
- "Getting around is impossible unless you have a car. Fort Erie just got rid of its bus, so there's now no regular bus only a bus on demand like a taxi. Even when they had a bus, it only went one way."

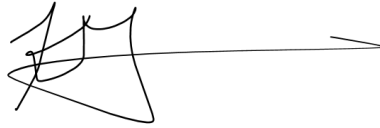


As the Region considers this important initiative, OUTniagara believes it is vital that municipal voices across the region be included to make the process more equitable.

Please record OUTniagara's support for the Moving Transit Forward plan transportation plan in Niagara.



Celeste Turner (they/them)  
Co-Chair  
OUTniagara



Kerry Goring (she/her)  
Co-Chair  
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