

# Government Relations: Advocacy Priorities and Strategy

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Why?

## Why is Government Relations and Advocacy Important?


1. **Government policy is complex:** we need to be able to communicate Niagara's needs and concerns effectively in order to influence federal and provincial government policy
2. **We need to set ourselves apart:** with 444 municipalities in Ontario and over 3,500 across Canada all competing for government funding and policy changes, we need to be strategic when advocating for Niagara

- THE IMPORTANCE OF -

## Speaking with 'One Voice'

There is agreement between **Niagara Region** and the **12 Local Area Municipalities** that communicating consistent, united messaging to federal and provincial governments is critical to achieving effective policy changes and securing additional funding





consistency  
is key

Developing one set of consistent priorities, in partnership with the local municipalities, will be key to moving forward.



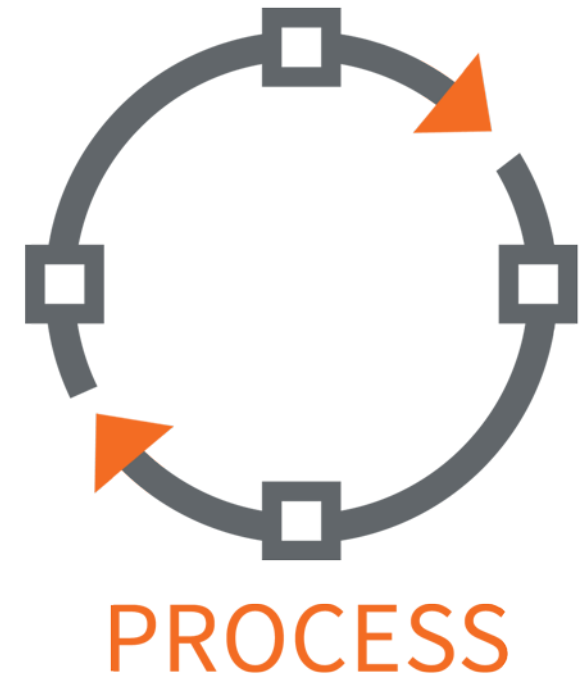


The image features a bright yellow background with a dark horizontal band across the middle. Two light blue speech bubbles with black outlines are positioned on either side of the band. The text 'Consultation Process' is written in white, sans-serif font across the dark band.

# Consultation Process

# What was included in the process?

- Robust interviews with all 12 of the local area CAOs and senior staff (and some mayors)
- The strategic plans of the Region and LAMs
- Annual budget documents
- The Region's economic development strategy
- Provincial policy direction and annual budget
- Party and government platforms



# Scoring Criteria for Priority Identification



1. Is the issue Niagara specific?
2. Are other organizations involved? Do we have partners?
3. Does it have a Region-wide benefit?
4. Does it align with council's strategic goals and direction?
5. Has there been previous or current effort on this issue?
6. Does this issue have alignment with provincial policy or direction?
7. Does the Region stand to benefit financially or socially?



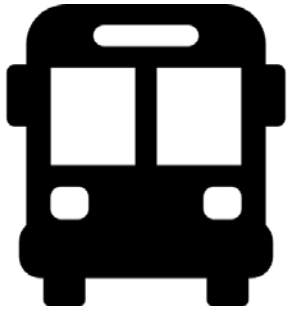
# Six Priority Areas



Housing and  
Homelessness



Infrastructure



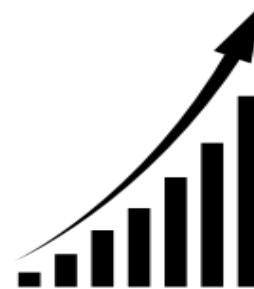
Transit  
Services



Protecting the  
Environment



Transportation  
Networks



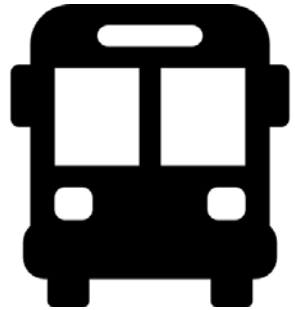
Economic  
Development



## Housing and Homelessness

### Specific Advocacy Opportunities

1. Provide more housing options through provincial and federal funding partnerships
2. Policy framework for short term vacation rental
3. Influx of international post-secondary students



Transit  
Services

## Specific Advocacy Issues

1. Continue to advocate for GO Train expansion
2. Funding for the potential regionalization of public transit in Niagara



## Transportation Networks

### Specific Advocacy Issues

1. Implementation of the 2017 TMP (Niagara-Hamilton Trade Corridor, North-South Escarpment Crossing, East-West Corridor)
2. QEW Enhancements (405/QEW juncture, twinning of Garden City Skyway)



Infrastructure

## Specific Advocacy Issues

1. South Niagara Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant
2. Broadband Internet expansion

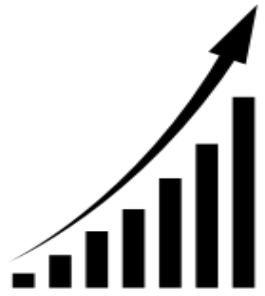


Protecting the  
Environment

## Specific Advocacy Issues

1. Climate Change
2. Cannabis Production, planning regulations
3. Greenbelt Protection





Economic  
Development

## Specific Advocacy Issues

1. Reassess Current Tax Rates and Fees for the Agricultural Sector
2. Redevelopment of Canal Lands

# Niagara Region Specific Issues

- Funding for homelessness, human trafficking and social assistance programs
- Mobile Integrated Health Model
- Public Health Funding
- Investments in front-line care for seniors living in long-term care and continued support for two significant redevelopment projects



## **Anything missing?**

The Region will support individual local area municipalities in their government relations priorities as appropriate.



A blue-tinted photograph of the Ontario Museum building, a large stone structure with multiple domes and arched windows. The building is partially obscured by bare trees in the foreground. A flag flies on a tall pole to the left. A dark horizontal band across the middle of the image contains the text "The Return of Niagara Week" in white.

# The Return of Niagara Week



# Niagara Week 2020

- Return to the highly successful model implemented from 2009 - 2014
- May 25 – 27, with a formal reception on the Monday night
- Hour-long delegations in support of our advocacy priorities
- Considerable support from MPP Oosterhoff's office
- In partnership with the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce
- Steps being taken to manage costs (i.e. travel, meals, etc.)

# A Note About Delegation Participation

- Higher levels of preparation are required than an AMO briefing
- Consider optics: Consider delegation size with a government focused on efficiencies
- All councillors are invited to attend the reception on Monday night





# Recommendations to Council

1. That Regional Council **ENDORSE** the list of priority advocacy issues outlined in this report that incorporate the shared priorities of the local area municipalities
2. That Regional Council **ENDORSE** the list of priority advocacy issues outlined in this report that are specific to Regional operations or jurisdiction
3. That staff **BE DIRECTED** to plan and execute a “Niagara Week” event occurring May 25 - 27, 2020 in collaboration with the 12 local area municipalities and the local business community





# Questions and Discussion