

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Council
FROM: Nick Ruller, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: February 6, 2026
SUBJECT: CAO Performance and Professional Development Plan

As Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and in coordination with the Lord Mayor, I am pleased to present the CAO Performance and Professional Development Plan (attached). This plan is designed to advance Council's priorities and the Town's vision, while aligning with the 2022–2027 Strategic Plan and the statutory responsibilities of the CAO.

As I continue working closely with the Corporate Leadership Team and their respective departments, the Performance and Professional Development Plan establishes a clear framework for organizational leadership, accountability, and continuous improvement. It is intended to provide Council with transparency regarding my areas of focus, key deliverables, and the professional development activities that support effective executive leadership.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The plan is guided by the following primary areas of focus:

Organizational Excellence and Culture - Fostering a high-performing organizational culture committed to continuous improvement, workforce stability, succession planning, customer service excellence, and strong Council–staff relationships.

Good Governance and Fiscal Stewardship - Strengthening governance practices, enhancing financial oversight, advancing asset management, improving budget transparency, and ensuring responsible fiscal management aligned with legislative and Council requirements.

Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency - Improving organizational processes, optimizing the use of financial and physical resources, and reducing reliance on external consultants where appropriate to enhance internal capacity.

Long-Term Strategic Planning and Community Outcomes - Advancing major planning initiatives, including the Official Plan, master plans, affordable housing strategy, and key municipal land redevelopment, with a forward-looking and place-based approach.

Intergovernmental Relations and Strategic Partnerships - Enhancing relationships with federal, provincial, regional, and community partners to advance Council priorities, secure external funding, and strengthen collaborative outcomes.

Proactive Issue Management and Council Communication - Anticipating emerging issues and ensuring timely, data-driven communication with Council to support informed decision-making and organizational responsiveness.

KEY OBJECTIVES AND PLANS OF ACTION

The key objectives outlined in the CAO Performance and Professional Development Plan have been carefully developed to ensure:

- Alignment with Council's Strategic Plan and priorities
- Clear performance expectations, timelines, and measurable outcomes
- Strong fiscal management and governance practices
- Organizational resilience, leadership capacity, and workforce sustainability
- Proactive engagement with Council, partners, and the community

ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWN'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The Performance and Professional Development Plan is directly aligned with the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake 2022–2027 Strategic Plan. By advancing these objectives, the organization is positioned to enhance service delivery, strengthen governance and financial stewardship, support sustainable growth, and protect the unique character and long-term interests of the community.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

I am committed to transparency and accountability in all aspects of my role. The plan includes a mid-year check-in with the Lord Mayor and will be incorporated into the annual CAO performance evaluation. Council will continue to receive regular updates through reports, briefings, and correspondence as objectives are progressed.

I am confident that, by working collaboratively, we can continue to advance Council's priorities and strengthen the organization in support of a vibrant, resilient, and well-governed community. I look forward to Council's continued support and collaboration as we move forward with this Performance and Professional Development Plan.

Please advise whether Council requires any additional clarification or wishes to discuss this matter further.



Nick Ruller
Chief Administrative Officer