
The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Information Report to Council

SUBJECT: Governance Review – Working Group Mandate & Status Update
DATE: 2026-04-14
REPORT #: CAO-26-016
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BACKGROUND

As previously reported to Council, Niagara Regional Council passed a motion on February 26, 2026, to initiate a governance review for Niagara Region, prompting Niagara-on-the-Lake to respond in a proactive, coordinated, and evidence-based manner.

In response, Town Council established a Governance Working Group on February 24, 2026, comprised of members of Council and the Senior Leadership Team. The Working Group was tasked with monitoring regional and provincial developments, coordinating the Town's internal research and analysis, articulating the Town's financial, operational, and governance interests, and providing timely strategic advice to Council.

SUMMARY OF COMPLETED WORK

The Governance Working Group has successfully fulfilled all of its original objectives. Over the course of its mandate, the Working Group oversaw a significant body of work, including:

- **Submission to the Province** – On March 4, 2026, the Town submitted its formal feedback to the Province of Ontario. The submission, titled Governance in Niagara-on-the-Lake, provided a comprehensive overview of the Town's governance structure, service delivery model, financial position, and key considerations related to potential governance changes. The document was subsequently made publicly available.
- **Public Communications** – The Town launched a dedicated governance review webpage, shared a video and written message from the Lord Mayor, and published a "Governance Review in Niagara" one-pager.
- **Resource Tracking** – As directed by Council, Staff tracked time dedicated to the governance review initiative. Across all departments, Staff collectively dedicated approximately 205 hours to this work, undertaken alongside ongoing operational responsibilities.

CONCLUSION OF MANDATE

The Working Group's original mandate has been fulfilled. While there is some interest in the Working Group continuing to meet as the governance discussion evolves, no further meetings are proposed at this time. Should Council wish for the Working Group to continue during the next stage of the governance review process, Council direction will be required to establish a new mandate, structure, and purpose.

NEXT STEP / CONCLUSION

The Governance Working Group has delivered on all elements of its original mandate. The Town's formal submission has been delivered to the Province, a joint inter-municipal position has been established, and public communications have been issued.

Staff will continue to monitor developments at the regional and provincial levels related to governance. Any significant updates or issues that warrant further consideration will be brought to Council's attention in a timely manner. Existing communication channels and resources will be maintained to support ongoing information sharing and coordination as needed.

PREVIOUS REPORTS

- [CAO-26-012](#) – Governance Review – Working Group Update
- [CAO-26-014](#) – Governance Review – Working Group Update 2