



March 31, 2026

BY MAIL AND EMAIL: premier@ontario.ca

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

RE: Joint Letter from the Lower-Tier Municipalities of Niagara Region

The Honourable Premier Doug Ford,

On Thursday, March 26, Niagara Regional Council voted to move forward with a comprehensive service delivery review. We know that the residents of Niagara deserve better than the status quo. As Mayors of Niagara, with consensus of the Region, we support moving forward with meaningful change in Niagara. We are writing to you with a straightforward purpose: to update you on the concrete, made-in-Niagara solutions our municipalities have taken since that letter, and to make a specific request of the Province.

We have worked with our colleagues across Niagara to reflect the needs of each municipality; a shared vision we are accountable to is the one we sign together, and it is that shared vision we are writing to report progress on.

On the question of regional governance structure, we are united in our support for a weighted distribution voting model that balances representation by population with fairness and ensures every municipality has a meaningful voice. Municipal best practises support a weighted distribution system that supports a diverse geography and creates a system that meets the needs of major urban centres and the rural communities that make Niagara the thriving agricultural region it is today.

Since our last letter, our municipalities have made concrete steps forward. Niagara-on-the-Lake, Thorold, Grimsby, and Port Colborne have each passed formal resolutions to voluntarily reduce the size of their local councils. In 2025, Lincoln Council lowered its size by 2 representatives. These steps are a real demonstration of Niagara's municipalities making difficult decisions without waiting for provincial direction.

Our reform agenda is focused on three things that matter to every taxpayer in Niagara: fewer politicians, less duplication, and better value for every tax dollar spent. That means, subject to financial review, transitioning services such as regional roads, Housing and Social Services,

Public Health, and EMS to locally governed Public Service Boards. It means establishing publicly owned Water and Wastewater Service Corporations to deliver essential services more efficiently and accountably, driving efficiencies through eliminating overlap and providing better value for taxpayers. And it also means continuing to review and recalibrate the number of politicians across the region, which as the resolutions passed by our municipalities demonstrate, is already underway.

We have one specific request. For the council reductions passed recently by Niagara-on-the-Lake, Thorold, Grimsby, and Port Colborne to take effect at the 2026 municipal election, the Province must act by May 2026. These municipalities have moved voluntarily and in good faith, and we are asking the Province to match that commitment with the legislative authority needed to make their decisions count.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss next steps.

Respectfully,

The Mayors of Grimsby, Port Colborne, West Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold, Wainfleet, St. Catharines, Lincoln, and the Lord Mayor of Niagara-on-the-Lake


Mayor Jeff Jordan (Mar 31, 2026 13:19:08 EDT)
Jeff Jordan
**Mayor, Town of
Grimsby**

Cheryl Ganann
Cheryl Ganann (Mar 31, 2026 13:09:29 EDT)
Cheryl Ganann
**Mayor, Township of
West Lincoln**


Marvin Junkin
**Mayor, Town of
Pelham**


Mayor Bill Steele (Mar 31, 2026 13:04:16 EDT)
Bill Steele
**Mayor, City of
Port Colborne**


Terry Ugolini (Mar 31, 2026 13:24:43 EDT)
Terry Ugolini
**Mayor, City of
Thorold**


Brian Grant
**Mayor, Township of
Wainfleet**


Mayor Mat Siscoe (Mar 31, 2026 16:20:35 EDT)
Mat Siscoe
**Mayor, City of
St. Catharines**


Sandra Easton
**Mayor, Town of
Lincoln**


Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa (Mar 31, 2026 13:12:56 EDT)
Gary Zalepa
**Lord Mayor, Town of
Niagara-on-the-Lake**

cc: Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Sam Oosterhoff, MPP – Niagara West
Jeff Burch, MPP – Niagara Centre
Wayne Gates, MPP – Niagara Falls
Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens, MPP – St. Catharines
Robert Dodd, Chief of Staff, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Rob Foster, Interim Regional Chair