



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Niagara moves forward with Smart Cities Challenge**

NIAGARA REGION, April 25, 2018 – Niagara has taken a collective step forward in the federal government’s Smart Cities Challenge.

Niagara’s 13 municipalities, with the support of its community partners, submitted an application with Infrastructure Canada that sets in motion a strategy to increase the sense of belonging among residents.

A sense of belonging is vital to the well-being and prosperity of individuals, families and neighbourhoods. Niagara’s plan will improve connections between people, work and community and enable greater civic participation through the use of technology.

Communities whose residents feel that they belong and trust each other have more innovative and inclusive economies; are healthier, safer, more engaged in the democratic process, and prove to be resilient in emergencies.

The Smart Cities Challenge, open to local municipalities and indigenous communities across Canada, encourages municipalities to think creatively and come up with innovative ideas that can positively impact the lives of citizens through the use of data and connected technology.

Since the launch of the competition last year, area municipalities, residents, academic institutions and community partners have worked collaboratively on a strategy that strengthens our residents’ sense of belonging.

Niagara is vying for a \$10 million grant. Finalists will be selected by summer 2018 and receive a \$250,000 grant to develop a final proposal, which must be submitted in winter 2019.

Winners will be announced spring 2019.

To learn more about the Smart Cities Challenge, visit <http://smartcitiesniagara.ca/>

QUOTES:

“The Smart Cities Challenge offers the Niagara community a unique opportunity to showcase to the rest of Canada just how innovative we can be. I believe through the use of data and connected technologies we can make a positive impact on our citizens’ community participation and overall quality of life.” Stuart Hendrie, Niagara Region Chief Information Officer

“I am pleased the Niagara Region, local area municipalities and community partners have come together to support this exciting initiative. Niagara residents have provided fresh new ideas that have shaped a comprehensive and innovative submission. We have put forward a proposal that will make a real difference in our region and has potential to better lives in communities across Canada.” Alan Caslin, Niagara Regional Chair

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