



## Building a Centre of Excellence for Agriculture



Sustainable solutions for horticultural and building automation

**Presented by:**

**Bill Hodgson, Mayor  
Town of Lincoln**

**to:  
Food and Farming Alliance,  
Ball's Falls**

**July 22, 2014**

# Ontario Planning Act



# Why **Agriculture**?

Because in Lincoln agriculture is:

- Here to stay because of Lincoln's natural endowments and the Greenbelt policy
- Where Lincoln leads in innovation
- The largest employer
- The largest economic driver as measured by value of shipments
- Interconnected to so much else

# Why a Centre of Excellence?

All the components are available:

- R&D potential
- Protected lands
- Knowledgeable work force
- Understand the value of agriculture to the broader economy

# Top Five Ranking by Gross Farm Receipts (all Farms) Including Breakdown of Miscellaneous Specialty, 2006 and 2011

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Rank	2006	2011
1	Greenhouse Product - \$109,405,296	Greenhouse Product - \$106,370,654
2	Fruit - \$42,321,281	Fruit - \$45,392,068
3	Poultry & Egg - \$29,506,438	Nursery Product & Sod & Maple - \$17,751,400
4	Nursery Product & Sod & Maple - \$4,878,208	Poultry & Egg - \$8,727,550
5	Cash Crops - \$3,440,116	Cash Crops - \$3,686,309



Due to the changes in Data Collection—there has been a large number of suppressions. With the suppression of data some categories will be significantly undervalued and not comparable.

Due to the changes in data collection made by Statistics Canada—The Category of Cash Crops includes the former categories of Wheat, Grains & Oilseeds and Field Crops

# Economic Profile of the Town of Lincoln

	2006	2011	Min/Max	Rank/12
Farmgate cash receipts in millions of dollars	\$195	\$191		
Number of farms	483	395		
Farmland area in acres	29,081	24,050		
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2012</b>		
Jobs	8,239	8,439	1,226 – 64,844	6th
Workforce participation rate		64.0%	56.2% - 69.0%	4th
Unemployment rate 2012		5.4%	4.3 – 11.5	2nd
Job Breakdown by Selected Sectors:				
Agriculture	1,249	1,523		
Manufacturing	1,513	1,524		
Self-Employment Rate		13.8%	7.2% - 20%	4th

# Official Plan Consultation

Council was involved in consultation throughout a two-phase process:

1. **Urban** – Consultant, Chris Jones of “Municipal Planning Consultants”
  - Public consultation (regulatory) process with invitations to the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and other associations
  - Council discussion
2. **Agriculture** – Consultants – Margaret Walton and James Farrar, “Planscape”
  - Key Stakeholder consultation
  - Chamber of Commerce consultation
  - Council workshops

Proposed O.P. presented to Planning and Development Committee June 18, 2014

O.P. approved by Council July 7, 2014

# FIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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- **Grow the Cluster** – to become the leading food and farming cluster in the world

- **Link Food, Farming, and Health** – promote the value of eating healthy, local food products

- **Foster Innovation** – “The place to do business” for the cluster of food and farming businesses

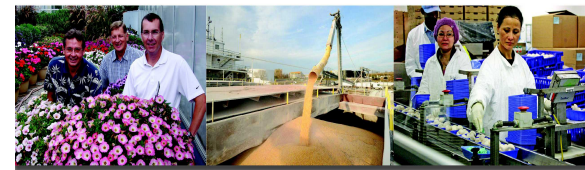
- **Enable the Cluster** – help food and farming businesses remain competitive and profitable

- **Cultivate New Approaches** – develop programs that support food and farming

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Golden Horseshoe Agriculture & Agri-Food Strategy  
Food & Farming: An Action Plan 2021





## Environmental Scan — Where We Are Now

### Strengths

1. Access to abundant fresh water for irrigation
2. Climate is moderate with warmer winters than most parts of Ontario and Canada allowing more temperate crops to thrive — the western end of Lake Ontario typically does not freeze affording unique protection against very cold winters
3. Accumulated reservoir of knowledge and skills to draw on as well as management depth in agricultural business
4. Outstanding educational facilities to support agriculture close by (Examples: Niagara College, Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute—Brock University, University of Guelph)
5. A desirable place to live which contributes to attracting talent
6. International connections through wine-making [all wine-making regions of the world] and floriculture [especially the Netherlands]
7. High tech support industries (Example: greenhouse production systems) providing essential privately owned infrastructure
8. Major transportation corridors in close proximity with access to border (Example: QEW)
9. Innovation and creative culture (Example: Vineland Research and Innovation Centre) Location in the Golden Horseshoe, an established, recognized creative economy cluster
10. Destination for agri-tourism (vineyards, wine tasting, agricultural landscape, fine dining)
11. Close to major food markets and consumers they serve — both domestic and export
12. The soils in the Town are rich in nutrients and well drained and therefore suited to a diversity of crops including grapes and tender fruit
13. Positive public perception of the area in view of its long and proud history for growing high quality fruit and, since the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, for producing high quality VQA wine
14. There is no single dominant employer — the economic base of the Town is made up of many firms, including many entrepreneurs — the business owners are residents of the Town
15. The Greenbelt legislation has provided for stability and a measure of control over planning variables that enables more orderly and predictable growth and development of a permanent small town
16. The stable population base enables demographic projections to be made accurately in anticipating future needs
17. The Town has a good supply of land available for industrial and commercial development
18. Attractive area for high value investors
19. Attracts and retains youthful entrepreneurs drawn to educational facilities, wine industry, research cluster and innovative opportunities

### Weaknesses

1. Livestock production has become very regulation intensive. These regulations are increasingly difficult to meet without a large land base — as a result livestock production is withdrawing from the Town of Lincoln and moving to less population dense rural areas of Ontario
2. Many layers of regulatory oversight are not integrated which adds to cost, length of time to obtain approvals and process complexity (Examples: Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority; Niagara Escarpment Commission; Ministry of Transportation; Ministry of the Environment; Town of Lincoln)
3. Competition for the use of the agricultural land base (Example: exurbanites who acquire farms in order to have a country home in a rural area) leads to the following consequences:
  - The cost of land is bid up to levels which makes acquisition for farm purposes uneconomic
  - Conflicts arise between agricultural users of the land and urban-oriented city dwellers
  - One farm operation may be composed of multiple parcels leading to inefficiencies in production and sub-optimal use of resources constrained by lot size restrictions (Example: Location of helphouse)
4. The impact of non farm development and fragmentation in rural areas creates imbalance with visitors' expectations for experiencing green, rural landscapes and impacts farmers ability to farm.
5. The Official Plan tells entrepreneurs what they can't do (restricting) rather than what they can do (enabling)
6. Provincial policies are not geared to the needs of the Town (Examples: (i) Greenbelt officials are located a long way from the lands their policy decisions impact (ii) LCBO monopoly restricts consumer access to Ontario vintages)
7. Rural road infrastructure which is very important for primary production farming and agri-tourism is in poor condition
8. Regulation can be limiting without corresponding public benefit or protection, particularly with respect to the environment and its implications for land use — farmers have a strong commitment to being good stewards of their land and use their soils to ensure their continued productivity
9. Centralization of processing is cutting out the small producer.
10. Gross farm receipts declined between 2006 and 2011,
11. Mapping of natural heritage features which become an impediment for farmers, is not a transparent process.
12. Inefficient use of existing infrastructure i.e. access to water

### Opportunities

1. Present Lincoln as an agricultural centre of excellence — be unique in focus as no other municipality is committed to this goal — diffuse the brand throughout the planning process
2. Encourage the expansion of businesses specializing in logistics in order to propel growth especially to markets outside Ontario
3. As the ethno-demographics of Ontario shifts, demand for new crops and new products increases allowing for more diversity; niche crops and new varieties could be well adapted to growing on smaller parcels of land
4. Expedite the approvals process — create an expeditor position to work with business on steering through the process
5. Provide incentives for commercial and industrial farm-related development to attract and expand its presence in Lincoln [Prudhomme's was given as an example of waterfront land that could be repurposed]
6. Relocate the Greenbelt head office to Lincoln so that Lincoln is recognized as being the centre for the greenbelt economy
7. Take measures that are tourist-friendly such as more bike lanes, better rural roads, more waterfront trail access, more promotion of and access to natural amenities
8. Focus business attraction on high tech companies in manufacturing and knowledge businesses like software development that support the agriculture value chain
9. Make agricultural production more competitive by (a) intensification (Example: higher planting densities of new orchards and vineyards, extended harvest window for fresh tender fruit through introduction of more early and late season varieties, more greenhouse production systems on lesser quality land) and (b) innovation (example: introduction of new varieties that resonate with consumers while providing higher returns to the growers)
10. Ensure excellent access to key inputs and resources [Example: water for agricultural applications like irrigation] leveraging existing infrastructure assets to the fullest extent possible
11. Enable continuing focus on value-added agriculture, where it is scaled appropriately, by allowing for on-farm enterprises including ones that engage the public directly
12. Ecological goods and services are provided by agriculture through the manner in which farmland is used responsibly to protect watersheds and habitats
13. New varieties developed in Lincoln
14. Expanding brewery and distillery industry mirroring the expansion of the wineries.
15. Smaller properties allow niche operations highly specialized for specific emerging markets.
16. Reuse of farm buildings no longer needed as part of farming operation but with architectural value.
17. Promote Canada, Niagara and Lincoln internationally as the source of safe food.

### Threats

1. Changing ethno-demographics and an aging population may change consumption patterns relative to the varieties currently planted in vineyards and orchards (Example: red/white wine preference shifts)
2. The time and effort it takes to get development approved may result in lost opportunities as proponents give up [investing in another jurisdiction instead], scale back or are delayed getting to market first
3. Future restrictions on water use for agriculture or imposition of more costs for agricultural water use
4. More unpredictability in climatic conditions including severe winters and/or summers that cause high plant stress
5. Not enough future workers with the right technical skills to support the increasingly high tech needs of agriculture
6. Not enough future workers with the right low tech skills to support labour intensive functions in agriculture [Examples: pruning, harvesting]
7. Future changes in Ontario government policy that are adverse to agriculture in the Town of Lincoln [Examples: increases in the minimum wage, changes in Greenbelt policy].
8. Limited land base zoned for large scale industrial development
9. Increases in the cost of energy, especially electrical energy, for cooling systems required by horticultural
10. Investment from other parts of Ontario in high value real estate may distort land values and demand for small parcels relative to large parcels for agricultural use
11. Gentrification resulting from the sale of small parcels for estate lots.
12. Friction between long term residents and new investors.
13. Fear of change

## Where Do We Plan To Go?

<b>Food and Farming Action Plan Pillar</b>					
<b>Summary Description of the Pillar</b>	<b>GROW THE CLUSTER</b> Grow the cluster by coordinating economic development, finding the voids, filling the gaps and building on strengths in the Golden Horseshoe.	<b>LINK FOOD, FARMING AND HEALTH</b> Work closely with a broad range of stakeholders to educate and inform consumers about healthy food products from the Golden Horseshoe.	<b>FOSTER INNOVATION</b> Position the agriculture, food processing, food retail and food service sector in the Golden Horseshoe as "the place to do business."	<b>ENABLE THE CLUSTER</b> Harmonize regulations, provide one-stop shopping for approvals and create an "open for business" environment	<b>CULTIVATE NEW APPROACHES</b> Be a leader in developing programs to support food and farming.
<b>Recommendations from the Stakeholder Consultation held on April 3, 2014</b>	<p>Emphasize the local food connection for the nearby population base while seeking to gain share in the global market where millions of middle class consumers with resources to spend are emerging</p> <p>Build the clusters where Lincoln has leadership (i) agriculture and food (agri-technology services and research, primary production including ornamentals, wine-making and other value-added food and beverage products, agri-tourism) and (ii) design and fabrication</p> <p>Explore partnerships for improving the transportation network.</p> <p>Focus on programs and actions to draw young people to live and work in Lincoln.</p> <p>Promote Lincoln as a centre of excellence for agriculture and a model of rural – urban balance.</p>				
<i>What could be added or modified?</i>					

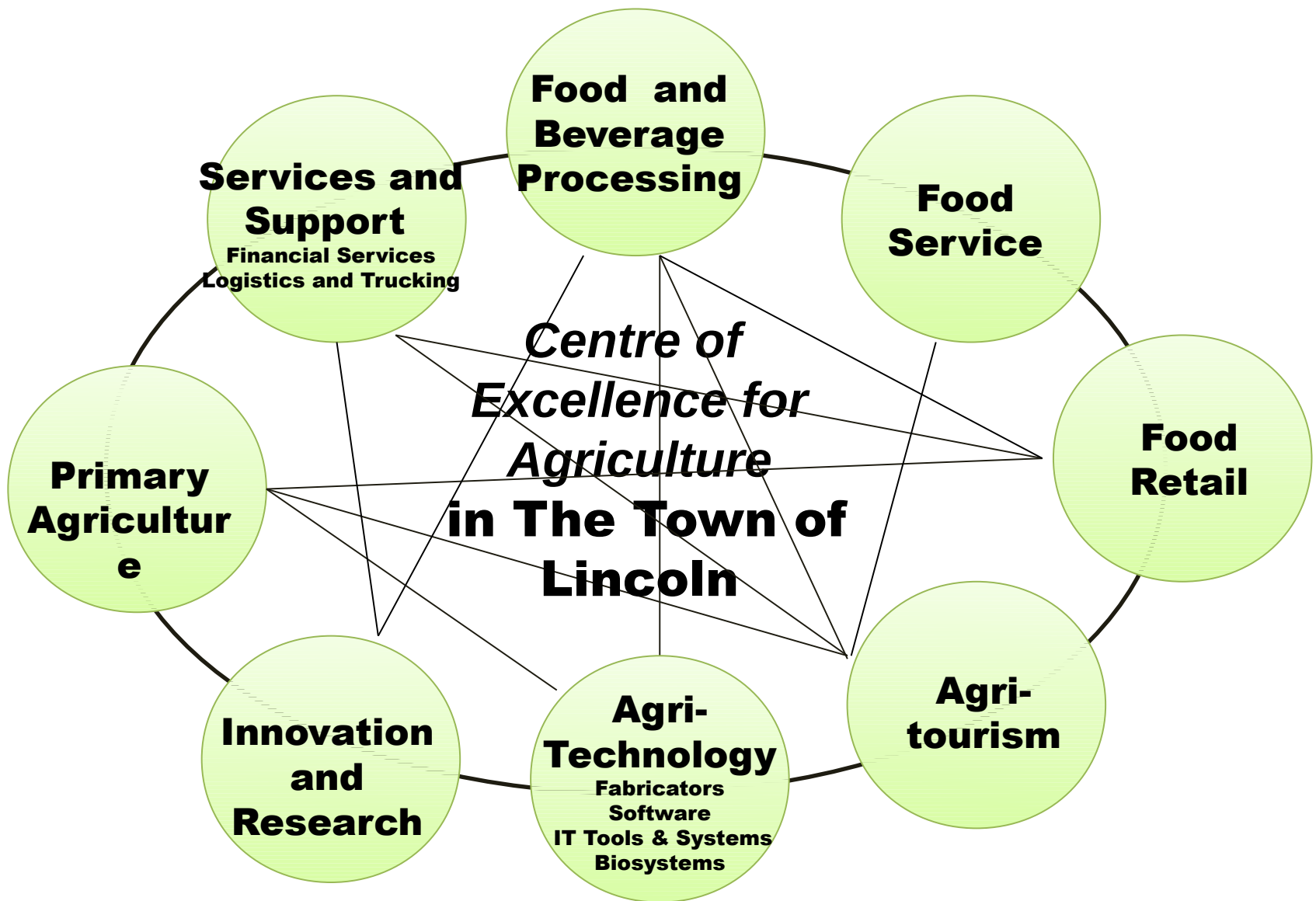
April 25, 2014-updated April 28, 2014



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<b>Recommendations from the Stakeholder Consultation held on April 3, 2014</b>	<p>Grow the cluster by coordinating economic development, finding the voids, filling the gaps and building on strengths in the Golden Horseshoe.</p> <p>Coordinate with other levels of government to leverage their support for policies that will grow the horticultural value chain in Lincoln</p> <p>Continue to implement the Town's plan to repair and rebuild rural roads to make Lincoln's rural treasures accessible to motorist and cyclists and to enable efficient logistics in the movement of goods while obtaining as much support as possible from the Region and from the Province</p> <p>Draw young people to live and work in Lincoln that have the skills and vision to contribute to making Lincoln the centre of excellence for agriculture and a model of rural-urban harmony where the small town feel is preserved and the quality of life is highly prized</p> <p>Increase the use of rail transit and its connectivity as a means of moving people in and out of the Town for both commuting access for Town residents to jobs outside the Town and tourist access to attractions inside the Town</p> <p>Allow for at least two different market-driven business models for primary agriculture to grow: (i) a model that recognizes that the scale of retail distribution has increased through consolidation and therefore requires capacity to assemble volume for distributing consistent quality product efficiently, aligned with market needs and (ii) a model that enables niche crop production to flourish by catering to specialty segments outside of the mass market and which implicitly stimulates and rewards innovation (recognizing that crops from (ii) may evolve into (i) as they mature in terms of market acceptance and awareness)</p>	<p>Work closely with a broad range of stakeholders to educate and inform consumers about healthy food products from the Golden Horseshoe.</p> <p>Brand Lincoln as a centre of excellence for agriculture</p> <p>Promote the town as a unique destination for agri-tourism and culinary tourism to celebrate Lincoln's wines, fruits, flowers, vegetables, cooking schools, and cheeses</p> <p>Promote the richness and abundance of the fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers, new varieties introduced, and new value-added products and processes that originate in Lincoln</p> <p>Support hub(s) for enhanced logistics coordination to improve access of smaller growers to domestic and international markets for Lincoln-grown crops and value-added products and services</p> <p>Bring the Greenbelt to Lincoln and build on Lincoln as the heart of the Greenbelt</p> <p>Enhance consumer access to and from the GTA through improved transit offerings with facilities in Lincoln to support a range of transportation alternatives</p> <p>Spruce up the appearance of the community especially along major corridors (Example: flowering shrubs along the QEW roadside, retain agricultural landscape) in collaboration with other levels of government</p> <p>Emphasize the quality and the safety of food produced in the Town</p> <p>Promote local Canadian food as the safe choice for consumers.</p>	<p>Position the agriculture, food processing, food retail and food service sector in the Golden Horseshoe as "the place to do business."</p> <p>Focus on key technologies that will support innovative agriculture and work to retain and attract global technology and service firms in this sector to Lincoln as well as encouraging entrepreneurial start-ups</p> <p>Be branded and recognized as the place for "excellence in agriculture" in both research, development and commercialization, on the one hand, and best practices adopted by farmers and other segments of the value chain in Lincoln on the other</p> <p>Be recognized as the leader in agri-tech solutions and research for horticultural crops and greenhouse production systems and encourage Lincoln farmers and processors to be early adopters of new technology by supportive policies</p> <p>Be known for agricultural practices that use water and other inputs efficiently and which are green and therefore sustainable including expanded use of biocontrol technologies to manage diseases and pests</p> <p>Support intensification of agriculture to maximize the value per acre of farm cash receipts while being responsible stewards of the land</p> <p>Promote Lincoln as the "permanent small town" that offers employment opportunities in a diverse and innovative economy</p>	<p>Harmonize regulations, provide one-stop shopping for approvals and create an "open for business" environment</p> <p>Develop policy to advance harmony between rural and urban land owners and users</p> <p>Implement expedited processes for facilitating agriculture business development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve one-stop coordination among regulatory bodies</li> <li>Position Lincoln so that it is sought out as the place to do the business of agriculture and food</li> <li>Follow a 'can do' culture in which planning and economic development work together seamlessly</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty in the planning process and increase flexibility for users of agricultural lands</li> <li>Provide guidance and support for entrepreneurs through the approvals process</li> </ul> <p>Develop a community market that showcases local production.</p> <p>Manage signage to promote appropriate vision.</p>	<p>Be a leader in developing programs to support food and farming.</p> <p>Consider industrial development policies that encourage agri-tech firms to locate in Lincoln and set a goal of reducing the industrial vacancy rate by 20% in five years</p> <p>Be a leader in agriculture investment and renewal by considering tax incentives for research-based firms and firms supplying agri-technology solutions</p> <p>Encourage more value-added processing operations on farms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative approaches to processing to grow markets</li> <li>Extend the season for economic activity in the agri-food sector to more year-round operations</li> <li>Increase the use of robotics to raise labour productivity and product quality</li> <li>Create more on-farm experiences to bring people to the farm to enjoy and to spend</li> </ul> <p>Encourage more collaborative approaches among businesses in Lincoln [Example: consolidate loads for efficiencies in logistics]</p> <p>Use existing public infrastructure such as the new community centre in Beamsville for purposes aligned with the vision</p> <p>Establish partnerships as part of economic development strategy with GH Region Food Processors</p> <p>Link urban and rural – interesting urban spaces support rural tourism</p> <p>Promote partnerships between farmers and businesses</p> <p>Consider new approaches to managing home based businesses that foster incubation of new businesses that can grow to be major contributors to the local economy</p>

April 25, 2014-updated April 28, 2014



# All businesses in Lincoln benefit when agriculture prospers

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**The Town of Lincoln's Agricultural Cluster**

11.00 x 8.50 in

# Next Steps

- Regional review and approval (delegated Provincial authority)
  - Circulate to NPCA and NEC and other agencies
- Council to review and decide on suggested modifications, if any
- Regional Review a second time - approve
- Official Plan comes into effect



*Thank you for the opportunity to speak  
with you about our Town of Lincoln Plan.*

*-Bill*



**Presented by:**

**Bill Hodgson,  
Mayor  
Town of Lincoln  
July 22, 2014**