Software Niagara
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February 23, 2013

Niagara Region
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Dear Staff and Elected Officials of the Niagara Region:

We at Software Niagara want to take the occasion of International Open Data Day to express out most sincere thanks for adopting the Open Data Pilot in Niagara project. Open Data offers incredible opportunities and Software Niagara is thrilled to see Niagara's government among the earliest of Canada's municipalities to embrace this potential-filled concept in technology and governance.

Software Niagara is a grassroots organization that seeks to bring together people with an interest in creating software in the region. We are made up of programmers, business owners, students and others who share not just a passion for technology but a belief in the value of community and collaboration. We advocate strongly for the adoption of open data policies for the incredible practical advantages to local communities and economies, and because they are inherently appealing to this core value of collaborative community building.
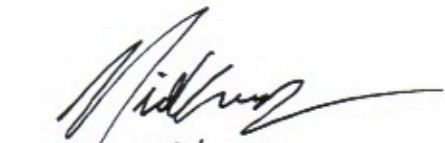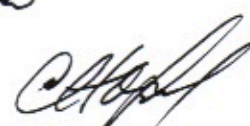
The number of people already examining and working with the open data has been very encouraging, and a clear indication that the local technical community is hungry to pursue projects using open data. Over 15 local professionals and students took a Saturday of their own time to attend our Open Data Day Hackathon. This lead to the development of interesting and potentially useful, if small, applications, that display possible uses for open data.

More importantly, it was a terrific learning opportunity for not only the students, but the programmers, public staff, and other professionals in attendance. This again represents the tremendous power of open data to bring diverse groups, with potentially opposed views, together in situations rife with opportunities to learn from one another while working together.

For the reasons above, and many more omitted in the name of brevity, we encourage you with the utmost enthusiasm to strengthen the Niagara Region's commitment to open data policies.
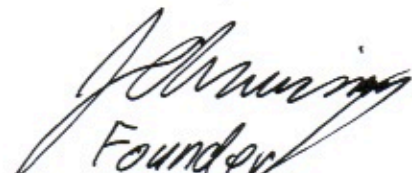
Our Sincerest Thanks,

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Nickolas Kemper
Web Developer

Slavi Mariner

Michael Mattok - Web Developer

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