

## **2023 PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE NORTH TONAWANDA CITY CHARTER**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **SEPARATE CITY CLERK/TREASURER**

To ensure North Tonawanda's City Treasurer, the most critical financial officer in NT, is highly qualified in accounting and managing the City's finances, the new Charter will allow for a rigorous recruitment and appointment process conducted by the Mayor and City Council. As the City Clerk regularly engages personally with the residents of North Tonawanda, he or she will remain elected by that citizenry.

#### **APPOINTED CITY ATTORNEY**

There remains a conflict of interest with an elected City Attorney. This is because the City Attorney, in representing the interests of the City, must at times bring legal action against individual citizens who are also potential electors and campaign donors. This is why all but two municipalities in New York State utilize appointed legal counsel. Revising the Charter to have the City Attorney appointed by the Mayor will eliminate the potential for this conflict of interest.

#### **VACATED ELECTED POSITIONS – SPECIAL ELECTIONS**

The current Charter allows the City Council to appoint replacements for all vacated elected positions, including their own. It is undemocratic, taking away the right of voters to replace someone leaving these offices. This has happened **16** times in the last **20** years. Special Elections for vacated elected positions will give the voters this right back.

#### **EARLIER BUDGETING**

Submission of a proposed City Budget should be well before an election, so voters can evaluate City officials based on that budget. August 1, rather than the current date of October 1, creates a more reasonable time frame for citizens to review the City's finances prior to any City election.