

## **30 Years of Experience: Thomson's Greatest Accomplishments**

With nearly 30 years of municipal experience, Wayne Thomson has been a fixture in local politics in Niagara Falls. He is the longest serving Mayor in the City's history, having served a combined total of 17 years as the head of Council.

Wayne began his municipal career in 1969 when he was elected as Alderman. After ten (10) years as a councillor, he rose to the Mayor's chair after winning the 1979 election. Wayne served five (5) years before returning to his vocation as a Public Health Inspector. He returned to the Mayor's office in 1992 at an economically difficult time for the community with unemployment at a high of 16%.

Wayne's second stint as Mayor from 1992-2003, saw unprecedented changes to the community. He successfully lobbied the Provincial government to select Niagara Falls as a location for a commercial casino. Relatedly, he spearheaded a multi-party agreement with the Provincial government and the nation's rail lines to remove a track that cut through the heart of the tourist corridor, enabling increased development, a proposed People Mover system and the \$1 billion Fallsview Casino Resort. The creation of a conducive environment for development lead the Conference Board of Canada to declare Niagara Falls as "the Provincial leader in economic growth" toward the end of Wayne's second run as Mayor.

Wayne's other major accomplishments include reducing Council size, eliminating the parochial ward system in the community and organizing the local tourism community under one umbrella organization.

Wayne's political involvement is by no means done. He returned as Councillor after the last municipal election and is the President of Niagara Falls Tourism, an appropriate position considering how he helped make the community a truly year-round tourist destination.