

Grimsby Soccer + Lincoln Soccer Club → West Niagara

## Stronger together — a new chapter for soccer in West Niagara

Following a positive and encouraging town hall, both clubs are proud to move into the member voting stage. This pamphlet gives you the key facts, answers your questions, and explains why both boards believe this is the right move — for your family, and for the future of soccer in our region.

### • A message from both clubs

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Over the past year, the leadership of Grimsby Soccer and Lincoln Soccer Club have been engaged in open and honest conversations about what the future of community soccer in West Niagara looks like. Those conversations led to a clear conclusion: together, we can offer our players, families, and communities something neither club could achieve alone.

Both clubs are proud of what they have built — the players developed, the volunteers who gave their time, and the communities they have served. This is not about one club absorbing the other. It is about two strong, like-minded organizations choosing to become something even better.

We already share turf facilities, training and uniform providers, and have members active in both clubs. In many ways, this transition is less of a leap and more of a natural next step. We believe this is the right move for every kid who puts on a kit in this region — now and for generations to come.

*"By combining our resources, player pools, and experience, West Niagara SC will offer a stronger, more sustainable, and more competitive pathway for every player in our region — with better development opportunities and greater stability for all our families."*

### • Who we are — our combined scale

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Together, Grimsby Soccer and Lincoln Soccer Club represent one of the largest community soccer organizations in the Niagara region. Here is what West Niagara SC would look like from day one:

**450**

Little Kickers & youth players aged U3–U7

**750**

House league players aged U8–U19

**180**

Adult players across both communities

**38 teams**

Travel & rep teams with 600+ players

**1,580+**

Total registered players from day one

**2 homes**

Southward Park & Beamsville Lions Park

That scale matters. It means more teams, stronger grant applications, and a louder voice with municipalities on field access and future infrastructure investment.

## ● Registration fees — what to expect

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We know this is one of the first questions on every parent's mind, and we want to be straightforward with you.

Currently, there is a modest difference in fee structures between the two clubs — largely reflecting differences in staffing and facility access. Grimsby Soccer has invested in paid staff and its own turf facility, which is reflected in its fees. Lincoln Soccer Club has operated leaner, without those overheads.

As West Niagara SC, the goal is to harmonize fees fairly across both communities. No final structure has been set — that work will happen during the transition and families will be consulted. What we can commit to is this: any changes will be communicated well in advance, will be phased thoughtfully, and will reflect the improved programs and services that come with a larger, better-resourced club.

## ● Financial health — what the review found

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As part of the amalgamation process, both clubs invited an independent third party to review each other's financial records. The findings were clear and encouraging.

Both Grimsby Soccer and Lincoln Soccer Club are in a sound and healthy financial position. Neither club carries concerning liabilities, and both have operated responsibly as community non-profits.

The independent review also assessed a consolidated budget. The conclusion: a combined West Niagara SC would be in a strong, sustainable non-profit financial position — with greater purchasing power, improved grant eligibility, and a more stable long-term funding base than either club holds individually.

## ● What stays the same — your home, your community

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Change can feel unsettling, especially when it involves something as important as your child's sport. Here is what is not changing:

### **Your home field stays your home field**

Grimsby families stay at Southward Park.  
Lincoln families stay at Beamsville Lions Park.

### **A smooth transition**

We already share turf, facilities, training providers, and uniform suppliers. Many members are active in both clubs already.

### **Community identity matters**

Both communities will be recognized and celebrated within West Niagara SC.

### **Your people stay involved**

Both clubs will continue to need volunteers, coaches, and coordinators at every level.

### **Your child still has a team**

No age group loses its program. The goal is more teams and more options — not fewer.

### **More options, not more travel**

Overflow field access means more scheduling flexibility — not pressure to travel further than today.

## • Club structure — how programs would work

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West Niagara SC would operate across both communities, keeping local roots while building regional strength.

House league U8 to U11	<b>Home community first.</b> Players continue to train and play in their home locations. An interlocked divisional format lets Grimsby and Lincoln teams play against each other — more variety for Lincoln families, more opponents for Grimsby, without excessive travel for either.
House league U13+	<b>Regional interlock continues.</b> Older house league players remain within the established interlock divisions alongside Smithville and Pelham — maintaining the competitive structure families already know.
Travel / Rep Grassroots U8–U12	<b>Local teams, local pride.</b> The objective at grassroots rep ages is to field as many local teams as possible — keeping players close to home while offering a genuine competitive pathway. A larger combined club makes this significantly more achievable.
Travel / Rep U13+	<b>Building real depth.</b> At U13 and above, the goal is multiple travel teams at each age group. More players get a genuine competitive opportunity — no one gets squeezed out because the pool was too small.
Travel / Rep U14+ Elite	<b>Elite pathway.</b> Where numbers and level support it, West Niagara SC would pursue I-Model teams at U14 and above — an elite development pathway for players ready for that challenge. Alongside this, 1–2 district teams would continue in the Niagara Soccer League, ensuring pathways for players at every level.

## • Governance — how the club would be run

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West Niagara SC would be governed by a formal board structure, with both communities meaningfully represented. Day-to-day operations would be managed by paid staff, supported by subcommittees drawn from volunteers across both organizations — covering areas like player development, house league, travel programs, finance, and communications.

A dedicated transition committee will oversee the process of bringing both organizations together following a successful vote. Once the vote has passed, that committee's mandate, membership, and timeline will be clearly communicated to all members.

The goal is a club that is professionally run, community-governed, and transparent — not a faceless organization, but one where members have a real voice.

## • What happens next — timeline

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May TBD, 2026	<b>Special General Meeting — member vote.</b> Both clubs vote at their respective locations. A yes from both clubs moves West Niagara SC forward.
Spring / Summer 2026	<b>Transition begins.</b> The transition committee activates. Governance, branding, registration systems, and fee harmonization work begins. Families will be kept informed throughout.
Fall 2026	<b>Travel team tryouts</b> held for the first time under the West Niagara SC banner.
2026/27 season	<b>First full season as West Niagara SC.</b> House league, travel, and rep programs operating under one unified club.

## • What if we don't merge? An honest conversation

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We think it is important to be straightforward about this — because parents deserve honesty, not just enthusiasm.

*Soccer is changing fast. The demands placed on clubs by governing bodies are increasing every year — more administration, more compliance, more resources required just to operate. Volunteer fatigue is real. The same dedicated people have been running these organizations for 8–10 years, and the ask keeps growing. If both clubs remain separate, they will continue competing against each other for the same players — which weakens both. Smaller player pools mean thinner teams, fewer development pathways, and less leverage with municipalities and sponsors. The presidents and boards of both clubs have watched the landscape shift. This amalgamation is not a reaction to crisis — both clubs are financially healthy. It is a proactive decision made from a position of strength, while we still have the momentum and goodwill to do it properly. Staying separate is an option. But the boards of both clubs believe that choosing to stay small, when the opportunity to grow together is right in front of us, is the greater risk.*

## • What this means for your family

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### **Better teams**

Stronger player pools = better competition at every age and level

### **Stay local**

No need to leave the region for a quality program

### **Financially stable**

A well-governed club with a healthy, consolidated budget

### **Clear pathways**

From first kick to elite rep, all under one roof in your community

### **Less chaos**

One club, one plan, one point of contact for your family

### **Built to last**

A club with the scale and structure to grow with your child

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*Reach out to your club representatives — we are happy to talk through anything in this document.*

West Niagara SC — Grimsby Soccer & Lincoln Soccer Club amalgamation proposal · April 2026