

## FOSS4G 2020 LETTER OF INTENT TO HOST FOSS4G 2020 in NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO CANADA

Dear FOSS4G 2020 selection committee,

A committed group of GIS / Open Source Geomatics professionals request the support of OSGeo, in creating awareness and recognition of GIS / Geomatics in the Niagara Region, Ontario through the hosting of the FOSS4G 2020 Annual Conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. Our LOC proposes that FOSS4G be held over the dates of **Monday September 14 to Saturday September 19, 2020**. Please note Niagara Falls could also host FOSS4G either the week prior or week post these dates. We propose a Joint Canadian – US FOSS4G bringing together both sides of the border to increase the potential delegate attendance.

**CDN Conference Co-Chair: Brad Berg, Email: [huntersrow64@gmail.com](mailto:huntersrow64@gmail.com)**

Expert in open source GIS software and associated programs. Associated with Innovate Niagara on a GIS Startup "MapX GSI." MapX specialists in open-source training, documentation, tech support and geospatial product development.

**US Conference Co-Chair: Chris S. Renschler, Associate Professor of Geography, University at Buffalo**

**Email: [renschr@buffalo.edu](mailto:renschr@buffalo.edu)**, Director of the Landscape-based Environmental System Analysis and Modeling (LESAM) lab, Director of the Geographic Information and Analysis Lab (GIAL)

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrisrenschler/>

### LOC MEMBERS (To Date):

**Scott Barbacki:** URISA Ontario, Director of Communications. OACETT Niagara, Chair. Niagara College Professor, GIS/Geospatial Management program. Niagara College GIS/GM Program Advisory Committee. Judge, Niagara Region Science and Engineering Fair.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/scott-barbacki-c-tech-73926a32/>

**James Burn:**

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-burn-let-c-e-t-cgs-gisp-a8322123/>

**Jesse Griffis:** MA Geography (GIS) SUNY Buffalo. Over 20 years of GIS and spatial application software design experience (prior to it being FOSS4G), Lead Software Engineer, VETRO FiberMap, and lead developer for FiberLocator. Supervised the team managing the QA process for FEMA's flood hazard data, participated in the OSGeo OWS-1 working group on multi-hazard mapping data.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jesse-griffis-a390a66/>

**Jenn Gross:** HBA, GISP, C.Tech. – GIS and Asset Management Coordinator for the Town of Grimsby. She has worked in the GIS and asset management industry for over 10 years in both the private and public sectors.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jenn-gross-hba-gisp-c-tech-ab551224/?originalSubdomain=ca>

**Arthur J. Lembo, Jr.:** Professor, Department of Geography & Geosciences Salisbury University, Technical Director of the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative, has conducted sponsored research for organization like the National Science Foundation, NASA, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Kellogg Foundation.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/artlembo/>

**Thomas Lillo:** Managing Partner & Co-Founder, Datathon Analytics Events, Data Scientist, Technology & Geography Student; with additional experience as Municipal Research Coordinator, Brock University Student's Union; Business Analyst, Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/thomaslillo/>

**Ian Lucas:** Founding Partner at Public Service Request LLC, Board Secretary Geospatial Niagara Inc., Board Member, Local Government Liaison Niagara Olympic Track and Field Club.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/publicservicerequest/>

**Darren Platakis -** BSc. Geography, GIS(PG), FRCGS - Founder and Executive Director of Geospatial Niagara, Member of the College of Fellows - Royal Canadian Geographical Society (2013), Chair - Niagara College GIS/Geospatial Management Program Advisory Committee, Co-lead on treeOcode Niagara and the Ohnia:kara Aspiring Global Geopark, Leader of the the Niagara GoGeomatics Group.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/darren-platakis-bsc-geog-gis-pg-frcgs-52656127/>

**Kevin Turner:** Associate Professor, Department of Geography & Tourism Studies, Brock University. Research focus: tracking changing climate and landscape features and associated impacts on water resources. Has led field research campaigns for over a decade in remote northwestern Canada and has employed leading edge techniques for high-resolution 3D mapping of landslides, wildfire sites, and changing land cover. Spatial analyses and use of open source technology is a key component of his teaching and research programs.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevin-turner-4b5b821a/>

### Committee / Events Organizing Experience

**The listed committee members have experience with the following:** URISA Ontario, Director of Communications, annual event BeSpatial, OACETT Niagara, Chair; Niagara College GIS/GM Program Advisory Committee; Niagara Region Science and Engineering Fair; Team leader that oversees the holdings and building of financial support that benefits over members/tenants; Team Leader & Event co-ordinator, Movember Foundation; Conference Committee participation for "User" group conferences, ranging in size 50 – 300 delegates; Two 3 day major Ontario-sanctioned athletics events with 500 athletes & 1500 spectators; Conference Committee 2018 Canadian Open Data Summit

## Location: Niagara Falls Ontario Canada

60% of North America's population is located within a 90-minute flight of Niagara Falls. With three international airports, all less than 125 km away. Pearson International Airport is located 125 KM from the SCCN and rated the 2nd most connected airport in North America and 5th in the world. Niagara Falls International Airport, located in Buffalo NY, is 15KM from the SCCN and would be a perfect gateway for the majority of FOSS4G US Delegates. John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport is 86km away and provides direct flights to 11 destinations, and additional connectivity to over 25 domestic and international destinations.

**Venue Information:** Our LOC has partnered with the Scotiabank Convention Centre Niagara (SCCN) to host FOSS4G 2020. The SCCN is steps away (250) from Niagara Falls and easy walking distance to 4,000 branded hotel rooms to accommodate all budget levels. The flexibility the SCCN offers provides us with many options as we plan around various innovations for the FOSS4G program.

- 13 flexible breakout meeting rooms with generous pre-function & service space
- made from scratch menus featuring regionally sourced products and seasonal ingredients
- 82,000 sq.ft. free span exhibit hall
- an exquisite 17,00 sq.ft. ballroom
- an intimate 1,000+ seat tiered theatre

Facility Highlights: <http://www.fallsconventions.com/planning/>

**Accommodations:** Niagara Falls hotels were created to service the needs of over 15 million annual visitors, which means that there is a large variety of hotel brands for OSGeo delegates to choose from. The majority of the hotels have rooms overlooking the Falls or the Niagara River. It is a stunning sight to be sitting in your hotel room watching the volumes of water thunder over the Falls. Hotel rooms rates for FOSS4G 2020 delegates are currently quoted in the range of \$169CDN to \$385CDN.

## A Delegate Experience:

Niagara Falls is a "bucket list" destination for people around the world. Scotiabank Convention Centre and Niagara Falls Business Events are delighted to offer FOSS4G attendees use of the Delegate Advantage Card or "DAC" Card throughout their visit. As DAC cardholders, FOSS4G benefits from VIP treatment that few others ever get to experience in our destination. The best deals, discounts and limited time offers await you in Niagara Falls, giving your delegates the chance to save big from over 50 local restaurants, shops and attractions.

## Local Organizations

Our Joint LOC will propose partnerships with the following organizations Canadian Institute of Geomatics

- City of Niagara Falls
- Niagara Region (Municipality)
- Niagara Falls Business Events
- Vineland Research & Innovation Centre
- McMaster University, FAC. of Science, School of Geography & Earth Sciences
- Brock University: Environmental Sustainability Research Centre; FAC. Of Mathematics & Science, Earth Science; FAC. Of Social Sciences, Geography & Tourism; Cool Climate Oenology & Viticulture Institute
- Niagara College: Walker Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre; School of Environment & Horticulture
- Rochester Institute of Technology, Digital Imaging and Remote Sensing Laboratory
- University at Buffalo, Department of Geography
- National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis at University at Buffalo
- Geospatial Niagara
- Niagara GoGeomatics Group
- Town of Grimsby

## Why FOSS4G 2020 in Niagara Falls, Ontario

- The Niagara Falls LOC has budgeted a similar registration fee schedule as Boston 2017 and estimates a modest profit
- The LOC has budgeted for engaging a Professional Conference Organizer to manage logistical and planning arrangements.
- At this time, the Niagara Falls LOC does not require OSGeo seed funding
- Raise the awareness and application of Open Source data to GIS professionals in the area and bring them together to form a Niagara (Canada / US) Regional OSGeo Chapter.
- FOSS4G 2020 Niagara Falls presents an opportunity to enlighten thousands in our community and educate them about the use of Open Source
- Execute an "Open Border" FOSS4G 2020 with colleagues from Buffalo NY and the surrounding Northeast US area. FOSS4G 2020 in Niagara Falls provides easy driveable access for those delegates
- FOSS4G 2020 Niagara Falls will offer a diverse scientific program and technical tours:
  - The Welland Canal, Marine survey / navigation / Hamilton Port Authority / ASI Group
  - Teaching Teachers, Niagara District School Board Connect Conference (Canada's largest educational technology conference, 2000 delegates)
  - Landfill GIS - Walker Industries / Environmental Sustainability imaging
  - Agribusiness, Vineyard management, Soft Fruit monitoring
  - sUAVs, Remote Sensing & Imaging