

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**PEDC 5-2019
Wednesday, May 8, 2019
Council Chamber
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON**

Committee: Bradley (Regional Chair), Butters, Bylsma, Campion, Darte (Committee Vice-Chair), Foster, Greenwood, Heit, Huson (Committee Chair), Junkin, Redekop, Rigby, Ugulini, Witteveen

Absent/Regrets: Bellows, Diodati, Easton, Sendzik, Zalepa

Staff: I. Banach, Manager, Long Range Planning, M. Bannerman, Program Manager, Grants & Incentives, H. Chamberlain, Director, Financial Management & Planning/Deputy Treasurer, D. Giles, Director, Community & Long Range Planning, J. Gilston, Legislative Coordinator, D. Heyworth, Official Plan Policy Consultant, V. Kuhns, Acting Director, Economic Development, P. Lambert, Director, Infrastructure Planning & Development Engineering, D. Morreale, Director, Development Approvals, R. Mostacci, Commissioner, Planning & Development Services, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, C. Selig, GO Implementation Project Planning Lead

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Huson called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Niagara Economic Update (Agenda Item 6.1)

Blake Landry, Manager, Economic Research and Analysis, provided information respecting Niagara Economic Update. Topics of the presentation included:

- Nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- Consumer Price Index
- Labour Force
- Unemployment Rate

3.2 Visitor Rebate Program

Sebastian Prins, Director of Government Relations (Ontario), Retail Council of Canada, presented information respecting the Visitor Rebate Program. Topics of the presentation included:

- About the Retail Council of Canada
- Tourism in Canada
- Tourist Spending
- International Comparison
- What We Found
- Summary and Next Steps

Moved by Regional Chair Bradley
Seconded by Councillor Darté

That Regional Council **ENDORSE** the re-instatement of the Visitor Rebate Program.

Carried

Councillor Information Request(s):

Provide an update with respect to the role of Niagara's Regional Tourism Organization (RTO). Councillor Heit.

3.3 Regional Incentives Financial Information (Agenda Item 6.4)

Doug Giles, Director, Community and Long Range Planning, provided information respecting Regional Incentives Financial Information. Topics of the presentation included:

- Purpose
- Context
- Regional Grant Programs Under Review
- Types of Grants and Incentives
- Smarter Niagara Incentive Program (SNIP)/Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Relationship
- SNIP Tax Increment Grant Commitments
- 2018 SNIP Encumbrances
- Regional Grants and Incentive Review
- Incentive Review Overview

Councillor Information Request(s):

Provide a list of all projects funded by tax-related grants in the Smarter Niagara Incentive Program (SNIP). Councillor Heit.

3.4 Niagara Biennial Awards Program (Agenda Item 6.3)

Julia van der Laan de Vries, Urban Designer, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture, provided information respecting the Niagara Biennial Awards Program. Topics of the presentation included:

- History of Niagara Community Design Awards
- Past Winners
- What is a Biennial?
- Design Awards in Canada
- Highlights of the Biennial Program
- Niagara Region's Creative Cluster
- What is Special about Niagara?
- Alternatives Reviewed
- Financial Considerations
- Timeline and Phases

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

4. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 PDS 18-2019

Creating the Ohnia:kara UNESCO Global Geopark

Moved by Councillor Bylsma
Seconded by Councillor Ugulini

That Report PDS 18-2019, dated May 8, 2019, respecting Creating the Ohnia:kara UNESCO Global Geopark, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the concept for the Ohnia:kara UNESCO Global Geopark **BE ENDORSED** and the Ohnia:kara Steering Committee **BE SUPPORTED** in their pursuits of developing a global geopark; and
2. That Report PDS 18-2019 **BE CIRCULATED** to the local area municipalities.

Carried

5.2 PDS 20-2019

St. Catharines GO Station Primary Access - Ridley College Memorandum of Understanding

Moved by Councillor Foster
Seconded by Councillor Witteveen

That Report PDS 20-2019, dated May 8, 2019, respecting St. Catharines GO Station Primary Access - Ridley College Memorandum of Understanding, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the Chief Administrative Officer **BE AUTHORIZED** to execute a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the commitment by Ridley College, City of St. Catharines and Niagara Region to create a municipal right-of-way to enable a preferred access road at the St. Catharines GO Station;
2. That a copy of Report PDS 20-2019 **BE CIRCULATED** to the City of St. Catharines; and
3. That all parties **BE NOTIFIED** of Regional Council's decision.

Carried

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moved by Councillor Bylsma
Seconded by Councillor Darte

That the following items **BE RECEIVED** for information:

ED 5-2019
Niagara Economic Update

ED 6-2019
Niagara Ambassador Program

PDS 19-2019
Niagara Biennial Awards Program (and **BE CIRCULATED** to the Local Area Municipalities)

PDS 22-2019
Regional Incentives Financial Information (and **BE CIRCULATED** to the Local Area Municipalities)

Carried

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Bill 108 - More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019

Isaiah Banach, Manager, Long Range Planning, provided information respecting Bill 108, *More Homes, More Choices Act, 2019*, and the proposed changes to legislation governing planning-related matters, as noted in Councillor Weekly Correspondence Distribution Item CWCD 176-2019.

Committee members expressed concern with the short time-frame to provide feedback on Bill 108 to the Province and the potential implications of Bill 108 for Niagara Region. Rino Mostacci, Commissioner, Planning and Development Services, advised that Planning staff would be providing comments to the Province on Bill 108.

It was noted that given the amount of Provincial changes being communicated recently, that it would be helpful to have regular updates respecting provincial changes be provided at Regional Council.

7.2 Quorum Concerns

Committee members expressed concern respecting quorum and requested that this topic be brought to the Procedural By-law Review Committee for consideration.

8. CLOSED SESSION

There were no closed session items.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Councillor Huson
Committee Chair

Jonathan Gilston
Legislative Coordinator

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk