

November 4, 2021

Niagara Regional Council
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

Dear Chair Bradley and members of Niagara Regional Council:

I am writing to provide you with information relating to Stanpac's labor shortage and how transportation and proximity play a role in the problem.

Stanpac is a food packaging manufacturer located in West Lincoln. Since our relocation to Smithville in 1971, we have grown from a handful of employees to more than 480 in Niagara and almost 800 companywide including our two other manufacturing facilities in New Jersey and Texas.

We are presently looking for 39 new employees for various entry level positions. It is increasing difficult to find people to join our team. There are various reasons in the present climate that are out of our control, however a lack of a transit system is the #2 reason for candidates not applying or accepting a position at Stanpac. This has been determined through our own conversations with potential candidates, data shared by Employee Help Centers in Niagara, and various temporary staffing agencies.

Over 80% of our current workforce is made up of residents who live in the Niagara Region. The highest population of Stanpac team members live in West Lincoln (26%), Welland (20%) and St. Catharines (20%). The population of team members living outside those areas drops significantly to below 7% for each of the remaining Municipalities.

We encourage team members to carpool to minimize impacts to the environment, but if someone with a car leaves their position or is unable to attend work, we can lose up to 4 people for that shift which further impacts production and shipments to our customers. When residents of the Niagara Region are unable to work due to transportation barriers, they are unable to contribute to our economy in a meaningful way. Inter-municipal transit options open the door to many employment opportunities for residents who can drive the economy forward and lower the unemployment rate. Implementing a system that starts early and ends late will align with multiple shifts, provide the reliability of transit and connectivity between municipalities.

Larger centers such as St. Catharines, Welland, and Port Colborne are good for pools of candidates, however without a reliable, economical transit system there is a barrier which leaves us in the position we are today. As we continue to grow and introduce new products to broader markets we have to take a close look at our other facilities to take on this expansion.

We love Niagara. Our leadership team is here; our families are here; and we want to continue to grow and prosper here. Having a reliable, economical transit system that helps get our folks to and from work from these centers is a solution that shouldn't be overlooked or kicked down the road for someone else to look at. Our demographic numbers highlight the fact that we are unable to attract folks from a large majority of the Municipality and that has a significant impact on our recruitment efforts.

We support the regional transportation plan. It would be very helpful to the business community to have NRT On-Demand service at both the inter and intra municipal level in West Lincoln. I would ask that each member of the Regional Council support the transportation plan that has been developed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Murray Bain". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Murray Bain
Vice President Marketing
Stanpac Inc.