

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES**

COTW 4-2024

Thursday, September 5, 2024

**Council Chamber - In Person and Electronic Meeting
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON**

Committee: Bradley (Regional Chair), Bateman*, Campion*, Craitor*, Diodati, Easton, Gale*, Ganann, Heit, Huson, Insinna*, Junkin*, Kaiser, Morocco, Redekop*, Rigby, Seaborn, Secord, Siscoe, Sorrento, Ugulini, Villella, Whalen, Witteveen

Absent/Regrets: Chiocchio, Davies, Foster, Grant, Ip, Jordan, Steele, Zalepa

Staff: K. Ahmad, Manager, Urban Design, M. Ajibaye, Manager, Asset Management Office*, C. Banach, Director, Housing Services*, D. Barnhart, Chief of Staff, Governance, A. Basic, Legislative Coordinator, R. Bradshaw, Associate Director, Water Wastewater Asset Management, B. Brens, Associate Director, Budget Planning & Strategy, J. Brunet, Associate Director, Water Operation Maintenance, D. Carnegie, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/Acting Commissioner, Corporate Services/Treasurer, T. Cimino, Associate Director, Water and Wastewater Engineering*, D. Gibbs, Director, Legal & Court Services*, C. Habermebl, Director, Waste Management Services*, B. Hutchings, Manager, Revenue Planning & Strategy, K. Lotimer, Deputy Clerk, P. Maposa, Director, Asset Management*, M. Marino, Associate Director, Economic Development, D. Morreale, Director, Growth Management & Planning, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, T. Ricketts, Commissioner, Public Works, M. Sergi, Commissioner, Growth Strategy & Economic Development, F. Tassone, Director, Transportation Services, R. Tripp, Chief Administrative Officer, D. Turner, Manager, Strategic Growth Services, J. Vanderlinde, Grant & Incentive Program Manager, K. Young, Senior Development Planner

* indicates participants who attended the meeting electronically, all others participated in person

1. CALL TO ORDER

Regional Chair Bradley called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor Bateman read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

3. **DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

See Minute Item 7.

4. **PRESENTATIONS**

4.1 **Water and Wastewater Service State of Repair**

Terry Ricketts, Commissioner, Public Works, provided information respecting Water and Wastewater Service State or Repair. Topics of the presentation included:

- What we do and how
- How we compare
- Key strategic challenges
- What's happening now
- Where to go from here

Councillor Information Request(s):

Provide information respecting alternate systems that were considered to provide wastewater services to the new industrial plant to be constructed in the City of Port Colborne. Councillor Redekop.

Committee members requested information respecting the calculation of the current rate of \$2.00 per day, per household, set by the Region, including how assessment and households are accounted for (Slide 15).

Provide information respecting the asset management plans and infrastructure gaps of comparative regions. Councillor Redekop.

Provide information respecting the percentage of communities within the Region of Waterloo and the Region of York that use the Regional water system. Councillor Heit.

5. **DELEGATIONS**

Moved by Councillor Sorrento
Seconded by Councillor Morocco

That Rachel Braithwaite, St. Catharines Downtown Association, **BE PERMITTED** to appear before Committee as a delegate respecting Niagara Region Incentive Policy Review (PDS 26-2024, Agenda Item 6.1).

Carried

5.1 Niagara Region Incentive Policy Review (Report PDS 26-2024, Agenda Item 6.1)

5.1.1 Rachel Braithwaite, Executive Director, St. Catharines Downtown Association

Rachel Braithwaite, Executive Director, St. Catharines Downtown Association, appeared before Committee to request that Niagara Region consider enhancements to incentives for supportive housing, explore incentives to revitalize under-utilized housing stock, include BIAs in future incentive consultation processes, and in support of the City of St. Catharines motion to extend the expiration date of Niagara Region's Smart Growth Regional Development Charges Reduction Program and Smarter Niagara Incentive Program Property Rehabilitation and Revitalization Tax Increment Grant to October 1st, 2027.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 PDS 26-2024
Niagara Region Incentive Policy Review

Diana Morreale, Director, Growth Management & Planning, provided information respecting Niagara Region Incentive Policy Review. Topics of the presentation included:

- Purpose of Recommendations
- Program Expiry Communication
- Engagement
- Summary of the Engagement
- Provincial Mandatory and Discretionary
- Niagara Region Current Incentive Policy
- Changes to Affordable Housing Priority Area
- Changes to Employment Priority Area
- Changes to Brownfield Priority Area
- Changes to Public Realm Priority Area
- Updated Incentive Policy
- Additional Administrative Changes

Moved by Councillor Huson
Seconded by Councillor Kaiser

That Report PDS 26-2024, dated September 5, 2024, respecting Niagara Region Incentive Policy Review, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendations **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the following changes to the Niagara Region Incentive Policy (NRIP) C-A-028 (Appendix 1) **BE APPROVED** and implemented by Staff in an updated NRIP:
 - a) Remove “Non-profit Affordable Rental Housing RDC Deferral” from NRIP as it has been rendered obsolete due to recent amendments to the Development Charges Act through Bill 23;
 - b) Move “Welcome Home Niagara Home Ownership”, “Niagara Renovates Homeownership”, “Niagara Renovates Multi-residential”, “Non-Profit and Co-op Capital Repair Costs”, and “Housing Provider Capital Loan” programs from the NRIP to be included in the Programs Listing provided by Community Services through the Housing Services division mandate;
 - c) Move the “Public Realm Investment Program” (PRIP) and “Public Realm Priority Area” from the NRIP to be included with other Public Works programs that are only available to Area Municipalities;
 - d) Remove the affordable housing component from the “Brownfield TIG Tier 1 and Tier 2” and change to an annual tax increment grant of 80% for both tiers;
 - e) Move Mandatory DC programs, “Intensification Regional Development Charge (RDC) Grant” and “50% Industrial Expansion RDC Grant”, outside the NRIP; and
 - f) Remove and discontinue the “Small Buildings Rental Grant” and the “Residential Rental Grant”;
2. That Staff **BE DIRECTED** to assess the “Partnership Housing Program” and develop and report back to Council regarding a new purpose-built rental housing incentive program with the goal of increasing the supply of rental housing;
3. That any financial recommendations **BE REFERRED** to the 2025 budget process; and
4. That a copy of Report PDS 26-2024 **BE CIRCULATED** to the Local Area Municipalities.

Carried

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Councillor Morocco declared a conflict with respect to Report PDS-C 27-2024 (Agenda Item 7.1) respecting Smarter Niagara Incentive Program and Smart Growth Program Expiry Background, Correspondence Item COTW-C 2-2024 (Agenda Item 7.2) respecting City of St. Catharines Council - Request for Extensions to Niagara Region Incentive Programs and Memorandum COTW-C 3-2024 (Agenda Item 7.3) respecting Projects Interested in Expiring Smarter Niagara Incentive Program TIG/BTIG and Smart Growth Programs, as she has a business client who is currently involved in the process of applying for a Brownfield Smart Growth Incentive; therefore, she did not participate in any discussion or vote on these matters.

Correspondence Item COTW-C 2-2024 (Agenda Item 7.2) was considered separately.

Moved by Councillor Witteveen
Seconded by Councillor Ganann

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

PDS-C 27-2024

Smarter Niagara Incentive Program and Smart Growth Program Expiry Background

COTW-C 3-2024

Projects Interested in Expiring Smarter Niagara Incentive Program Tax Increment Grant/Brownfield Tax Increment Grant and Smart Growth Program

Carried

7.2 COTW-C 2-2024

City of St. Catharines Council - Request for Extensions to Niagara Region Incentive Programs

Moved by Councillor Siscoe
Seconded by Councillor Sorrento

1. That Correspondence Item COTW-C 2-2024, dated September 5, 2024, respecting City of St. Catharines Council – Request for Extensions to Niagara Region Incentive Programs, **BE RECEIVED**;
2. That the Smart Growth Regional Development Charges Reduction Program expiration deadline **BE EXTENDED** for a period of three years until October 1st, 2027;

3. That the Smarter Niagara Incentive Program Property Rehabilitation and Revitalization Tax Increment Grant and Brownfield Tax Increment Grant expiration deadline **BE EXTENDED** for a period of three years until October 1st, 2027; and
4. That staff **BE DIRECTED** to collaborate with the local area municipalities on a new incentive program that takes into account current market conditions and the enhanced housing mandate from Provincial and Federal governments.

Moved by Councillor Huson
Seconded by Councillor Seaborn

That COTW-C 2-2024 and the proposed motion **BE REFERRED** to the Budget Review Committee of the Whole meeting on October 17, 2024, with a report on projected costs resulting from the program extension and associated assessment revenues with an associated timeline and including projects highlighted and identify if incentives currently exist in which they would qualify; and

That the programs expiration deadline **BE EXTENDED** until October 31, 2024.

Recorded Vote:

Yes (8): Bateman, Easton, Ganann, Heit, Huson, Insinna, Kaiser, Seaborn.

No (13): Campion, Craitor, Diodati, Gale, Junkin, Rigby, Secord, Siscoe, Sorrento, Ugulini, Villella, Whalen, Witteveen.

Defeated

The Regional Chair called the vote on the motion.

Recorded Vote:

Yes (13): Campion, Craitor, Diodati, Gale, Junkin, Rigby, Secord, Siscoe, Sorrento, Ugulini, Villella, Whalen, Witteveen.

No (8): Bateman, Easton, Ganann, Heit, Huson, Insinna, Kaiser, Seaborn.

Carried

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The Regional Chair announced that there were no further Committee of the Whole meetings scheduled for the remainder of the year.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:17 p.m.

Jim Bradley
Regional Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Deputy Regional Clerk

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk