# COUNCIL INFORMATION PACKAGE

October 16, 2020

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The purpose of this memo is to follow up on Report 20-211(CRE) regarding the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 Phase 2 Council Workshop, which was approved by Council at its Special Meeting on September 8, 2020.

The resolution of Council directed the City Clerk to schedule a Council Workshop for Phase 2, to be held virtually, between the dates of September 28th and October 2nd, 2020.

Due to the demands on staff and Council resources which have arisen as a result of the Ward 7 byelection and the recent Joint Council Meeting with the Township of North Dumfries, a suitable date could not be found within the specified time range. As a result, the Phase 2 Council workshop will now be held on Monday, October 26th from 4:00PM to 6:00PM. This timing will also allow for the newly elected Ward 7 Councillor to participate in the virtual workshop.

As with the first council workshop, this will be a facilitated working session and the public will be able to observe the proceedings; however, no delegations will be permitted and only direction to staff will be given.

The Strategic Plan Phase 2 workshop provides members of Council the opportunity to continue to identify and confirm Council’s strategic priorities, including short-term COVID-19 recovery priorities, prior to entering the final phase of strategic plan development. At the workshop, Council will have the opportunity to review the input that has been received from the community and staff during Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagement, and builds on the Phase 1 Council workshop held on March 9, 2020.

Following the workshop, it is anticipated that a Phase 2 report will be brought to Council with recommended goals and objectives no later than January 2021, which will ensure that the City can move forward with implementation in early 2021.
Should you have any questions regarding the Cambridge Connected Strategic Plan Project, please contact Brooke Lambert, Director of Corporate Strategy at lambertb@cambridge.ca

Attachments

N/A

Approvals:

☒ Manager/Supervisor   ☒ Deputy City Manager   ☒ City Manager
October 8, 2020

Dear Heads of Council and Chairs of District Social Services Administration Boards:

On August 28, 2020, our government announced its intention to stabilize rent by introducing legislation this fall to ensure that the vast majority of families do not see a rent increase in 2021.

On October 1, 2020, the Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020 received Royal Assent. The Act amends the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 (RTA), to deliver on the commitment to freeze residential rent increases in 2021 to give the vast majority of Ontario tenants some relief and financial security as we continue to recover from the pandemic.

The amendments set the 2021 rent increase guideline to zero per cent and freeze annual rent increases starting January 1, 2021 and lasting until December 31, 2021. The rent freeze applies to the majority of rental units that are covered by the RTA, including:

- Newly built units occupied for the first time on or after November 15, 2018, which are typically exempt from the rent increase guideline;
- Purpose-built rental apartments, condos, houses and basement apartments;
- Rented sites in mobile home parks and land lease communities;
- Care homes, including retirement homes;
- Affordable housing units created through various federally and/or provincially funded programs; and
- Households living in community housing that receive rent-garried-to-income (RGI) assistance or pay low end of market rent, with the exception of non-profit housing co-op members who pay market rates.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is committed to engaging the community housing sector through consultations under the Community Housing Renewal Strategy to monitor and understand the impacts of the rent freeze, as we work together to mitigate the financial impacts of COVID-19 on Ontarians, increase housing affordability, and deliver on our goal to sustain and grow the community housing system.
The Act is available online here and additional details can be found online here.

On behalf of our government, I would like to extend our thanks for your support in working with the ministry to support tenants during this challenging time. We welcome your continued input and look forward to continuing to work with our municipal partners in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Steve Clark
Minister
October 2, 2020

Sent via email to all Ontario Municipal Clerks

Dear Municipal Clerks,

At its meeting held September 24, 2020, Wellington County Council approved the following recommendation from the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee:

WHEREAS previous assessment methodologies for aggregate resource properties valued areas that were used for aggregate resources or gravel pits at industrial land rates on a per acre basis of the total site and such properties were formally classified and taxed as industrial lands; and

WHEREAS Wellington County Council supports a fair and equitable assessment system for all aggregate resource properties; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation determined, with the participation only of the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, revised criteria for assessing aggregate resource properties; and

WHEREAS Wellington County Council has concerns that the revised criteria does not fairly assess the current value of the aggregate resource properties.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That Wellington County Council does not consider the revised criteria for assessment of aggregate resource properties as a fair method of valuation for these properties; and

(b) That Wellington County Council believes there is a need to review the current assessment scheme for aggregate resource properties to address the inequity of property values; and

(c) That Wellington County Council hereby calls upon the Province to work with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation to address the assessment issue so that aggregate resource properties are assessed for their industrial value; and
(d) That Wellington County Council direct the Clerk to provide a copy of this motion to the Ministers of Finance; Municipal Affairs and Housing; and Natural Resources and Forestry; and to AMO, ROMA, and all Ontario municipalities and local MPP(s).

Please find the Aggregate Resource Property Valuation and Advocacy report and Municipal Resolution enclosed.

Wellington County Council is requesting that all Ontario municipalities adopt the Municipal Resolution and forward to Donna Bryce, Wellington County Clerk at donnab@wellington.ca upon passing.

Should you have any questions please contact Ken DeHart, County Treasurer, at kend@wellington.ca or call 519.837.2600 ext 2920.

Sincerely,

Kim Courts
Deputy Clerk
COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee
From: Ken DeHart, County Treasurer
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020
Subject: Aggregate Resource Property Valuation and Advocacy Report

Background:
Through the County’s Assessment Base Management Policy and Programme approved in 2016; Wellington County has made significant efforts to maintain, protect and enhance the quality of the assessment roll. This includes reviewing the accuracy of individual assessments and ensuring the equitable distribution of the tax burden. The County remains a strong advocate for the accurate and equitable valuation and property tax treatment of all properties, including gravel pit and aggregate resource properties in the County and throughout Ontario.

The County has been actively pursuing fair and accurate assessment valuations for gravel pits through two streams:
1. Assessment appeals heard by the Assessment Review Board
2. Advocacy through the province on a permanent policy solution

Assessment Appeals
The County has filed assessment appeals on all aggregate producing properties in its three southern-most municipalities, being Puslinch, Erin and Guelph/Eramosa for the 2017 to 2020 taxation years. The purpose of these appeals is to ensure that the current value assessment of these properties is captured through the existing legislation, and to deal with how those properties are classified for taxation purposes.

The effect of the current property tax valuation structure by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (“MPAC”) unfairly sees active gravel pits incurring less property tax than many single-family homes and small businesses as a result of unduly low and inaccurate current value assessments. It also leads to properties that are located in the same areas and are similar to gravel pits receiving vastly different property valuations, which contradicts the principle of fairness and transparency underpinning our taxation system that similar properties should be treated and taxed equally. Arbitrarily classifying gravel pits as among the lowest form of farmland (Class 5) sets an artificial cap on these producers’ property assessments and keeps their property taxes well below what they should be paying. In turn, residents and businesses are subsidizing the break that gravel producers are receiving.

In terms of next steps for these appeals, a settlement conference is scheduled to take place on September 16 and hearings are scheduled for the weeks of November 16 and 23.
Advocacy for a Permanent Policy Solution
The County has been working with its colleagues through the Top Aggregate Producing Municipalities of Ontario (TAPMO) to raise awareness of the assessments and the inequitable treatment of these properties and ask the government to review how these properties are assessed and treated from a property tax policy perspective through the MPAC review that is currently taking place.

Through this work, TAPMO endorsed the attached municipal resolution to be shared with TAPMO municipalities for consideration at local Councils. The resolution formally asks the province to review how these properties are assessed in light of the inequitable treatment in comparison to other residential and business properties in the municipality. Several municipalities across the province have approved and forwarded this resolution to the province and local MPPs.

To be clear, the County believes MPAC’s property valuation is incorrect even within the current legislation, however, the County is looking for further direction and possible legislative or regulatory changes that will eliminate future disputes. This kind of permanent policy change is in everyone’s best interest to resolve this issue once and for all.

Staff recommend that the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee support the resolution and pass it along to County Council for approval. This is also an opportunity for the County to remind its member municipalities to review and give consideration to this resolution as well.

AMO Delegation Meeting
On August 18, 2020, in collaboration with the Top Aggregate Producing Municipalities of Ontario (TAPMO), County representatives met with Stan Cho, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance, to discuss the need to improve how aggregate properties are assessed across Ontario under an equitable valuation system. The meeting was held during the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference. This is where municipal and provincial policymakers come together to discuss pressing issues facing both levels of government.

Wellington County and other TAPMO members presented several policy-driven solutions to Mr. Cho that would make MPAC’s property tax valuations accurate and equitable. There are many possible legislative, regulatory or policy changes that can achieve a permanent solution. These include:

- Creating a separate class for aggregate producing properties (as was done for landfills in 2015);
- Directive (or regulation) from the Minister to MPAC regarding how to assess these types of properties to reflect their true market or industrial value;
- Remove the aggregate exemption from the Assessment Act (as was the situation prior to 2008).

This would enable municipalities to maintain stability in local taxation levels and meet the needs of their communities. Directing MPAC on how to assess these properties based on their true market value makes common sense and will result in stability and accuracy in the assessment process. The solution to remove the exemption of aggregate in the Assessment Act would allow MPAC to assess the full value of the property.
Summary
Aggregate sites are important job creators and an increasingly critical element of public works that help to fuel steady economic growth across Ontario, especially as part of municipalities’ post-pandemic recovery. Yet, under the current MPAC valuation formula, their current value assessment is inaccurate such that these sites generate significantly less revenue for municipalities and the Province than other possible uses for the same land. This costs Ontario municipalities millions of dollars in lost tax revenue every year and negatively impacts their abilities to deliver more fulsome services and programmes to residents. The current system also generates less Education property taxes which shifts even more tax burden onto homeowners and small businesses. Municipalities are therefore eager to find a solution that is fair for all involved: the municipality, taxpayers, and aggregate producers.

COVID-19 has highlighted the urgency for a policy-driven, equitable approach. Municipalities across Ontario are fighting to continue providing a high standard of services to our families and businesses who need them now more than ever. The lost tax revenue undermines our ability to enhance those services and make key infrastructure investments at a time when our residents are suffering. The County wants to be fair to aggregate producers while recognizing that they should be part of the solution in terms of helping families and businesses get back on their feet – the very people who are carrying the burden of the current MPAC system.

Recommendation:
That the Aggregate Resource Property Valuation and Advocacy Update Report be received for information; and

That the attached resolution be supported by County Council and sent to the Ministry of Finance.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken DeHart, CPA, CGA
County Treasurer
WHEREAS previous assessment methodologies for aggregate resource properties valued areas that were used for aggregate resources or gravel pits at industrial land rates on a per acre basis of the total site and such properties were formally classified and taxed as industrial lands; and

WHEREAS Wellington County Council supports a fair and equitable assessment system for all aggregate resource properties; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation determined, with the participation only of the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, revised criteria for assessing aggregate resource properties; and

WHEREAS Wellington County Council has concerns that the revised criteria does not fairly assess the current value of the aggregate resource properties;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That Wellington County Council does not consider the revised criteria for assessment of aggregate resource properties as a fair method of valuation for these properties; and

(b) That Wellington County Council believes there is a need to review the current assessment scheme for aggregate resource properties to address the inequity of property values; and

(c) That Wellington County Council hereby calls upon the Province to work with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation to address the assessment issue so that aggregate resource properties are assessed for their industrial value; and

(d) That Wellington County Council direct the Clerk to provide a copy of this motion to the Ministers of Finance; Municipal Affairs and Housing; and Natural Resources and Forestry; and to AMO, ROMA, and all Ontario municipalities and local MPP(s).
September 15, 2020

Hon. Caroline Mulroney
5th Floor, 777 Bay St.
Toronto ON, M7A 1Z8

Dear Hon. Caroline Mulroney,

Please be advised that at the Regular Meeting of Council on August 24, 2020, the Council of Loyalist Township passed the following resolution:

Resolution No. 2020.33.11
Moved by: Councillor Porter
Seconded by: Councillor Townend

Whereas the Ontario government, in partnership with the federal government, is delivering on its commitment to provide up to $4 billion in urgently needed one-time assistance to Ontario’s 444 municipalities;

And Whereas in addition to the support for municipalities, the government is providing over $660 million in the first phase of transit funding to the 110 municipalities with transit systems to provide immediate relief from transit pressures, such as lower ridership, as well as for new costs due to COVID-19, such as enhanced cleaning and masks for staff;

And Whereas in the second phase, additional allocations will be provided based on expenses incurred to ensure the funding meets the needs of municipalities;

And Whereas as part of the Safe Restart Agreement with the federal government, up to $2 billion is being provided to support public transit in Ontario;

And Whereas Ontario Regulation 191/11 being the Integrated Accessibility Standards, which applies to every designated public sector organization including municipalities, establishes accessibility standards, including transportation and as such, recognizes ferries as a form of public transportation;

And Whereas many municipalities located along large bodies of water such as Lake Ontario, including the Township of Frontenac Islands and Loyalist Township, are only accessible by public ferries which are connecting links to mainland highways and roads and form part of Ontario’s road systems, making them critical public services;

And Whereas due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and restrictions placed on ferry services by Transport Canada as well as public health guide lines, ferry transit, similar to conventional transit, has experienced reduced ridership, additional costs to cover increased sanitization and requirement for masks for ferry operators, and reduced revenue due to the inability to collect cash fares;
Therefore, Be It Resolved that Loyalist Township requests that the Ministry of Transportation support the Canadian Ferry Association’s request that ferries be considered part of the local transit system and that lost revenue be eligible for reimbursement;

And Further That a portion of the (pandemic) Federal funds be allocated towards municipal transportation ferry revenue loss and ferry expenditures resulting from the pandemic;

And that this resolution be circulated to all Ontario municipalities.

Regards,

Brandi Teeple
Deputy Clerk
Loyalist Township

cc. All Ontario Municipalities
For immediate release

National Internment Education Day: October 28th

October 28th is National Internment Education Day, commemorating Canada’s first national internment operations of 1914-1920.

Between 1914 and 1920, 8,579 “enemy aliens” were incarcerated, among them women and children, as reported by Major-General Sir William D. Otter, the Officer Commanding these internment operations for the Department of Justice. The affected communities include Ukrainians, Alevi Kurds, Armenians, Austrians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Ottoman Turks, Poles, Romanians, Russians, Serbians, Slovaks, Slovenes, among others of which most were Ukrainians and most were civilians who were interned or registered as “enemy aliens”. Over 80,000 others were also categorized as “enemy aliens” and obliged to report regularly to their local police authorities or to the North West Mounted Police. They were issued with identity papers that had to be carried at all times, the penalty for noncompliance being arrest and possible imprisonment.

In May 2008, representatives of the Canada’s Ukrainian community reached an agreement with the Government of Canada providing for the creation of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund (CFWWIRF) to support commemorative and educational projects intended to remind all Canadians about this episode in our nation’s history.

Since the inception of the CFWWIRF, the Endowment Council has awarded over $4 Million in grants. The approved grants have funded various projects, including: historical exhibits, books, commemorative plaques/statues, films, internee cemeteries, historical research, artistic endeavors, and virtual and augmented reality and educational resources.

The Endowment Council is pleased to offer its newest project, “Discovering Canadian WW1 Internment”, an augmented reality digital map to educate Canadians about this tragic page in Canada’s history, to schools, educators and museums across Canada.
This project has delivered an immersive, accessible Augmented Reality (AR) exhibit that brings to life the history of Canada’s first national internment operations. 360 Story Lab has created an AR map of Canada printed on heavy vinyl. The map includes small visual icons, or “targets” that are recognized by the AR software program and activate the AR experience.

The Pilot was a huge success and launched to glowing reviews at the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival in September 2018. Users were excited to engage with the internment history in this new and innovative way, especially the younger more tech-savvy attendees at the festival.

Many of the users were pleasantly surprised that the CFWWIRF had created such a compelling cutting-edge exhibit, at the forefront of technological developments.

Several teachers have requested different sized maps to use in their classrooms and there were requests that versions of the AR project be made available in French. Some also expressed interest in adding more information to the maps, such as videos about the internment. Jeff Preyra, of 360 Story Lab stated, “The original design allows us to continue using the same AR map while incorporating updated technologies and fresh activations that can incorporate new materials either created through the CFWWIRF or discovered through new CFWWIRF funded research. For the Pilot we created 26 activations for all the internment camps/receiving stations across Canada.”

To obtain the vinyl AR Map in English or French, please contact the CFWWIRF Program Manager, Andrea Malysh.
For more information on the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund contact the Program Manager, Andrea Malysh, at malysh@internmentcanada.ca or toll free at 1-866-288-7931. www.internmentcanada.ca