



GENERAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thirty-Second Meeting, Regular, Monday, December 17, 2012

Council Chambers, City Hall

*His Worship Mayor Brian McMullan takes the Chair and opens the meeting
following Item Number 10 on the Council Agenda*

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76-94	4.10	Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities Seasonal Ice Rink for Montebello Park
95-131	4.11	Economic Development and Customer Service, Office of the City Clerk Correspondence List

5. Other Business

6. General Committee (In-Camera)

Council will meet In Camera for the following purposes:

- a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the Municipality or local board

Corporate Report

Report from: Economic Development & Customer Service, Tourism

Date of Report: December 3, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: EDTS-693-2012 **File:** 68.46.99

Subject: 2013 Centurion Cycling Race

Recommendation

That Council approve funding for the 2013 Centurion Cycling in the amount of \$3,500 to stage a Centurion Cycling event in St. Catharines, August 17-18, 2013.

And that in accordance with the City's policy, that the request to waive fees and charges related to the use of City owned facilities be denied.

FORTHWITH

Background

Centurion Cycling currently operates large scale cycling events in Collingwood, Barrie, Lake George (NY) and Ellicottville (NY). The format is typically spread over two days with a short (<10km) local community "criterion" style event with celebrities and local community participants which is followed by 25 km, 50 km and 100 km races along controlled road routes. It is both a competitive and a recreational event which attracts a wide range of cyclists from children to adults with casual to competitive individual and club entries. Discussions with Centurion Cycling, the City of St. Catharines, other municipalities, and regional partners have resulted in a proposal for a Centurion cycling event to be hosted in St. Catharines in 2013.

Report

The Event

Centurion Niagara 2013 is proposed to be a two day event over the August 17-18, 2013 weekend. The main staging point for the event will be at Montebello Park which will host participant registrations, starts and finishes, award ceremonies, and a cycling trade show component. A short "criterion" fun race with various celebrities and the local community will be held in the downtown to launch the event. Road maintenance and construction programming at that time precludes the use of St. Paul Street, and this element will likely involve a circuit including Church and King Streets. Over Saturday and Sunday, the more challenging 25 km, 50 km and 100 km races, which start and finish at Montebello Park, leave and enter the City on routes via Pelham Road (see Appendix 1).

An additional component of the proposal is production of a one hour television program broadcast on TSN2. The program is nationally televised throughout the

year and, while its focus is on the cycling, provides many opportunities to showcase St. Catharines and its surroundings.

Economic Impact

Centurion organizers believe the 2013 event would easily accommodate 1,500 participating cyclists with an additional 2,500 spectators (mostly constituting friends and family). This figure seems reasonable relative to the figures associated with their Collingwood / Blue Mountain event which had 1,400 participants in 2010, 3,200 in 2011 and 4,000 in 2012.

Tourism staff input budget and visitor projections into the Sport Tourism Economic Assessment Model (STEAM), which is used to measure the economic impact of sports events in St. Catharines under the Sport Tourism Grant. With 1,500 participants and 2,500 spectators, two scenarios are proposed for consideration – one with approximately 90% staying overnight (based on Centurion's assumptions) and a much more conservative occupancy rate of 50%.

	Local Area St. Catharines		Rest of Ontario	
Estimated Occupancy	90%	50%	90%	50%
Initial Expenditure	\$1,056,338	\$957,663	-	
Wages & Salaries (Total Impact*)	\$515,841	\$460,208	\$222,129	\$205,117
Municipal Taxes (Total Impact*)	\$62,059	\$48,926	\$17,544	\$16,038
Industry Output (Total Impact*)	\$1,623,184	\$1,465,129	\$762,338	\$686,921

**Total impact refers to the accumulative "multiplier" benefit as the injection of initial expenditure supports ongoing levels of economic activity*

It should also be noted that this event is consistent with City and Regional tourism objectives to promote Niagara as a cycling destination. Participation and awareness of this event not only promotes cycling in Niagara but also increases awareness of our local cycling strengths and attractions such that participants may return / consider future visits. Similarly, the televised program will reach broader audiences to promote and showcase cycling and other attractions in St. Catharines / Niagara.

Legacy

Should the proposal be accepted, the Centurion organization has offered to use their event to generate funding and contributions towards a community legacy project. A specific project is yet to be defined, but Centurion is interested in projects that create opportunities for greater activity and sport among youth and families. Centurion suggests developing a working committee with staff to identify appropriate projects and to develop the process for raising and applying the funds. Projects in other communities that Centurion has been involved with include support and development of a junior cycling team, cooperative fundraising for a public outdoor ice surface, fundraising towards development of a running track, scholarship awards to deserving youth allowing them to pursue their sporting activity and/or coaching goals.

Financial Implications

Should the proposal by Centurion be accepted, there are some cash and in-kind costs to be considered.

Cash Costs

Marketing / Hosting Fee (Contribution to TSN2 Program)	\$30,000
Police Costs – City's share (Traffic Control)	\$10,000
Total Cash Cost	\$40,000

Centurion has been successful in their application to the Tourism Partnership of Niagara (TPN) for a \$39,000 grant to offset associated costs of the event. As a result the cash requirement has been reduced to \$1,000.

Fees and In-Kind costs

City road closures (staff estimates)	
Downtown Criterion	\$1,500 - \$1,800
Ontario Street (Montebello Park – St. Paul St.)	\$1,500 - \$2,000
Subtotal (estimate)	\$3,000 - \$3,800

Fees and Charges – Montebello Park (Aug 14-19, 2013)	
Park Rental	\$1,993.32
Reinstatement & Hydro (Estimate)	\$4,115.00
Subtotal (estimate)	\$6,108.32

Reinstatement costs are subject to the condition of Montebello Park following the 2013 Ribfest which is on the Civic Holiday weekend (August 3-5, 2013).

Summary Costs

Cash Costs	\$1,000.00
Road Closures (using highest estimate)	\$3,800.00
Montebello Park	\$6,108.32
Overall Costs	\$10,908.32
Less Sport Tourism Grant*	- \$3500.00
Total	\$7,408.32

Under the City of St. Catharines Sport Tourism Grant policy, the Centurion event would be eligible for a maximum of \$3,500 which can be used to offset the costs of the event. The remaining \$7,408.32 costs are being requested as the City's in-kind contribution to the event.

Conclusion

The Centurion cycling event circuit is a proven success with rapid expansion over the last four years to four venues in Ontario and New York State. Furthermore, the loyalty and growth in participants has been significant to the point where the organizers are now limiting registrations at some venues to better manage the logistics and the experience for participants. An event in St. Catharines is well

placed to complement the circuit, and it would be hard to imagine the event not being successful from the proponent's point of view.

Staff believe that the event is consistent with tourism marketing and positioning objectives, and the economic impact for a two day event is significant. The proponents have expressed an interest in staging the event in St. Catharines on an annual basis, and if consistent with Centurion's other cycling events, the benefits to the City and surroundings would likely increase over time.

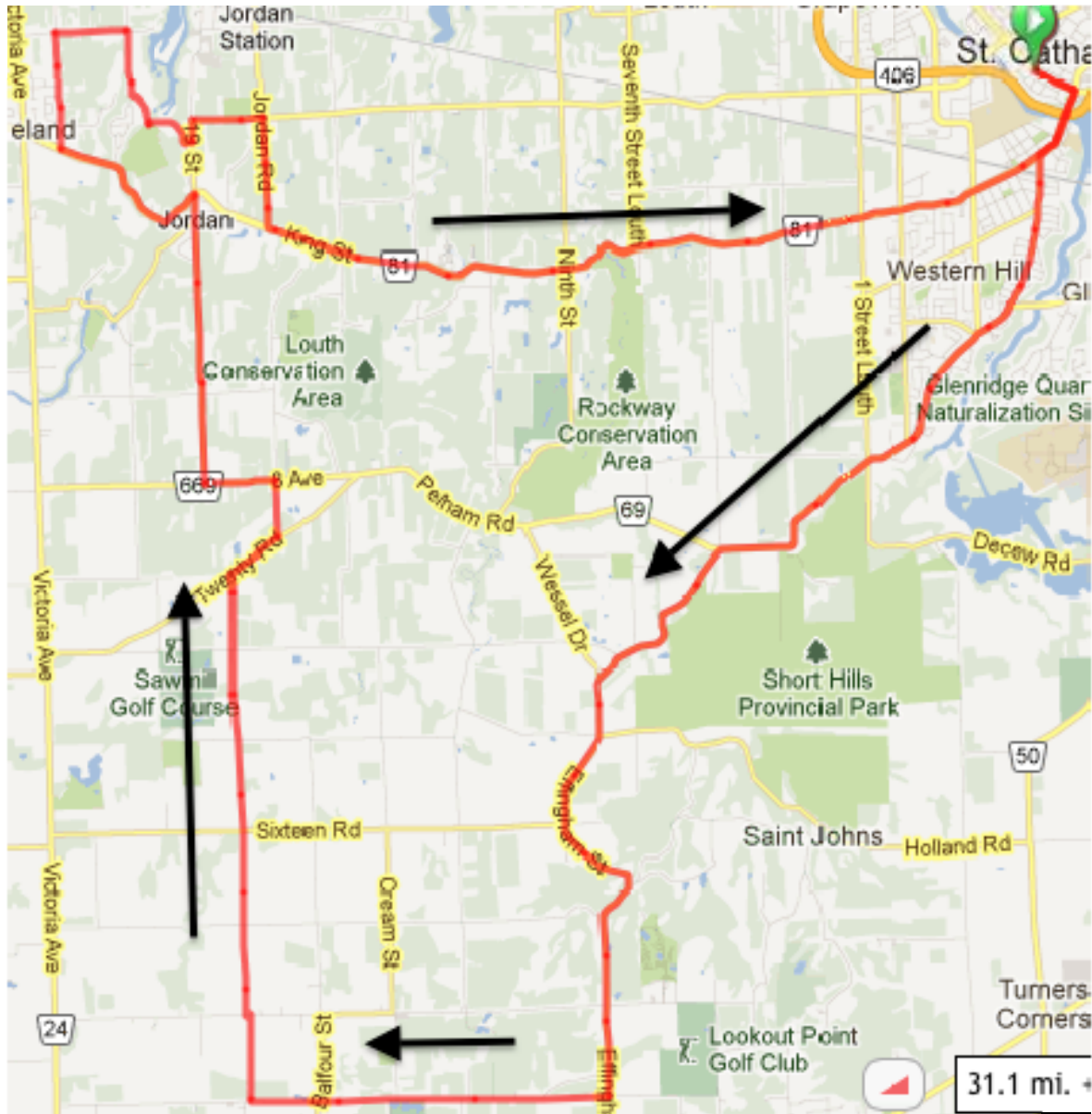
Prepared and Submitted by:

Kim Payne
Tourism Development Officer

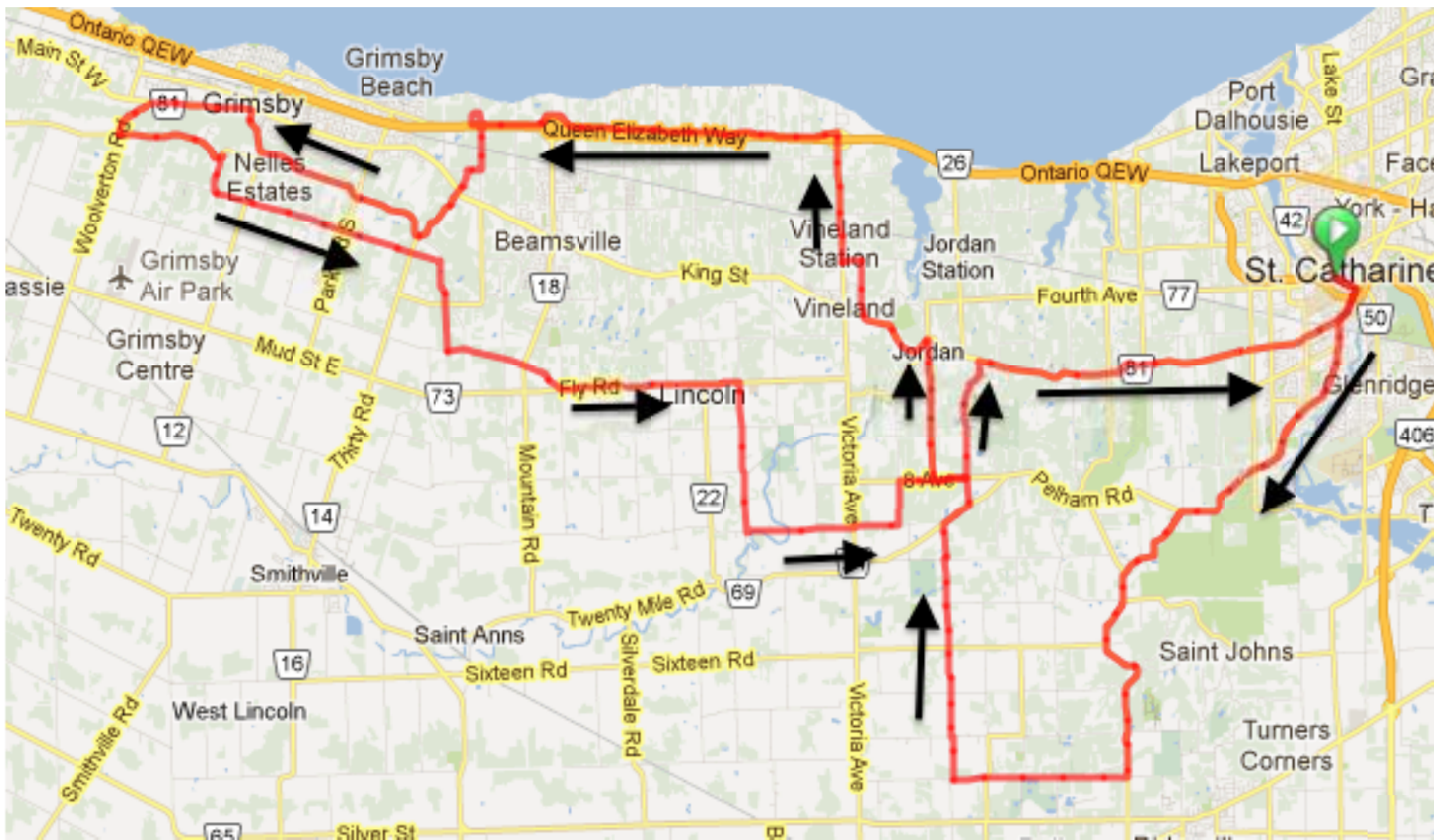
Approved by:

David Oakes
Director, Economic Development Customer Service

50 km Route



100 km Route



Corporate Report

Report from Economic Development and Customer Service, Office of the City Clerk

Date of Report: December 3, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: EDTS-688-2012 **File:** 36.60.87

Subject: Citizen Appointments to the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee and the Green Committee

Recommendation

That Council appoint two citizens to the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee for the remainder of the Term of Council; and

That Council appoint Jesse Matthews to the Green Committee; and further

That the Office of the City Clerk be directed to make the necessary notifications.
FORTHWITH

Report

The Urban Forestry Advisory Committee, due to recent resignations by its members, has two vacancies for citizen appointments. The Green Committee has one vacancy.

Economic Development and Customer Service, Office of the City Clerk, at the request of Recreation and Community Services and Planning and Development, initiated recruitment efforts both on the City's website and through the local media.

The City received five applications for the consideration of Council for the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee and one applicant for the Green Committee. Applications have been forwarded to the Members of Council for their consideration.

Notification

It is in order to notify all the applicants of Council's decision in this regard.

Submitted by:
Bonnie Nistico-Dunk

Prepared by:
Carol Coull

Approved by:
Dan Carnegie



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Corporate Support Services, Human Resources

Date of Report: December 3, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: CSS-691-2012 **File:** 10.10.99

Subject: Employee Benefit Carrier

Recommendation

That Council direct staff to enter into a contract for health and dental (Administrative Services Only (ASO)) benefits with Green Shield and Insured Benefits with Sun Life for the recommended 36 months (3 year) contract; and

That the City Solicitor be directed to prepare the necessary by-laws. FORTHWITH

Summary

The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines' health and dental (Administrative Services Only (ASO)) contracts with Green Shield and life and long term disability benefits with Sun Life (Insured Benefits) are up for renewal. The City's benefit consultants, BBH Benefits and CR Smith Financial Services Inc., conducted a market study.

Report

The City's benefit consultants, BBH Benefits and CR Smith Financial Services Inc., conducted a market study by inviting eleven carriers / benefit providers to bid on the City's program, seven participated in providing quotes. The findings were reviewed with Staff.

The results of the market study for ASO benefits highlighted that over the next 36 month (3 year) duration the general administration and claims pooling rates are lower with Green Shield and are guaranteed for this duration. Staff is recommending Green Shield.

Regarding our Insured Benefits, life and long term disability, all participating carriers were able to provide the minimum 36 month (3 year) rate guarantee. Based on the rates provided by carriers, there was no financial advantage to changing carriers at this time. It is recommended that the City of St. Catharines enter into a 36 month (3 year) contract with Sun Life.

Financial Implications

No increase is expected, current budget will accommodate the cost.

Prepared by:

Jeanette Pillitteri

Human Resources Manager

Approved by:

Dan Carnegie

Deputy CAO/Director Corporate Support Services



Corporate Report

Report from Corporate Support Services, Legal

Date of Report: November 21, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: LS-692-2012 **File:** 16.2.99

Subject: Regulatory By-law to Prohibit Smoking on City-owned and Operated Property

Recommendation

That Council receive the report from Legal Services, Corporate Support Services, dated November 21, 2012, for information purposes. FORTHWITH

Background

On September 26, 2011, Council requested that staff prepare a report on the implications of a regulatory by-law to restrict smoking on City property (General Minutes, Item Number 477). In response to this request, Council received a report on July 9, 2012, from Legal Services regarding the City's ability to enact a by-law that would restrict smoking on City property, as well as implications and alternatives of such a by-law (General Minutes, Item Number 381). In response to the July 9, 2012 report, Council directed staff to prepare a report bringing forward a by-law, which would prohibit smoking in outdoor public spaces within the City of St. Catharines. This report was presented to Council on October 15, 2012, and referred back to staff until such time as the Niagara Region (the "Region") has determined its position on a Regulatory By-law to prohibit smoking in outdoor spaces throughout the Niagara Region (General Minutes, Item Number 537).

Report

Regional Council directs staff to create a Regional By-law to prohibit smoking

On November 6, 2012, the Region's Medical Officer of Health presented a report to the Region's Public Health and Social Services Committee regarding the creation of a by-law to prohibit outdoor smoking on all regionally and municipally owned properties including parks, playgrounds, sports fields, splash pads, bus shelters, and beaches, but excluding municipal rights of way, sidewalks, roads, and thoroughfares. The Region's report is included as Appendix 1.

Following consideration of the report, the Region's Public Health and Social Services Committee approved the following recommendations, as amended, which were then subsequently approved by Regional Council on November 15, 2012:

- 1) To share the report and decision with local municipalities and to continue to meet with municipalities and to engage in public consultation to discuss the by-law implementation and timelines; and
- 2) To direct staff to create a Regional by-law to prohibit outdoor smoking on all regionally and municipally owned properties including parks, playgrounds, sports fields, splash pads, bus shelters and beaches, but excluding municipal rights of ways, sidewalks, roads and thoroughfares.

Region staff will consult with municipalities and public prior to drafting by-law

Staff at the Region will consult with the area municipalities and the public once they have developed a draft of the by-law. Following this consultation, the by-law will be refined and brought forward to Regional Council for their approval. If passed by Regional Council, the by-law will be presented to the Councils of the area municipalities seeking the majority of municipalities across the Region to pass resolutions in support. It is expected to be recommended that the by-law come into effect on May 31, 2013, World No Tobacco Day. Active enforcement would not begin until 2014 following a year of education and warnings. The recommended set fine will be \$250 plus court costs.

Submitted by and Prepared by:

Stacey E. Wells

Approved by:

Christopher C. Cooper, Acting City Solicitor/Director



Office of the Regional Clerk

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RECEIVED

NOV 26 2012

November 16, 2012

Ms. Bonnie Nistico-Dunk
City Clerk
City of St. Catharines
PO Box 3012
St. Catharines, Ontario
L2R 7C2

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CL 16-2012, November 15, 2012
PHSS 14-2012, November 6, 2012
Report PHD 38-2012

Call for Regional Action for Smoke-free Outdoor Spaces

The Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, at its meeting of November 15, 2012, approved the following recommendation of its Public Health and Social Services Committee:

"Call for Regional Action for Smoke-free Outdoor Spaces PHD 38-2012"

That Report PHD 38-2012, November 6, 2012, respecting Call for Regional Action for Smoke-free Outdoor Spaces, **BE RECEIVED**.

That staff **BE DIRECTED** by Regional Council to create a Regional By-law to prohibit outdoor smoking on all regionally and municipally owned properties including parks, playgrounds, sports fields, splash pads, bus shelters, and beaches

That the Chair of the Board of Health **BE DIRECTED** to share this report and the decision with local municipalities, and that staff **BE DIRECTED** to continue to meet with municipalities to discuss the by-law implementation and timelines.

The following amendments were made to the report:

That the Chair of the Board of Health **BE DIRECTED** to share this report and the decision with local municipalities, and that staff **BE DIRECTED** to continue to meet with municipalities **and to engage in public consultation** to discuss the by-law implementation and timelines.

That staff **BE DIRECTED** by Regional Council to create a Regional By-law to prohibit outdoor smoking on all regionally and municipally properties including parks, playgrounds, sports fields, splash pads, bus shelters, and beaches ***but excluding municipal right of ways, sidewalks, roads and thoroughfares.***

For further information on this matter, please contact Dr. Valerie Jaeger at (905) 688-3762, ext. 7366.

A copy of Report PHD 38-2012 is attached for your information.

Yours truly,



Janet Pilon
Acting Regional Clerk
cc: Dr. Valerie Jaeger

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REPORT TO: Public Health and Social Services Committee

SUBJECT: Call for Regional Action for Smoke-free Outdoor Spaces

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That staff **BE DIRECTED** by Regional Council to create a Regional By-law to prohibit outdoor smoking on all regionally and municipally owned properties including parks, playgrounds, sports fields, splash pads, bus shelters, and beaches
- 2) That the Chair of the Board of Health **BE DIRECTED** to share this report and the decision with local municipalities, and that staff **BE DIRECTED** to continue to meet with municipalities to discuss the by-law implementation and timelines

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Committee and Council about Smoke-Free Outdoor Spaces public consultation results and to seek approval for the above recommendations.

BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

Niagara Region Public Health (NRPH) employs four full-time Tobacco Control Officers (TCOs) and one full-time Health Promoter to address all tobacco protection and enforcement work, in alignment with the Chronic Disease Prevention Standards and the Tobacco Compliance Protocol of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). The Tobacco Control Enforcement program is 100% funded through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (see PHD 11-2012).

A Regional by-law prohibiting smoking in outdoor settings would not require additional funding to support enforcement efforts. Experience from other jurisdictions suggests the need for active enforcement will be minimal. Therefore, existing TCOs would be utilized. Enforcement of the by-law would be performed on a complaint basis, in conjunction with existing municipal staff as is feasible and sensible, and the existing Tobacco Hotline could assist with identifying areas of non-compliance. A preliminary one-time budget of approximately \$100,000-\$175,000 would be required to produce adequate signage and to educate residents about the by-law. NRPH would work with area municipalities to identify cost-effective strategies to educate residents as well. These one-time costs would be

effectively managed through social marketing, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, and Medical Division budgets.

Working with local area municipalities on the implementation of a Regional by-law restricting smoking in outdoor settings aligns with Council's Business Plan. Regional by-law development aligns with the themes of Open for Business and Healthy Communities. NRPH would continue to focus on developing solid partnerships and improved alignment with the area municipalities, in order to generate improved economic development, savings, and enhanced service delivery.

REPORT

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable illness and death. In Niagara, a greater proportion of both the adult and youth population are smokers compared to the Ontario average. This highlights the need for continued progress with comprehensive strategies in Niagara.

The Smoke-free Ontario Act (SFOA) has legislation in place to protect the public from exposure to second-hand smoke. Although the SFOA protects children from smoking outdoors on properties that contain day nurseries and elementary and high schools, it does not apply to high-use areas like parks and playgrounds.

By-laws restricting smoking in areas such as parks and playgrounds are a positive step toward building safer and healthier communities. Studies have shown that ensuring these areas are smoke-free promotes positive role modelling for children, prevents cigarette litter, and creates supportive environments for those who are interested in cutting back or quitting smoking. A Regional by-law would support a healthy community by ensuring that areas where children are active and play do not result in exposure to cigarette smoke, and that they promote positive health. Boards of Health are required to work with municipalities to support healthy public policies and the creation or enhancement of supportive environments regarding comprehensive tobacco control.

Public Support

NRPH administered surveys at over 60 outdoor locations across the region between May-July 2012. In total, 1,907 Niagara residents completed the survey, with an additional 91 surveys completed by non-residents of Niagara. The results found that the majority of smokers and non-smokers support some level of restriction to smoking in outdoor settings. Key findings from the survey (Appendix 1) reveal the following:

- 88.1% of Niagara residents support a by-law restricting smoking in outdoor public settings;
- 93.5% of visitors to the Niagara region support a by-law restricting smoking in outdoor public settings;
- 89.8% of Niagara residents support Niagara Falls by-law to some extent; and

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- 85.4% of Niagara residents agreed that restricting smoking in outdoor settings is good for the health of their community.

The survey results align with findings from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RFSS) which reported that 96% of Niagara adults support some level of smoking restriction in outdoor settings (RFSS, 2011). The Tobacco Control Program also has received numerous complaints regarding smoking in various outdoor settings throughout the Niagara region.

Niagara residents also provided comments on the survey. The vast majority of comments were positive and in support of making areas where children are present, smoke-free (Appendix 2).

An informational postcard initiative was also developed to give residents an opportunity to pledge their support for a smoke-free by-law and to educate residents about the benefits of smoke-free environments. Over 500 postcards were received from Niagara residents pledging their support for a by-law that supports smoke-free environments.

NRPH receives daily complaints to the Tobacco Hotline from Niagara region residents. A common concern identified by residents is understanding where smoking is prohibited in outdoor settings. Typically, areas of concern identified are playing fields and entrances/exits to public buildings which are not restricted under the SFOA or in the municipal context. A consistent by-law across the region would level the playing field among municipalities and reduce confusion among residents regarding outdoor smoking restrictions. Clear signage and simple rules will further help alleviate confusion among the public.

Municipal Support

Over 70 municipalities in Ontario have enacted by-laws that have successfully prohibited or restricted smoking in a variety of public outdoor settings.¹

In Niagara, four municipalities (Niagara Falls, Welland, Grimsby, and West Lincoln) have established by-laws restricting or banning smoking in outdoor public settings that exceed the requirements of the SFOA. Niagara Falls developed the most recent by-law in 2011, which prohibits smoking in all city-owned parks, recreational facilities, bus shelters, and entrances to city-owned buildings.

Three municipalities (St. Catharines, Thorold, and Grimsby) have been actively working with their city staff to examine the issue further and have prepared reports to their respective councils encouraging by-law development to restrict smoking outdoors on municipal properties.

¹ A comprehensive list of by-laws that exist in Ontario can be found on the [BOH Sherpa site](#).

Following PHD 46-2011, four municipalities (Niagara-on-the-lake, West Lincoln, Fort Erie, and Pelham) have demonstrated their support for smoke-free outdoor spaces. They have encouraged the Region to consider taking a lead role in regulating and enforcing a comprehensive Regional by-law.²

It has become clear that Niagara region municipalities support a consistent by-law, lead and enforced by the Region.

Considerations for By-law Development Plan

The draft by-law will be discussed with municipalities and finalized based on the following principles:

- Guiding principle: Creating consistent restrictions across the Niagara region that will ensure safer and healthier environments for children and the community as a whole;
- Given the local impact on a Regional approach, local municipalities and Board of Health members or their staff should be engaged;
- Consistency across local municipalities will create efficiencies and a coordinated approach across the Region; consistent rules in Niagara will eliminate confusion for smokers and non-smokers alike;
- Local municipalities will provide information that will be used to establish communication plans including signage, and will work with the Region to establish a referral system for any issues of non-compliance; and
- In order to implement a successful plan, the implementation plan needs an education and complaint-based enforcement strategy.

Enforcement Considerations

Municipalities that have implemented smoke-free outdoor space legislation have found that it is generally socially enforced, and have witnessed compliance from the public. In Niagara Falls, no tickets have been issued to date and approximately 80 warnings have been distributed by a municipal by-law officer.

Public consultations demonstrated that over half (58.7%) of Niagara residents would feel comfortable asking someone who is smoking in a restricted area to stop smoking or to move to an unrestricted area. Lived experience has shown that people are most comfortable when there is a sign to which they can point.

As demonstrated in other jurisdictions, the initial phase of enforcement consists of education, and then moves towards warnings and/or charges as appropriate. Enforcement of the by-law would be performed on a compliant basis by Tobacco Control Officers working in conjunction with existing municipal by-law officers. NRPH staff would ensure

² Municipal letters and documentation can be found on the [BOH Sherpa site](#).

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that a reactive complaint-based enforcement strategy using the existing Tobacco Hotline and partnerships with local municipal by-law officers is established. Efficiencies would be identified to ensure that resources are covered under existing funding sources.

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA)

The SFOA prohibits smoking in enclosed workplaces and public spaces and also in motor vehicles when children under 16 are present. It also bans the public display of tobacco products prior to purchase and prohibits youth-targeted tobacco products such as flavoured cigarillos.

Since the Act's implementation, several questions have been raised regarding how the SFOA affects entrances, exits, and patios. The most common misconception about the Act is the "nine metre rule". The "nine metre rule" applies only to any entrance or exit of a health facility (i.e., hospital, private hospital, psychiatric facility, nursing home, approved charitable home for the aged, and independent health facility). Public places and workplaces can choose to develop their own policy restricting smoking at entrances and exits. For example, the Niagara Region has developed a corporate policy restricting smoking on Regionally owned property.

The Act also applies to some outdoor bar and restaurant patios. In July 2009, the Act's Regulation was amended to clarify the requirements for outdoor patios of bars and restaurants. The Act prohibits smoking on the entire outdoor patio if any portion of a patio is covered or partially covered by a roof.

Smoking is also prohibited if the patio is adjacent to a smoke-free patio (partially or fully covered by a roof) or a section of the smoke-free patio. For example, if an L-shaped patio has a section that is covered, smoking is prohibited on both the covered and uncovered sections of the patio. However, if there are adjacent patios in an establishment that are separated by at least one-half storey (1.37 meters), and one is covered by a roof and the other is uncovered, smoking is permitted on the uncovered patio. Where patios in an establishment are not adjacent, they are evaluated separately.

Smoking Cessation Supports

NRPH supports provincial and local initiatives in order to meet the needs of local residents in their quit attempts. Supports available to Niagara residents include the following:

- The Smokers' Helpline phone, text, and online services;
- The annual Driven to Quit Challenge;
- Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients (STOP) study, which has provided Niagara residents with an opportunity to access free nicotine replacement therapy;
- Support for quitting smoking on University and College campuses via Leave the Pack Behind, which is supported through Brock University;

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- The Tobacco Hotline, through which trained staff provide brief intervention counselling and referrals to appropriate services and resources; and
- Heart Niagara, which provides counselling, quit smoking medications, and nicotine replacement therapies at little or no cost in partnership with NRPH.

NRPH also works with health care practitioners to build community capacity in order to meet the needs of local residents in their quit attempts.

REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- PHD 04-2011
- PHD 05-2011
- PHD 46-2011
- PHD 11-2012

Submitted by:

Valerie Jaeger, MD, PhD, CCFP
Medical Officer of Health

Approved by:

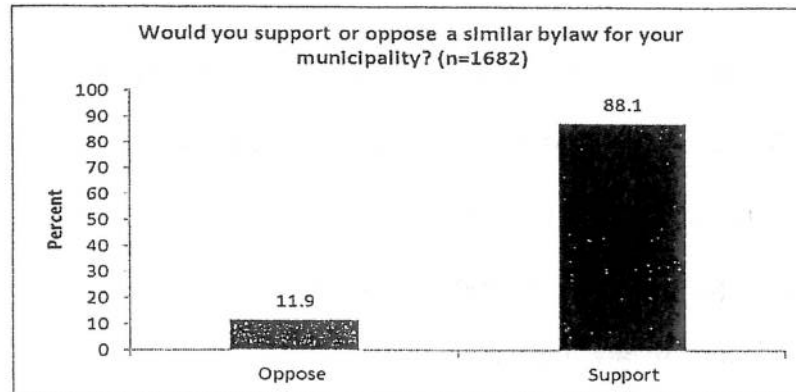


Mike Trojan
Chief Administrative Officer

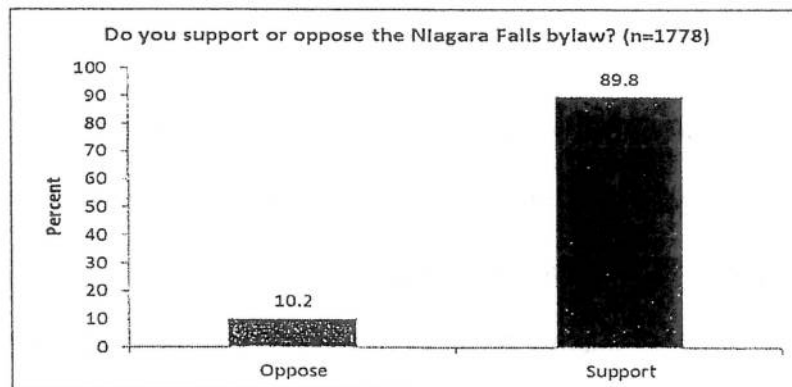
This report was prepared by Gillian McDonald, Health Promoter, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, and Maria Brigantino, Manager, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention; and reviewed by Ellen Wodchis, Director, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, and Dr. Andrea Feller, Associate Medical Officer of Health.

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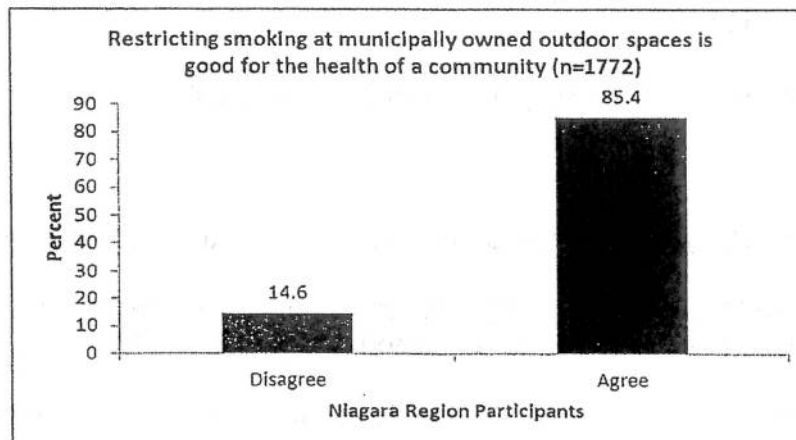
Appendix 1: Public Support for Outdoor Smoking Restrictions



Overall, 88.1% of Niagara residents are in support of a by-law restricting smoking in outdoor public settings.



Overall, 89.8% of Niagara residents are in support of Niagara Falls by-law restricting smoking in outdoor public settings.



Overall, 85.4% of Niagara residents felt that restricting smoking in outdoor settings was good for the health of their community.

Source: Smoke-free Outdoor Spaces Public Consultations, 2012

Appendix 2- Niagara Residents' Feedback on Outdoor Smoking Restrictions

Fort Erie

- "I like not having smoke around these areas as I have two children that it would affect"
- "Smoking in public areas should be banned and strictly enforced"
- "Full support to minimize second hand smoke"
- "I really don't have a problem with smoking outdoors"
- "I would love to see this by-law in place"
- "Smoking should be limited to one's place of residence; I consider it a form of assault if someone smokes around me"

Grimsby

- "I would strongly encourage and support a smoking restriction in Grimsby"
- "I think this is a very important issue and a by-law must be passed"
- "Good idea. Not good for smoking around kids"
- "I strongly support not smoking around children but banning smoking outright is not the solution"
- "I think this is a great thing to support and enforce! People should not smoke in the presence of children at all"
- "I would support restricting smoking in all outdoor properties!"

Lincoln

- "I feel especially strongly that people should not be smoking around children's events"
- "We know the hazardous effects of cigarette smoking and as a result, under no circumstances should non-smokers be subjected to cigarette smoke"
- "Smoking outside 'away' from others is fine (designated areas), I'm ok with that"
- "I believe this will set strong example for children to discourage smoking and support this. I am a former smokers and would not smoke on municipal properties"

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- "There should be no smoking anywhere children can be exposed"
- "The by-law is necessary as smokers often don't respect the need and desire to breath fresh by non-smokers"
- "Smoking in public spaces should be banned. My kids and other kids shouldn't have to put up with the smell, smoke and garbage"
- "Especially important for asthma"
- "I hate smokers at arena doors. Family has to hold breath when walking by"
- "I think this by-law is a great idea. It's time that people started thinking about how one person's smoking can affect several others"

Niagara Falls

- "I think this is great, as a parent of young children I love that I don't have to worry about them being around smoke!"
- "Outdoor locations could use more visible no smoking signage"
- "Thank you for keeping the outdoors smoke-free and promoting healthy living"
- "I think it is great. Especially for children. Just because it is outside doesn't mean they are affected by second hand smoke"
- "Young kids should not be surrounded by cigarettes/smokers, so I support the restrictions"
- "No smoking in parks and outdoors keep our parks clean and young children don't see people smoking"
- "Support the by-law to reduce the exposure to children"

Niagara-on-the-Lake

- "I quit smoking 5 years ago because of the new smoking by-laws. It became too inconvenient to smoke"
- "Outdoor smoking is not a health risk to by-standers. I don't smoke but I recognize others freedom to smoke outdoor. Public area or not"
- "Smoke-free for everyone's health"

- "I dislike smoking around children. I like where the municipality is heading with this!"
- "It's unfair to non-smokers, kids and people suffering from illnesses (including cancer)"
- "I think it is a good idea to limit people to where they can smoke. Maybe they will get discouraged and stop"
- "Appreciate the cleaner air"
- "I don't believe smoke outdoors affects health positively or negatively"
- "Restrict with distance from playing field or playgrounds"

Pelham

- "Protecting people from second hand smoke should be a major option by local government"
- "I have had to leave many special events because of asthma triggered by others smoking"
- "People should be allowed to make their own choices, these are public places and I think that if people want to smoke they should be able to, but respectfully"
- "Smoke-free is a great idea because often it's kids at the playgrounds. They don't need to be exposed"
- "In the past I have seen ball coaches smoking while games are being played and I feel it is a terrible role model for the children!"
- "Very good idea to prohibit smoking in public outdoor areas"
- "Although I feel smoking is an individual's choice, I do appreciate being able to enjoy outdoor space without being exposed to smoke"
- "Annoying when people are smoking right outside a building and/or park around kids"

Port Colborne

- "Great idea, I hope to see it come into effect"
- "Good example for kids"
- "It seems that it would be difficult to police this for smoking in public parks, etc. More public awareness is needed"

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- "I don't think you should be able to smoke in a municipally owned outdoor property"
- "It is wonderful to enjoy our increasingly smoke-free society"
- "Respect the children"

St. Catharines

- "This is a positive step that all municipalities should adopt"
- "Limit all smoking where possible. Good for health, good for environment"
- "I believe in clean air for the health of myself, my children and everyone else"
- "I am not sure if I agree with outdoor restrictions. May be better to have areas where smoking is permitted"
- "My child has asthma. I do not like it when someone smokes by him"
- "It's a person's choice to smoke but it should never affect those who choose not to"
- "I think it is long overdue to restrict smoking outdoors. Especially where there is children and sporting events (promote healthy)"
- "Smoking or not smoking is the right of each individual, however agree it should not be done in front of children"
- "As an asthmatic and having a child it's so important to be smoke-free in public places"
- "I have two small children and would greatly appreciate smoke free parks/splash pad etc. where my children can play"
- "Smoking in soccer fields or where many children are gathered should be restricted"

Thorold

- "For the health of myself and my children I strongly support this"
- "I have seen young children burned by brushing up against a cigarette or by stepping on a discarded one. I have cancer and hate inhaling second-hand smoke as they pass by"
- "Anywhere with kids playing I would strongly support non-smoking areas"
- "I don't smoke but I think it might be over done at parks, also who polices these parks"

- "My husband is a smoker, but I would still support this"
- "People in general need to be more aware of their surroundings when lighting up"

Wainfleet

- "Great idea, safer for everyone and less litter"
- "I do not like being exposed to cigarette smoking or my children"
- "I think it is a great idea! I don't smoke and don't wish to breathe in the smoke of others"
- "If smoking is against the law then these by-laws should apply. Otherwise it restricts freedoms of people and has no place"
- "Any place, indoor or outdoor where children are present should be smoke-free"
- "Great Idea - safer for everyone, less litter and one less influence for kids to see (people smoking)"
- "Promoting outdoor active living does not include smoking"
- "I am very much in favour of this bylaw"

Welland

- "Parks and outdoor facilities frequented by children and families should definitely be smoke-free"
- "I would love to see a by-law passed in my area because smoking influences our most vulnerable sector- our children"
- "I'm not a smoker but I have no problem with people who smoke outdoors. If the smoke bothers me, I move"
- "Good for N.F. for passing this by-law. There is no need for tobacco products in areas where children are playing"
- "Would like to enjoy parks or recreational areas without having to sit near smokers"
- "I don't smoke and never will. I don't appreciate breathing in second-hand smoke!"
- "As someone with asthma, I think that it is really rude of people to smoke on any public property"

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West Lincoln

- "Soccer fields should be smoke free!"
- "I hope it gets restricted in West Lincoln"
- "Outdoors is outdoors, I don't feel the need to restrict"
- "Keep up the good work"
- "Great idea"



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities

Date of Report: November 29, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: RCS-671-2012 **File:** 10.12.1, 35.2.2, 35.23.14

Subject: Maintenance of Landscaped Medians (Regional Roads)

Recommendation

That Council receive the report dated November 29, 2012, for information purposes. FORTHWITH.

Summary

Landscaped medians have a number of benefits and contribute positively to the appearance of the City's prominent roadways. Although medians are most often constructed on Regional roads, Regional Council has delegated maintenance to the City. It is not anticipated that this policy will be reversed and, as such, the City will continue its current practice of maintaining the medians listed within this report. Maintaining medians has an impact on the City's annual operations (i.e. human and financial resources). This impact has fluctuated over time as the number medians maintained by the City has increased, but also due to the changing maintenance needs. For example, the required maintenance tends to decrease as the plant material within the median becomes established.

Prior to the construction of any future medians the Region should consult with the City to determine first, if medians are desired and if maintenance can be accommodated within the City's budgetary constraints, and secondly to determine the design which will meet the City's health and safety standards for maintenance, reduce the long-term maintenance requirements, and increase the sustainability of the plant material.

Background

At its meeting on September 19, 2011, Council approved the following motion:

"That staff be directed to negotiate a fee-for-service agreement with the Region of Niagara for maintenance of greening initiatives for the new Burgoyne Bridge along with all roadway center islands."

Report

Landscaped medians contribute positively to the City's streetscape

Landscaped medians have a number of benefits, including improved traffic safety, the creation of space for trees and plantings which have environmental benefits, and contributing to beautification and civic pride. The Garden City Plan identifies median treatment and plantings as an urban design feature and outlines that excellence in urban design can be promoted by committing necessary funds to create and maintain high quality streetscapes that reflect the "Garden City" image.

Regional Council approved recommendation that landscape features in medians be the responsibility of the area municipalities

In 2009 the Region conducted a Transportation Services Sustainability Review (TSSR) which reviewed policies for infrastructure on Regional Road allowances, including medians. The TSSR, which was brought forward to and approved by Regional Council, recommended that the area municipalities be responsible for the maintenance of landscape medians and the cost of this maintenance. Specifically, the report stated the following in regards to Median Treatment:

"The primary purpose of street/traffic medians is to safely channelize traffic, thus minimizing the possibility of conflicts due to turning movements. Traditionally, the road authority has constructed, owned and maintained medians. With the move to incorporate decorative plantings in medians, there is a need to address maintenance in a more comprehensive manner.

The Region is responsible for all other aspects of road safety on Regional roads and given the potential for liability, jurisdiction of medians is an important issue. In addition, the Region does not generally provide right-of-way beautification for Regional Roads.

Recently, there has been a move to utilize medians as entry points to municipalities and business areas and landscape features have been incorporated into the medians. These features have no relevance to the operation of the road and are often requested by the area municipalities. Given the need to delineate responsibility within the road right-of-way, a policy on median landscape treatments is required.

Since landscape features are generally considered as beautification, it is unreasonable to expect the Region to provide the enhanced level of service required to maintain them throughout the Region. Therefore, it is recommended that landscape features in medians be the responsibility of the area municipality in which it is requested. Consultation between the Region and the area municipality should be conducted during the

design phase of a project to ensure the needs of the area municipality are known and construction of the median be provided for by the Region.”

Medians currently maintained by the City

Over time the number of medians maintained by the City has increased. The City began maintaining medians along Fourth Avenue in front of the Ridley Plaza approximately 10 years ago. Since that time two more phases of landscaped medians have been constructed along Fourth Avenue. The first extended the medians to Vansickle Road, and this year medians were continued to Third Street Louth in the vicinity of the new hospital. Currently the City maintains landscaped medians at the following locations:

- Geneva Street at Bond Street/Gale Crescent;
- Martindale Road at Welland Vale Road;
- Louth Street between Fourth Avenue and Ridley Road (two medians); and
- Fourth Avenue from the Highway 406 overpass to Third Street Louth.

As the number of medians maintained by the City has increased, so too has the impact that this maintenance has on the human and financial resources of the Recreation and Community Services department (RCS). The 2012 season required more resources than would normally be expected due to the fact that City crews installed the plant material for the newly created medians extending to Third Street Louth. Maintenance needs are greatest during the first few growing seasons as plant material is becoming established. While maintenance needs tend to decrease once the material is established, medians do still require maintenance at different times throughout the year, which are labour intensive.

Future construction of medians needs to consider long-term maintenance requirements and budget implications

The City has the desire to be involved with beautification projects on Regional roads. As a result, Staff are proceeding with this initiative with the understanding that this is the approved direction.

Each of the medians listed above is located on a Regional road. This is most often the case as Regional roads are usually wider than City roads and more often act as gateways. The Region’s TSSR recommends that the Region consult with area municipalities during the design phase of a project to ensure the needs of the area municipality are known. The City agrees with this approach, and should be prepared to be involved before the design stage to evaluate desirability of a landscaped median and the City’s ability to maintain it. This approach has been taken with the Burgoyne Bridge, as discussed below.

In addition, there is a need for extensive interdepartmental discussions prior to the approval of any additional landscaped medians to address the following:

- how medians can best be integrated into the overall streetscape design;

- the sustainability of any landscaped areas (i.e. volume of soil, plant selection etc.);
- how medians can be designed to meet the City's health and safety standards and to reduce maintenance requirements (i.e. size of median, access and traffic control planning, irrigation, etc.); and
- the City's ability to maintain this landscaping within its budgetary constraints, including any impacts on long-term operations.

At a minimum these discussions should include staff from Recreation and Community Services, Transportation and Environmental Services, and Financial Management Services, but possibly also Planning and Development Services and Economic Development and Customer Service to help evaluate and prioritize the desirability of medians in specific locations.

Discussions about the maintenance of the medians along Glenridge Ave. are ongoing between City and Regional staff. Elements such as irrigation and traffic planning are being considered to ensure that the City would be able to safely maintain these medians prior to taking any responsibility for them. Some raised beds were removed by the Region this year as these were not wide enough to sustain plant material.

Consultation between City and Region required for any greening initiatives for the new Burgoyne Bridge

City staff have been involved in preliminary discussions on the design of the new Burgoyne Bridge. Due to its narrow road width it is unlikely that the bridge itself will have any median landscaping, but there are opportunities for greening of the surrounding areas and approaches to the bridge. As discussed above, and as approved through the TSSR, the Region should be consulting with the City prior to the creation of and during the design of any landscaping of any areas around Burgoyne Bridge to ensure the City's operational requirements are met. The cost of installing any landscaping would be the responsibility of the City as reported to Council on December 10, 2012.

Financial Implications

No additional funds have been requested as a result of this report. The human and financial resources (i.e. plant material) for median maintenance are estimated to be \$50,000 during the average year. This amount is captured within the existing RCS Operating Budget and will be carried forward for 2013.

Conclusion

Regional Council has delegated the maintenance of medians on Regional roads to the area municipality. The maintenance of such medians impacts the City's annual operations and, as such, consultation between the City and the Region before the construction of any future medians is important. These discussions will evaluate the desirability and affordability of the median as well as design considerations which can decrease the long-term maintenance needs, increase the sustainability of the

plant material and ensure that the median can be maintained within the City's health and safety procedures.

Submitted by: Jim Benson, Assistant Director/Manager of Parks & Facilities

Prepared by: Kristen Sullivan, Project and Development Planner

Approved by: Rick Lane, R.D.M.R., Director of Recreation & Community
Services

Corporate Report

Report from Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities

Date of Report: November 29, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: RCS-672-2012 **File:** 68.31.192

Subject: Hartzel Road Revitalization Planning and City's Sustainability Strategy

Recommendation

That Council receive the report for information purposes. FORTHWITH

Summary

Hartzel Road is in a state of transition and is of pivotal importance to the Merrittton area. Over the past year, Hartzel Road has undergone a "road diet" by being converted from a four lane, auto-oriented road, to a three lane, sustainable multi-modal road that includes on-street bike lanes. Tree planting and replacement along Hartzel Road is occurring this fall, and future greening will occur through a partnership for funding with the Region of Niagara. As discussed within this report, the "road diet" and greening initiatives promote the goals of the City's Sustainability Strategy.

Background

At its meeting on September 12, 2011, Council approved the conversion of Hartzel Road / Merritt Street from Queenston Street to Oakdale Avenue from a four lane road to a three lane road with a centre turn lane and bike lanes as part of the planned resurfacing of Hartzel Road scheduled for the Fall of 2011. Further to this approval, Council directed staff to report on how the Hartzel Road revitalization planning fits into the City's Sustainability Strategy including a plan to maximize tree planting on Hartzel Road and in the surrounding residential neighbourhood, as well as a progress report on sidewalk replacement along both sides of Hartzel Road. A report about tree planting on side streets was received by Council on August 13, 2012 (General Minutes, Item Number 438).

Report

'Tending the Garden City: The City of St. Catharines Sustainability Strategy' provides an overarching framework to ensure that municipal initiatives are aligned towards achieving common community-identified sustainability objectives. It identifies establishing a multi-modal transportation network and urban forestry management as "Municipal Sustainability Priorities," both of which are directly promoted through the recent works along Hartzel Road.

“Road Diet” increased multi-modal transportation options

The Sustainability Strategy describes a multi-modal system as one that offers alternatives to automobile use, such as relevant public transit networks and a system of paths and trails that link people to where they need to go with safe active transportation options.

Prior to its resurfacing, Hartzel Road was auto-oriented and did not conform to the principles and policies of the Garden City Plan or the Sustainability Strategy. The resurfacing of Hartzel Road converted a four-lane undivided road into a three-lane road with a centre turn lane and on-street bike lanes. These bike lanes create a more efficient and sustainable transportation network by providing a safe route for cyclists along Hartzel Road and by connecting the bike lanes on Queenston Street to those on Merritt Street south of Oakdale Avenue.

No plans for sidewalk replacement but sidewalks are evaluated annually

Transportation and Environmental Services (TES) has advised the following in regards to sidewalk replacement on Hartzel Road:

Independent concrete sidewalks exist on both sides of Hartzel Road. An independent sidewalk is one where there is a boulevard between the sidewalk and the asphalt roadway. Generally, the existing sidewalks on Hartzel Road are 1.2 metres wide. Wheelchair ramps exist at all intersections where pedestrians are lawfully permitted to cross the roads.

City sidewalks are inspected annually and repaired or replaced as necessary to meet minimum maintenance standards as defined by the province. Typically, once identified repairs exceed 30% of a single block, the entire sidewalk in the block is replaced. In all other cases, repairs and replacements are undertaken on a panel by panel basis with no change in the width of the sidewalk. The standard minimum width for an independent sidewalk is 1.5 metres wide. Should a full length block repair be identified, then TES would carefully review the possibility of installing a 1.5 metre wide sidewalk during detailed design.

The most recent inspections of the sidewalks on Hartzel Road identified only minor repairs and replacements. In 2012, a total of 26 square metres of concrete sidewalk were replaced at five locations along Hartzel Road, representing less than 1% of the total length of sidewalks on Hartzel Road.

Additional tree planting and greening along Hartzel Road

As part of the Urban Forestry Management Plan, the City has committed to a comprehensive management strategy that deals with greening our community. The management plan identifies tree planting initiatives that will beautify and fill our public boulevards with trees. Further, the Sustainability Strategy outlines the importance of the urban forest to building sustainable communities and the role the urban forest can play in neighbourhood revitalization efforts. It states that through effective urban forestry management, trees have the potential to cool houses and

environments, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, increase property values, and contribute to the creation of complete streets.

The greening initiatives proposed for Hartzel Road will maximize tree planting by populating all of the vacant boulevards (59) this fall as well as expanding the plantable space or growing pits for these boulevards. The goal is to create a healthy, viable and sustainable asset that will provide a tangible benefit to the neighborhood's infrastructure.

Continuing in 2013 and into 2014, the City will remove the Ash trees and other species in declining health along Hartzel Road, replacing these with heartier varieties in the larger, sustainable growing space. It is estimated that approximately 50 tree replacements will be forthcoming for a total of 109 trees. Further greening will occur along this corridor through the redevelopment of the gore at the intersection of Rockwood and Hartzel in 2013.

Additional improvements through review of planning applications for private development

Most private development that occurs along Hartzel Road is subject to at least one type of planning application, such as a Site Plan Agreement. Through the review of these applications, City staff can ensure that private development along Hartzel Road promotes the goals of the City's Sustainability Strategy. Typical initiatives which might be implemented through a Site Plan Agreement are additional tree planting and on-site greening, the creation of pedestrian connections from the public sidewalk to the building entrance, installation of bicycle parking, or the construction of infrastructure for transit stops.

Financial Implications

The resurfacing of Hartzel Road and associated line painting was funded from the approved 2011 Capital Budget.

Sidewalk evaluations are included in the TES annual operating budget.

The estimated cost for tree planting and greening along Hartzel Road is \$100,000. This is to be funded through a partnership for public realm improvements between the City of St. Catharines and the Region of Niagara with each party contributing \$50,000. The 2012 Recreation and Community Services (RCS) operating budget included \$25,000 for this work, and the remaining \$25,000 has been requested through the 2013 RCS operating budget. Funding from the Region of Niagara is encumbered by its approval criteria which requires that projects be complete before the cost sharing amounts are transferred.

Conclusion

The conversion of Hartzel Road from a four lane, auto-oriented road, to a three lane, sustainable multi-modal road that includes on-street bike lanes and the tree planting which is currently occurring along Hartzel Road promote the goals of the City's Sustainability Strategy. While there are no plans for sidewalk replacement on both sides of Hartzel Road at this time, the sidewalks are evaluated annually by

Transportation and Environmental Services to ensure their conditions meet the minimum maintenance standards as defined by the province.

Submitted by:

Jim Benson
Assistant Director/Manager of Parks & Facilities

Prepared by:

Kristen Sullivan
Project and Development Planner

Approved by:

Rick Lane, R.D.M.R.
Director of Recreation & Community Services

Corporate Report

Report from Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities

Date of Report: November 30, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: RCS-690-2012 **File:** 68.31.192

Subject: Urban Forestry Management Plan Update

Recommendation

That Council receive the report dated November 30, 2012, for information purposes.
FORTHWITH

Summary

The Urban Forestry Management Plan is a comprehensive strategy for managing the urban forest in St. Catharines. The Plan was developed to address key areas of concern over the next five years, from 2011 to 2015. This report provides a status of the 2012 action plan and outlines the 2013 action plan.

Background

At its meeting on February 28, 2011, Council approved the Urban Forestry Management Plan (UFMP) for the purpose of providing a comprehensive strategy for managing the urban forest in St. Catharines.

The purpose of having an urban forest management plan is to ensure that our community will enjoy the benefits of trees. The goal of the plan is to state what is needed to manage the urban forest and to provide the roadmap to reach the goals outlined in the Plan.

The UFMP quantifies the structure, function and value of the urban forest in St. Catharines and provides a list of action items that will act as the building blocks for the development and sustainability of our urban forest canopy cover.

The intent of this report is to provide Council with an update of the 2012 forestry initiatives as presented in the UFMP recommendations for an annual 'State of the Urban Forest' report.

Report

In order to work toward a vision of sustainable ecosystems and communities, it is necessary to focus on actions to restore and maintain trees and urban forests as critical components and indicators of healthy ecosystems.

To achieve its target goals, the UFMP quantifies the function of the urban forest in St. Catharines and its value to people living and working in our city. It identifies the importance of trees on both public lands and private property. It addresses the need for enhanced public education and stewardship and provides the building blocks for a diverse and sustainable urban tree canopy.

To realize these benefits, the UFMP identified several action items for implementation in 2012:

1. 'Complete Our Streets': beautify and fill our public boulevards with trees

Summary

The public trees growing in any community are valuable municipal resources. They provide tangible and intangible benefits for diverse services such as pollution control, energy reduction, storm water management, increased property values, wildlife habitat, education, and aesthetics. The most visible of these public trees are those that are found on our municipal boulevards. In St. Catharines there are approximately 50,000 municipal addresses of which approximately 47,000 can support a boulevard tree. The 2005 inventory indicates that only 37,000 of these locations currently have a tree planted on the municipal space that fronts the property. To 'complete our streets' the management plan has recommended a net gain of trees planted over the first 5 year period of 1000 trees, from 2011 to 2015.

Prior to the approval and implementation of the UFMP and the increase of the tree planting budget from \$160,000 to \$300,000 in 2012, the net gain of trees planted had been negligible in that the number of trees planted was less than the number of trees removed.

Status report

The management plan recommendation was to achieve a net gain of 1000 boulevard trees by 2015, or 200 trees per year. At the time this report was drafted, the 2012 plantings of 800 trees, less 349 removals provided a net gain of 451, which exceeds the management plan recommendation.

2013 Action Plan

The number of new plantings and overall net gain for 2013 are projected to be similar to 2012 and within the recommended expectations of the management plan, providing the budget remains the same as in 2012.

2. Increase our canopy cover to meet the 30 per cent target

Summary

St. Catharines' urban forest cover has recently been calculated at 15-17 percent, which includes canopy in residential areas and on private property. The total urban area is approximately 7,000 ha., with the current canopy covering nearly 1200 ha. The accepted minimum percentage for canopy cover is 30 percent or for our municipality approximately 2100 ha. To reach the 30% target goal the management plan must include an additional 910 ha. or, approximately 40,000 large stature trees. The 40,000 tree goal can be reached by 2030 by planting 2,000 trees annually in addition to boulevard trees.

The goal of 2000 trees will be fulfilled through 1300 trees from the municipal tree planting program, 300 trees as part of park projects or community based groups and 400 trees planted through private initiatives such as new homes or on existing properties.

Status report

With the approval of the UFMP in 2011, the budget for tree planting was increased in 2012 from \$160,000 to \$300,000. The increase in funding allowed the program to reach and exceed the target goals for 2012. Specifically, the municipal tree planting program planted 1480 canopy trees. New trees planted through community based groups such as the 'Friends of Malcolmson Eco-park' and the Green Committee was in excess of 350. The number of trees planted privately, based on new housing units built in 2012 and local nursery sales in St. Catharines, exceeds the 400 required plantings.

2013 Action Plan

It is expected that new plantings for canopy cover trees will meet or exceed these numbers in 2013, providing the budget of \$300,000 for tree planting remains the same for 2013.

3. Prepare a threat evaluation response

Summary

Invasive pests have had significant negative economic and ecologic impacts upon various ecosystems in Ontario for more than 100 years. The early detection and eradication of forest invasive pests, either before they become established, or before populations increase, is critical to limiting their impacts. A response plan needs to be activated when a new, highly destructive invasive forest pest is detected and its taxonomic identification is confirmed by specialists. The purpose of the Plan must be:

- A. To adequately respond to new introductions of highly destructive invasive insect or disease pests that may threaten the forest and shade tree resources of St. Catharines.

- B. To ensure a unified approach to the detection, identification, delineation, and assessment of infestation or infection of highly destructive invasive forest and shade tree insects and diseases.
- C. To ensure a unified and safe approach to the eradication or suppression of highly destructive invasive forest and shade tree insects and diseases.
- D. To clearly define roles for responding to invading insects or diseases that addresses assessment, outreach, education, eradication and containment, relevant authorities and/or duties, and the allocation of resources.
- E. To ensure open, effective and timely communication between local, regional, provincial and federal government agencies, academia, plant industry professionals and the public.
- F. To effectively notify the public of the threat and the likely response activities.

The UFMP sets urban forestry planning objectives and qualifies natural and man-made disturbances in order to identify and implement appropriate response initiatives to protect and enhance the health and longevity of the urban forest.

2012 Action Plan

The Threat Response Evaluation Plan is attached as Appendix 1.

Status report

To meet these needs the Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (UFAC) has prepared a response plan. This plan included input from other relevant City departments as well as information from all vital agencies as required (such as Ministry of Natural Resources – Ontario, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Trees Canada, International Society of Arboriculture).

2013 Action Plan items for implementation of the UFMP

The Action Plan for Implementation of the UFMP will address the following items in 2013:

1. Prepare specifications, guidelines and budget for an inventory of trees on municipal properties

In 2004, the City of St. Catharines conducted an inventory of trees on all of the municipal boulevards and has used this information to assess and manage the current tree planting program. To satisfy the proposed strategy the existing inventory will require updating. City staff and the UFAC will prepare the specifications, guidelines and cost estimates to inventory all trees on municipal property. This will appear as a budget item in 2014.

2. Report for council regarding private property tree by-law

As part of its ongoing plan to be an environmentally responsible community, the UFMP recommends the creation of a By-law with respect to regulating the injury and removal of trees on private property. City staff and the UFAC

will prepare a report based on public input as well as information from other municipalities with similar by-laws. The report will be provided in fall 2013.

3. Review planning and development guidelines

Successful long-term stewardship of the urban forest canopy must include good principles of tree protection and planting. It should provide development regulations for the way space is allocated and trees are planted and protected on all land parcels in the community. Planning & Development Services is now in the process of reviewing and revising site plan standards with the intent to create a simple, user friendly document that will be accessible via hard copy and online. This document will provide direction to the development community and benefit the public at large. The UFAC will review these revised standards and provide comments on recommended changes, as required to satisfy tree protection and tree conservation practices on applicable properties.

Financial Implications

It is anticipated that once approved, the 2013 Budget as submitted, can accommodate the proposed UFMP objectives. The 2013 Budget for tree planting will not increase from 2012 and remain at \$300,000.

Conclusion

The UFMP is a comprehensive strategy for managing the urban forest in St. Catharines. The plan provides recommendations and action items that will act as the roadmap for meeting our target goals. The 2012 action items for implementation of the UFMP have been achieved.

Submitted by:

Jim Benson
Assistant Director / Manager of Parks & Facilities

Prepared by:

Mike Anderson
Development Horticultural Technician

Approved by:

Rick Lane, R.D.M.R.
Director of Recreation and Community Services

City of St. Catharines Threat Response Evaluation for Invasive Forest Pests

Introduction

Invasive pests have had significant negative economic and ecologic impacts in Canada and St. Catharines is not exempt. Increased international trade and travel have led to a significant increase in the accidental movement of pests into new areas.

These invasive pests once established have the potential to significantly alter the vegetation cover we have traditionally used for a variety of purposes. Most non-native, and potentially invasive, pests are prevented from entering this country through inspection services and port inspections. However, due to the volume of trade and the cryptic nature of many pests, some escape detection and become established. The early detection and eradication of forest invasive pests, either before they become established, or before populations increase, is critical to limiting their impacts.

It is the intent to activate this Emergency Response Plan within the City boundaries when a new, highly destructive invasive forest pest is detected either through surveys, other government agencies or from public reports, and its taxonomic identification is confirmed by specialists. This is a very serious matter. If the response to a harmful invasive pest is not rapid and 100% effective the threat will continue to survive.

Examples of casualties from inadequate efforts include the American sweet chestnut, the disappearance of white pine as an economic tree species over much of its range because of white pine blister rust, and the relative disappearance of elm because of dutch elm disease, all diseases introduced in the early part of the 20th century. We are now in the process of managing the demise of ash species across north america caused by the emerald ash borer, first discovered in ontario in 2002.

Purpose: The following goals can be achieved by following the procedure outlined below to identify and respond to invasive pests/threats to the forest/tree cover in St Catharines.

The goal is to adequately respond to new introductions of highly destructive invasive insect or disease pests that may threaten the forest and shade tree resources of St. Catharines by:

A. Ensuring a unified approach to the detection, identification, delineation, and assessment of infestation or infection of highly destructive invasive forest and shade tree

insects and diseases.

B. Ensuring a unified and safe approach to the eradication or suppression of highly destructive invasive forest and shade tree insects and diseases (See Attachment for specific invasive pest action plans).

D. Clearly define agency roles for responding to invading insects or diseases using outreach, education, eradication and containment, relevant authorities and/or duties, and the allocation of resources.

E. Ensuring open, effective and timely communication between local, regional, provincial and federal government agencies, academia, plant industry professionals and the public.

F. Effectively notifying the public of the threat and likely response activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

A. Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Canada is a signatory to several international treaties under which it is required to report, monitor and take appropriate actions against pests of quarantine significance. Failure to do so could result in economic sanctions being taken against Canada, loss of access to markets for agricultural and forestry products, and other penalties.

Under the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has been designated Canada's official national plant protection (and quarantine) organization and is the lead agency in Canada with respect to developing regulatory policies for forest and agricultural pests of quarantine significance. The CFIA is empowered under the Plant Protection Act and Regulations which give it the authority to enact and enforce regulations and policies to protect Canada's agricultural and forestry production base, environment and natural resources and to take all necessary actions to exclude, eradicate or otherwise manage invasive pests of quarantine significance. To this end, the CFIA works in close cooperation with other Canadian federal and provincial government partners as well as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop science-based import, and domestic movement regulations as well as inspection, surveillance and suppression strategies for EAB and other quarantine pests.

B. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

In Canada, provincial governments are responsible for the management of natural resources such as woodlands and forests, as well as environmental protection. Additionally they must approve the use of registered pesticides. While provincially enacted legislation is not permitted to contradict or limit federal legislation, Provinces have the authority to put in place laws to strengthen or augment federal acts and regulations where they see the need. In Ontario, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) has taken a major, albeit non-regulatory role in combating invasive pests. They provide assistance in training CFIA inspectors (and others) on detection and surveys, sponsoring and overseeing scientific research, and with public education and awareness initiatives. OMNR biologists sit on advisory panels which provide advice to the CFIA on policy development, research prioritization and regulatory issues. The OMNR Parks Section has been

a key partner in limiting the spread of pests to provincial parks and campgrounds through pre-screening, restrictions on firewood and other activities. Additionally, the OMNR can provide funding for conservation authorities

C. Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

The NPCA administer the Region's Forest Bylaw and play an important role in the way private woodlots are managed within the Region. The NPCA deals mainly with woodlots greater than 1 hectare and assess and approve Good Forestry Practices permits that allow commercial harvesting.

In cases of identified invasive pests the NPCA will work to develop a communication and outreach plan for cooperators and the public to develop specific messages once a damaging invasive pest has been confirmed in Ontario.

They will provide pest management expertise and advice to all cooperators and the public, assist in surveillance, detection and follow-up inspections on reported suspect infestations and assist with containment, restoration and mitigation activities.

D. City of St. Catharines

In Ontario municipalities and counties are responsible for managing their street trees, forests and woodlands and play a major role in protecting these from invasive alien species. Decisions with respect to the management of invasive forest pests such as the Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALHB) and EAB are made after extensive consultation and collaboration with the Niagara Penninsula Conservation Authority and other levels of government regarding identification, quarantine, and funding. To reduce the risk of infestation it is necessary to identify all major pathways of pest introduction and ensure actions are taken as soon as possible.

Establishing the process for risk response at the municipal level involves:

Assessing the Risk of Infestation

Assessment of risk as to the potential severity of impact (such as damage or loss) and probability of occurrence.

1. Assess the magnitude of the resource at risk (quantity of trees)
2. Track the spread of the pest in infested areas- provinces/states
3. Develop recommendations for reducing risk.

Managing the Risk

Once risks have been identified and assessed, all techniques to manage the risk fall into one or more of these four major categories

- Avoidance (eliminate, withdraw from or not become involved – do nothing)

- Reduction (optimize - mitigate) reducing the severity of the loss or the likelihood of the loss from occurring
- Sharing (transfer - outsource or insure) sharing with another party the burden of loss or the benefit of gain, from a risk, and the measures to reduce a risk."
- Retention (accept and budget)

Creating a Municipal Risk Management Plan

- The risk management plan should propose applicable and effective security controls for managing the risks and should contain a schedule for control implementation and responsible agencies for those actions.
- A Risk Treatment Plan should be prepared which should document the decisions about how the identified risk should be handled.

Reduce the Risk of infestation

- Raise public awareness about risks ie. install educational posters, media releases, public service announcements
- Educate industries/associated businesses/utility companies about risks and regulations
- Maintain an effective nursery inspection
- Promote planting selections that contribute to a diverse and sustainable urban forest

Create a Monitoring Program

- Survey high-risk populations to detect presence of pest
- Continue communications with other government agencies.
- Educate the public and professionals to aid in rapid identification of an infestation
- Facilitate inquiries and reporting of suspect infestations
- Continue to educate the general public
-

Response to Detection of an infestation

- Plan and implement containment actions including coordination with other government agencies and initiation of regulatory and control activities as necessary
- Communicate information about response to the public and industry professionals

Corporate Report

Report from Financial Management Services, Billing

Date of Report: December 3, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: FMS-687-2012 **File:** 10.57.99

Subject: Cancellation, Reduction, Refund of Property Taxes

Recommendation

That Council approve the necessary tax reductions, cancellations and refunds pursuant to Section 357 of The Municipal Act in the amount of \$31,328.59 in accordance with the list submitted by Financial Management Services, dated December 3, 2012 (see Appendix "1" attached).

Background

Pursuant to Section 357, application may be made to Council for cancellation, reduction and refund of taxes levied in the year.

The appeals are processed in the Financial Management Services Department, forwarded to MPAC where the amount of reduction is calculated in assessment dollars. The appeals are then returned to the Financial Management Services Department and the amount of reduction is calculated in tax dollars. Under the Municipal Act, a recalculation of the Capping Adjustments are necessary for those properties experiencing a reduction or removal from the Capped Classes (Multi-Residential, Commercial, Industrial).

Report

Application may be made for the following reasons:

Section 357

- (a) Tax reclassification resulting in a lower tax ratio
- (b) The land has become vacant land or excess land
- (c) The land has become exempt from taxation
- (d) A building on the land was razed or damaged by fire, demolition or otherwise so as to render it substantially unusable
- (e) A mobile unit on the land was removed
- (f) A person was overcharged due to a gross or manifest error that is clerical or factual in nature, but not an error in judgement in assessing the property
- (g) Repairs or renovation to the land prevented the normal use of the land for a period of at least 3 months during the year.

Financial Implications

Section 357 appeals amount to \$31,328.59 as listed on Appendix “1”.

Submitted by:

Tracey Miller
Billing Manager

Prepared by:

Tanya Craig
Tax Billing and Adjustment Clerk

Approved by:

Shelley Chemnitz, C.A.
Director/City Treasurer

City of St. Catharines Section 357 Tax Appeals - For Council Date December 17, 2012

Appeal #	Roll Number	Location	Description	Year	Period From	Period To	Reduction Amount	Tax Levied	Comments
3615	040.002.27900.0000	301 ST PAUL ST	357(a) Tax Class Change	2011	1-Jan-11	31-Dec-11	1,550.48	559,744.81	
3630	010.032.05400.0000	0 BUNTING RD	357(c) Exempt	2011	1-Jan-11	31-Dec-11	0.00	0.00	
3671	030.032.18701.0000	453 EASTCHESTER AVE E REAR	357(a) Tax Class Change	2012	1-Jul-12	31-Dec-12	15,814.83	106,929.05	
3700	010.020.04500.0000	10-14 WOODBURN AVE	357(d) Destroyed/Damaged	2012	1-Jan-12	31-Dec-12	4,408.89	5,794.74	
3701	010.020.04400.0000	16 WOODBURN AVE	357(d) Destroyed/Damaged	2012	1-Jan-12	31-Dec-12	7,389.38	9,458.38	
3702	040.023.00200.0000	120 LAKE ST	357(d) Destroyed/Damaged	2012	25-Apr-12	31-Dec-12	1,971.37	6,121.06	
3704	060.035.02300.0000	26 CRESCENTWOOD DR	357(d) Destroyed/Damaged	2012	1-Jan-12	31-Dec-12	193.64	2,502.38	
TOTAL							31,328.59		



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Planning & Development Services, Building & Development

Date of Report: December 3, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: PDS-695-2012 **File:** 56.49.3

Subject: Fast Tracking of Permits for Sheds, Decks and Pools

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Planning and Development Services Report, dated December 3, 2012, which recommends that a pilot program for fast tracking building permits for sheds, decks and pools be undertaken during the first half of 2013, at which time an evaluation of the program will be undertaken to assess its effectiveness. FORTHWITH.

Summary

This report provides a discussion of the feasibility of providing the fast tracking of building permits for decks, sheds and pools and outlines the recommended improvements to the current process to achieve this goal. The improvements will be undertaken as a pilot program during the first and second quarters of 2013. At the end of that time period an evaluation of the program will be undertaken to assess its effectiveness.

Background

The Mayor's Development Review Task Force was established in 2007 to review and provide recommendations on the City's processes and timelines for various development applications. One of the recommendations that the Committee made was the need for a commitment to provide expeditious reviews of development applications including building permits. In 2010, the City's Chief Building Official (CBO) met with the building industry to specifically review processes and timelines for building permit applications. The CBO completed a thorough study of the processes, the building by-law and associated fees. Input from and discussion with the building industry recommendations were made to improve processes, communications and, ultimately, customer service. Subsequent to this study, Staff was directed to provide an enhanced level of service to accelerate the permit issuance of sheds, decks and pools and provide same day service where possible.

Report

As was outlined in the CBO's study that was completed in 2010, the legislation is prescriptive for mandated timelines for the review of various types of building permits. Under the approval system in Ontario, fast tracking the approval of building

permits beyond the prescribed 10-day timeline is an option that municipalities can pursue depending on customer service expectations. Workload, financial and staff resources of the municipality help determine possible timelines that could be achieved.

In St Catharines, as an enhanced customer service over the past two years, staff has been attempting to process the permit issuance of decks, sheds and pools within 5 days which is half of the legislated requirement. However, because of staffing shortfalls, some significantly large overlapping projects and on-going daily workload, the 5-day target has not always been met.

Staffing levels are expected to be resolved in January 2013, and Staff has prepared some reference materials to assist the public in preparing their submissions for permit applications and to also assist Staff in streamlining the review process. Staff has developed checklists for decks, sheds and pools and has also obtained a diagram identifying minimum distance standards for Horizon Utilities' overhead transmission lines. The key to success will be ensuring that the applicant provides complete information at the counter when applying for the permit.

Often with these types of permits it is not always Building Code regulations that prevent quick permit issuance. Rather, in many instances, the timing of permit approval depends on the location of the property, various zoning requirements that need to be addressed such as coverage or setbacks that may introduce the need for a minor variance, or approvals from outside agencies such as the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

As part of the amalgamation of the Building and Development Division with the former Planning Services Department to create a new "Planning and Development Services Department", some infrastructure upgrades were identified. An additional computer station was one of these requirements to be implemented in 2012 and is still pending. It is expected to be installed at the Planning and Development Services customer counter in the near future and will provide a significant aid in the processing of permits during peak building season.

The CBO has checked with various municipalities to determine if they provide an enhanced permitting approval system for decks, sheds and pools. The common answer was that the building branches at the various municipalities are resourced to meet provincially legislated timelines with some enhanced capability as directed by the local Council to provide typical 5-day building permit approval for decks, sheds and pools. Some municipalities such as Ottawa and Toronto have attempted to provide same day permits but they have found that it was not sustainable because of resourcing requirements.

Along with new supporting documents created by Staff, additional brochures and information will be provided to the public through the City's website and at the department's service counter. Staff will attempt to provide an enhanced level of service to provide a fast tracking of permits for pools, decks and sheds and achieve a one day approval process.

Given competing resource needs, it is prudent for this service to be offered during the first half of 2013 as a pilot project. After this period of time the program will be evaluated for its success and effectiveness in order to ascertain whether any improvements are required to continue the service.

Financial Implications

As was discussed with, and supported by, the building industry in 2010, a fee will need to be set for this enhanced level of service. The CBO will include this fee in the annual report to be prepared early in February 2013.

Conclusion

Where a complete application is received with no complications for applicable law approvals staff will process the application with the goal of providing the permit within that same day or next day.

Prepared by:

Sandra Burrows
Manager of Building and Development
Chief Building Official

Approved by:

James N. Riddell, MPI, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning and Development Services

Corporate Report

Report from Transportation & Environmental Services, Operations

Date of Report: December 5, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: TES-697-2012 **File:** 35.31.4, 18.20.200

Subject: Buckland Street Wastewater Infrastructure Project, Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative (MIII)

Recommendation

That an Expression for Interest for the Buckland Street wastewater infrastructure project be submitted in the amount of \$1.8 million under the provincial Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative Capital Program (MIII);

And that \$200,000 be allocated in the 2013 Capital Budget as the municipal contribution in compliance with provincial funding criteria pending project approval;

And that the City Solicitor be directed to prepare the necessary by-law.
FORTHWITH

Summary

The Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure has launched its new Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative as part of the provincial Municipal Infrastructure Strategy. \$51 million in funding is available to Ontario municipalities and the application deadline is January 9, 2013.

Through analysis of funding criteria, corporate plans and preliminary work on a comprehensive asset management plan, staff believe that the Buckland Street wastewater infrastructure project is the most suitable project to pursue under MIII.

Background

On August 16, 2012 the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure launched \$51 million in funding for a new Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative as part of the provincial Municipal Infrastructure Strategy. In order to be eligible for funding, municipalities must either have a detailed asset management plan in place or be committed to completing one prior to December 31, 2013. The deadline for applications under MIII is January 9, 2013.

On December 10, 2012 Council considered a report regarding Asset Management and Sustainable Infrastructure Funding that recommended the completion of a

comprehensive asset management plan. Commitment to this plan is a prerequisite to provincial funding under MIII.

As part of staff's preliminary work toward a comprehensive asset management plan, significant work has been completed on evaluating the state of local infrastructure and desired levels of service. Through this process, deficiencies in the wastewater infrastructure near Buckland Street were identified as a priority for future work.

Report

Staff have evaluated the suitability of potential projects under the MIII framework and recommend the Buckland Street wastewater project based on the following selection criteria:

- **Consistency with funding announcement:** Eligible projects include roads, bridges, water and wastewater infrastructure.
- **Consistency with municipal priorities:** Project must align with municipal priorities as stated in corporate plans such as the Sustainability Strategy, Official Plan, and asset management plan (under development).
- **Project readiness:** Project must be completed prior to December 31, 2014.
- **Need for provincial funding:** Applicants should demonstrate a need for provincial assistance to make full use of local infrastructure financing tools.
- **Anticipated costs:** Provincial funding is capped at \$2 million per project, and municipal governments are expected to contribute a minimum of 10 per cent.
- **Health and safety:** Project must address a critical health and safety problem.

Based on the above criteria, the Buckland Street wastewater infrastructure project was identified as the most suitable project for consideration under MIII.

Collapses, blockages and sewage backups in the sanitary and combined sewer servicing the Buckland Street neighbourhood have been occurring at increased rates. Maintenance activities on the sewer have been enhanced in an effort to avoid further backups. An evaluation of the sewer, which is situated in a wooded valley behind the homes on the west side of Buckland Street, revealed the sewer has reached the end of its service life and requires immediate replacement. The Buckland sewer is part of a larger combined sewer system.

A Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) regulator along the sewer exists within the valley, upstream of where it discharges to a pump station. This regulator has been identified in the City's Pollution Control Plan (PCP) as one of twelve critical locations for CSO control. The PCP identified a need for flow monitoring and pollution control for this regulator, taking into account the relative impact of CSO discharges to local receiving waters while conforming to the Ministry of the Environment's Procedure F-5-5.

Given the poor condition of the sewer combined with the capacity issues identified in the Pollution Control Plan this sewer is a priority for sewer improvement and rehabilitation.

Due to the extent of this project, with an estimated project cost of \$2.0 million, it is currently not financially feasible for the City to resolve the issue without access to funding from other orders of government or the deferral of other sewer projects throughout the City – the entire Sewer Improvement Program totaled \$2.0 million in 2012.

Financial Implications

Should the Buckland Street wastewater infrastructure project be accepted by the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, a minimum 10 per cent municipal contribution will be required. Staff intend to apply for 90 per cent of the \$2.0 million anticipated project costs, leaving a 10 per cent City contribution of \$200,000. This amount will need to be allocated in the 2013 Capital Budget.

Conclusion

Analysis of Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure requirements and municipal priorities suggests that the Buckland Street wastewater project is the City's best opportunity for funding under MIII.

Should Council consent to submitting the project for consideration, the next step in the process is for the City to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure prior to the January 9, 2013 deadline. If EOI passes the Ministry's pre-screening process the City will be invited to submit a formal application early in 2013. Council will be notified of the Ministry's final decision.

Prepared and Submitted by:

Erin O'Hoski
Corporate Planning Officer

Approved by:

Dan Dillon, P. Eng
Acting Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

Corporate Report

Report from Corporate Support Services, Accessibility

Date of Report: November 26, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: CSS-683-2012 **File:** 35.31.88

Subject: Policy and Update Regarding Provincial Accessibility Legislation

Recommendation

That the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) policy be approved; and

That the City and its associated departments recognize and move towards compliance with the various deadlines within the IASR, Ontario Regulation 191/11.
FORTHWITH

Summary

In accordance with section three (3) of the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*), the City of St. Catharines as part of the broader public sector, is legislatively required to develop and implement corporate policies, procedures, and best practices governing how the City will comply with the accessibility standards set out in the Regulation.

Background

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was created with the goal of developing standards that would incrementally improve accessibility for people with disabilities across the Province of Ontario by the year 2025.

The AODA allows the Provincial Government to develop specific standards for accessibility and enforce them. These standards are made into regulations pursuant to the AODA. Under this Act there are various accessibility standards such as Customer Service, Employment, Information & Communication, Transportation, and Built Environment.

Most recently the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) came into force on July 1, 2011 as Ontario Regulation 191/11. A copy of this is available from the Accessibility Coordinator or on the Ministry of Community & Social Services website.

Report

The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation is a compilation of several standards, including Information & Communication, Employment and Transportation.

One of the requirements under this act was for the broader public sector to have a statement of commitment and an IASR policy in place by January 1, 2013.

The attached Policy (Appendix 1) is comprehensive in addressing all aspects of the IASR except the Transportation Section. The applicable elements of the Transportation section will be addressed by the St. Catharines Transit Commission as a separate policy (see Appendix 2). Several elements of the Transportation section apply to taxis and taxi licensing and therefore will be addressed by the Niagara Regional Police Services of the Region of Niagara.

The City has been proactive in training staff on accessible information and communication well before the compliance deadline. A training module was developed, as was a supportive guide, 'The Guide to Accessible Information and Communication'. This corporate-wide initiative provided training to approximately 100 staff in December 2011 and another 100 staff in June 2012. Staff who create documents, post information to our website and provide customer service can now deliver our information in various formats to people with disabilities upon request. Future training and information will ensure that all staff are aware of the City's commitment and obligation to provide accessible formats and communication supports.

As with all the AODA Standards, the IASR is subject to amendment which would then be reflected into any necessary amendments to associated policies. In August 2012 the Ministry of Community & Social Services, Accessibility Directorate released for public input / comment several amendments and proposed elements for Accessible Design of Public Spaces (exterior), under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11). This is anticipated to be a future amendment to the IASR.

As a broader public sector organization, the City of St. Catharines is required to develop and implement initiatives that meet the requirements set out within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The Policy was reviewed approved by key staff and supported by a motion from the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility at their meeting of September 26, 2012.

The specific components of each IASR section and their various compliance deadlines are attached as Appendix 3.

Financial Implications

Operational budgets, from various service areas or departments, may be impacted depending on the specific requirement. In addition, future capital budget forecasts, related to transit, will be impacted in order to meet the requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. Any impacts will be accommodated through future capital and operating budgets.

Submitted by:


Colin Briggs
CAO

Prepared by:

Diana Lecinski
Accessibility Coordinator

Approved by:

Colin Briggs
CAO

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1. Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines (herein after the “City”) is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing accessibility as set out under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its Standards for people with a disability, in a manner that:

- Reflects the principles of dignity and independence;
- Seeks to provide integrated services; and
- Provides opportunity equitable to others to obtain, use and benefit from its goods or services.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of the AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) Ontario Regulation 191/11 which reflects a number of accessibility standards that organizations across Ontario, including the City, are required to comply with.


This document has been organized into the following sections:

- Part I – General Requirements; Accessibility Plans, Procurement and Training
- Part II – Accessible Information and Communications Standards
- Part III – Accessible Employment Standards
- Part IV – Transportation Standards
- Part V – future amendments to the IASR

This policy is not intended to replace or supersede City’s Accessible Customer Service Policy (ACAO-01-09) that was approved by Council on March 30, 2009.

The requirements set out in this policy and the IASR are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the *Human Rights Code* nor do the standards or policy limit any obligations owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation.

Terms are as defined by the AODA and its Standards and are referred to herein with that intent and contained at the end of this policy as reference.

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3. Scope and Responsibility

This policy applies to all City of St. Catharines employees; fulltime, part-time, volunteers as well as other third parties acting on behalf of the City for the provision of goods, services, programs and facilities.

4. Policy Principles and Requirements

Part I: General Requirements

4.1 Accessibility Plans

The City will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan starting in 2013 that outlines its strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meets its requirements under the IASR.

The multi-year accessibility plan will be:

- posted on the City's website and be provided in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.
- reviewed and updated at least once every five years
- established, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities and the St. Catharines' Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility (MACOA)

The City will:


- prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan
- post the status report on its website and provide the report in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.

4.2 Procurement

When procuring or acquiring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the City shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the City shall provide an explanation, upon request.

4.3 Training

As required by the IASR, the City shall ensure that the following persons are provided training on (1) the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in

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the IASR and (2) on the *Human Rights Code*, as it pertains to persons with disabilities:

- all employees and volunteers;
- all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and,

All other persons or third parties who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization shall continue to be trained or meet their obligations as part of the City's procurement process.

The training on the requirements of the IASR and the *Human Rights Code* shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. Record of the training provided including the dates shall be kept of employees by the Human Resources Department.

Part II: Information and Communication Requirements


4.4 Feedback

Further to the City's Accessible Customer Service Policy (ACAO-01-09, Section 3.8) whereby it notifies the public of various formats and methods of communications, that it also, upon request, can provide accessible formats and communication supports when receiving and responding to feedback.

4.5 Accessible Formats

The City will:

- notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:
 - in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs;
 - by consulting with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support; and,
 - at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

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Exceptions, the IASR does not apply to the following:

- product and product labels
- unconvertible information or communications
- information that the City does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship

If the City determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the City shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications. Information or communications are unconvertible if, it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications; or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

4.6 Emergency Information

The City shall provide publicly available emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request, as soon as practicable.


4.7 Website Accessibility

The City shall make their internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. By January 1, 2014, any new web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A. By January 1, 2021 all internet website and web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA (exceptions; Captions (live), Audio Descriptions (pre-recorded)).

4.8 Public Library

Public Library Boards;

- Shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;

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- Shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request;
- May provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections and rare books.

Part III: Employment

4.9 Scope and Interpretation

The Accessible Employment Standard applies to paid employees and does not apply to volunteers and other unpaid individuals.


4.10 Recruitment and Notification

The City shall notify;

- Employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities during the assessment or selection process
- Job applicants selected to participate in an assessment or selection process relating to the materials or processes to be used that;
 - accommodations are available upon request
 - accommodations will take into consideration the applicants disability
 - accommodations will be based on consultation between the employer and applicant
- Successful applicants of City policies and any other additional supports pertaining to the accommodation of employees with disabilities

4.11 Employee; Accessible Formats and Supports

The City will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication job supports, upon request.

 CITY OF ST. CATHARINES	Chief Administrative Office – Accessibility			<i>Agenda Item 4.9 ...</i>
	SUBJECT:	Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy	POLICY #:	ACC-2012-01
	APPROVED BY DIRECTOR:			
	ISSUE DATE:	2012 – xx - xx	REVISION DATE:	
	REVIEW DATE:	Upon Provincial amendment or review	PAGE:	6 of 6

4.12 Employee; Workplace Emergency Information

The City will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, upon request.

4.13 Accommodation Plans

The City will develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

4.14 Return to Work

The City will develop and have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

4.15 Performance Management, Career development, Redeployment

The City's performance management will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

The City's career development/advancement or redeployment will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

St Catharines Transit Commission Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Statement of Organizational Commitment

The St. Catharines Transit Commission (SCT) is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing accessibility as set out under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its Standards for people with a disability, in a manner that:

- Reflects the principles of dignity and independence;
- Seeks to provide integrated services; and
- Provides opportunity equitable to others to obtain use and benefit from its services.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of the AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) Ontario Regulation 191/11 which reflects a number of accessibility standards that organizations across Ontario, including the SCT, are required to comply with.

This document has been organized into the following sections:

- Part I – General Requirements
- Part II – Accessible Information and Communications Standards
- Part III – Accessible Employment Standards
- Part IV – Transportation Standards

This policy is not intended to replace or supersede SCT's Customer Service Policy approved by the Commission on November 26, 2009. Compliance timelines have been met or will be met in accordance with the IASR. The SCT annual status report required by Regulation 4-3(a) will provide updates in this regard.

The requirements set out in this policy and the IASR are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the *Human Rights Code* nor do the standards or policy limit any obligations owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation.

Terms are as defined by the AODA and its Standards and are referred to herein with that intent.

St Catharines Transit Commission Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Scope and Responsibility

This policy applies to all SCT employees, volunteers as well as other third parties acting on behalf of the SCT for the provision of public transit service.

Part I: General Requirements

Accessibility Plans

The SCT will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan starting in 2013 that outlines its strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the IASR.

The multi-year accessibility plan will be:

- posted on the SCT's website and be provided in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.
- reviewed and updated at least once every five years.
- established, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities.

The SCT will:

- prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan.
- post the status report on its website and provide the report in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.

Procurement

When procuring or acquiring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the SCT shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible. If not feasible, the SCT shall provide an explanation, upon request.

Training

As required by the IASR, the SCT shall ensure that the following persons are provided training on (1) the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the IASR and (2) on the *Human Rights Code*, as it pertains to persons with disabilities:

- all employees and volunteers
- all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies

All other persons or third parties who provide services on behalf of the organization shall continue to be trained or meet their obligations as part of the SCT's procurement process.

St Catharines Transit Commission

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Training (continued)

The training on the requirements of the IASR and the *Human Rights Code* shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. Record of the training provided to employees, including dates, shall be kept by the Training Supervisor.

Part II: Information and Communication Requirements

Feedback

Further to the SCT's Accessible Customer Service Policy whereby it notifies the public of various formats and methods of communications, SCT will also, upon request, provide accessible formats and communication supports when receiving and responding to feedback.

Accessible Formats

The SCT will:

- notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
- upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:
 - in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs.
 - by consulting with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
 - at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

Exceptions, this IASR does not apply to the following:

- product and product labels
- unconvertible information or communications
- information that the SCT does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship

If the SCT determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the SCT shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications. Information or communications are unconvertible if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

St Catharines Transit Commission

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Emergency Information

The SCT shall provide any publicly available emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request, as soon as practicable.

Website Accessibility

The SCT shall make their internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. By January 1, 2014, any new web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A. By January 1, 2021 all internet website and web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA (exceptions; Captions (live), Audio Descriptions (pre-recorded)).

Part III: Employment

Scope and Interpretation

The Accessible Employment Standard applies to paid employees and does not apply to volunteers and other unpaid individuals.

Recruitment and Notification

The SCT shall notify:

- Employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities during the assessment or selection process.
- Job applicants selected to participate in an assessment or selection process relating to the materials or processes to be used that:
 - Accommodations are available upon request.
 - Accommodations will take into consideration the applicant's disability.
 - Accommodations will be based on consultation between the employer and applicant.
- Successful applicants about SCT policies and any other additional supports pertaining to the accommodation of employees with disabilities.

Accessible Formats and Supports

The SCT will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication job supports, upon request.

St Catharines Transit Commission Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Workplace Emergency Information

The SCT will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, upon request.

Accommodation Plans

The SCT will develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

Return to Work

The SCT will develop and have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

Performance Management, Career development, Redeployment

The SCT's performance management will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

The SCT's career development/advancement or redeployment will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

Part IV: Transportation Requirements

Availability of Information on Accessibility Equipment

The SCT will provide information on the accessibility features of its conventional and specialized transit services to the public, and will make this information available in an accessible format upon request.

Non-Functional Accessibility Equipment

In the event of non-functioning accessibility equipment on any of its vehicles, the SCT will provide an equivalent service to customers who rely on the accessibility equipment and service. The SCT will repair the accessibility equipment in a timely manner.

St Catharines Transit Commission Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Accessibility Training

The SCT will provide accessibility training to all conventional and specialized transit employees and volunteers. Training material shall include:

- The safe use of accessibility equipment and features.
- Acceptable modifications to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails.
- Public transit emergency response procedures that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.

Training records are maintained including training dates for each employee.

Public Transit Emergency Preparedness and Response Policies

The SCT shall establish emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities, and shall make these policies available to the public and in an accessible format upon request.

Fares - Support Persons

The SCT will not require a support person to pay a fare when that support person is needed to provide assistance to a person with a disability while travelling on its conventional or specialized transit. It is the responsibility of the person with the disability to identify their need for a support person.

Accessibility Plan - Conventional and Specialized Services

The SCT shall develop an accessibility plan which addresses both Conventional and Specialized services. The Plan shall identify the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback and shall be reviewed once per year at a public meeting, by persons with disabilities. The Plan will also identify the procedure for estimating demand for specialized services and ways to reduce waiting times for specialized services.

St Catharines Transit Commission

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Conventional Transit Services, General Requirements

When providing conventional transit services the SCT shall ensure the following services are being offered, upon request, and that information related to those services is available in an accessible format upon request.

- Deploy lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates upon the request of the person with a disability.
- Ensure that adequate time is provided to persons with disabilities to safely board, be secured and de-board transportation vehicles and that assistance be provided, upon request, for these activities.
- Assist with safe and careful storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices used by person with disabilities.
- Allow a person with a disability to travel with a medical aid without additional charge.

Fares

The SCT will not require persons with disabilities, using conventional transit services, to pay a higher fare than persons without disabilities.

Transit Stops

The SCT will ensure that persons with disabilities can board and de-board its conventional transit vehicles in a safe location, other than the designated transit stop, if the designated stop is deemed to be inaccessible, and the safe location is on the same route. When identifying a safe location, the SCT shall take into consideration the preferences provided by persons with disabilities. The SCT will develop a process from promptly reporting, to a designated authority, when a transit stop is temporarily inaccessible or when a temporary barrier exists.

Storage of Mobility Aids

The SCT will ensure that all mobility aids and mobility assistive devices are safely stored in the passenger compartment of its conventional transit vehicles when feasible, and be placed within easy reach of the person with a disability who uses the mobility aid or mobility assistive device when feasible. The SCT will not charge a fee for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.

St Catharines Transit Commission Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Priority Seating

The SCT will ensure that clearly marked priority seating for persons with disabilities is available on all of its conventional transit vehicles. This seating will be located in close proximity to the front entrance, and be identifiable through accessible signage.

Service Disruptions

In the event of a temporary service or route disruption, when the commencement of the disruption is known, the SCT will inform the public of the disruption, route detours, and communicate alternate accessible transportation services available.

Pre-boarding Announcements

The SCT shall, upon request, provide verbal pre-boarding announcements of routes, directions, destination, and next major intersection.

On-board Announcements

The SCT will provide electronic audible verbal announcements, on all of its conventional transit vehicles, of all destination points or available route stops, while the vehicle is on route or being operated.

Conventional Transit Technical Requirements

In accordance with sections 53 through 61 (and subject to section 40) of the IARS, the SCT will adhere to the technical requirements for transportation vehicles, specifically:

- Grab bars
- Floor and carpeted surfaces
- Allocated mobility and spaces
- Stop-requests and emergency response controls
- Lighting features
- Signage
- Lifting devices
- Steps
- Indicators and alarms

Specialized Transit Requirements, Categories of Eligibility

The SCT will maintain three categories of eligibility to qualify for specialized transportation services; unconditional, temporary and conditional eligibility, as defined in Regulation 63.

St Catharines Transit Commission

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Eligibility Application Process

The SCT will develop an application process for determining eligibility for its specialized transit services. This process shall include criteria for applying on emergency or compassionate grounds, be reviewed on an annual basis, and shall not charge a fee for persons with disabilities applying to use this service.

Fare Parity

The SCT will ensure that the same fare structure is being used for both conventional and specialized transit services. Furthermore, the SCT will ensure that the same payment options are available for both conventional and specialized transit services.

Visitors

The SCT will incorporate criteria related to visitors into its eligibility process for specialized transit services, and provide the service to visitors if the visitor provides proof that they are eligible for specialized transit services within the jurisdiction for which they reside, or meet the eligibility criteria established by the SCT.

Origin to Destination Services

The SCT will provide origin to destination services within its service area that takes into consideration and accommodates the needs of persons with disabilities. This service shall apply to both specialized and accessible conventional transit services.

Hours of Service

The SCT will ensure that its specialized transit service has, at a minimum, the same hours and days of operation as its conventional transit services.

Bookings

The SCT will provide same day booking service to the extent that it is available and provide accessible means to accept reservations.

Trip Restrictions

The SCT will not restrict the availability of its specialized transit services to persons with disabilities by limiting the number of trips a person with a disability can request, or implement any policies or practice that unreasonably restricts the availability of its specialized transit services.

St Catharines Transit Commission Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Service Delays

On specialized transit services SCT will provide information on a service delay of 30 minutes or more when known before the trip begins.

Companions and Children

The SCT will allow companions of persons with disabilities to travel with the person, if space is available or does not deny service to another person with a disability, on its specialized transit service. Similarly, the SCT will allow children of the person with a disability to travel with the person if appropriate child safety restraints, if required, are available.

Duties of Municipalities: General

The SCT will assist the City in developing design criteria for the construction, renovation, or replacement of bus stop areas and subsequent amenities.

Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation – 191/11
Compliance Timeframes for Large Public Sector and Transportation Providers

Year	General	Information & Communications	Employment	Transportation
2011 (July)	Number, refers to the Section number within the IASR			35 – Non Functioning Equipment 39 – Transition Existing Contracts 40 – Transition Existing Vehicles 46 – Fares 48 – Storage of Mobility Aids 51 – Pre-boarding Announcement 52 – On-board Announcements 68 – Origin to Destination Services
2012 (Jan 1)		13 – Emergency Procedures	27 – Workplace Emergency	34 – Availability of Equipment 37 – Emergency Preparedness 44 – General Responsibilities 47 – Transit Stops 48 – Storage of Mobility Aids 49 – Courtesy Seating 74 – Companions 80 – Taxi cabs
2013 (Jan. 1)	3 - Accessibility Policies 4 - Accessibility Plans 5 – Procurement 6 - Kiosks	19 – Public Libraries		41 – Accessibility Plans – Conventional 42 – Accessibility Plans – Specialized 43 – Accessibility Plans – both 45 – Alternative Methods of Transportation 50 – Service Disruptions 53 – Grab Bars 54 – Floors 55 – Allocated Spaces 56 – Stop Requests 57 – Lighting 58 – Signage 59 – Lifting Devices 60 – Steps 61 – Indicators 62 – Accessible Rail Cars 66 – Fare Parity (single provider) 67 – Visitors Policy 69 – Coordinated Services 70 – Hours of Service (single provider) 73 – Service Delays 78 – Accessible Stops and Shelters

Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation – 191/11 Compliance Timeframes for Large Public Sector and Transportation Providers				
Year	General	Information & Communications	Employment	Transportation
2014 (Jan. 1)	7 - Training	11 – Feedback 14 – Websites	22 – Recruitment 23 – Selection Process 24 – Notice to Applicants 25 – Informing Employees 26 – Accessible Formats 28 – Accommodation Plans 29 – Return to Work 30 – Performance Mgmt 31 – Career Development 32 – Redeployment	36 – Training 38 – Fares 64 – Eligibility Process 65 – Emergency Eligibility 71 – Booking Windows 72 – Trip Restrictions
2015 (Jan. 1)		12 – Accessible Formats 18 – Libraries of Educational Institutions		
2017 (Jan. 1)				63 – Eligibility Criteria 66 – Fare Parity (multi-level) 70 – Hours of Service (multi-level)
2021 (Jan. 1)		14 – Websites		



CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES

Corporate Report

Report from Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities

Date of Report: November 30, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: RCS-689-2012 **File:** 68.31.179, 68.32.99

Subject: Seasonal Ice Rink for Montebello Park

Recommendation

That Council deny the request for a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park; and

That the Clerk be directed to make the necessary notifications. FORTHWITH

Summary

In 2007, Council received a proposal for an artificial ice rink (AIR) in Montebello Park from Mr. Blain Chiavarini. In response to this, staff met with Mr. Chiavarini and a supplier of AIRs and contacted other municipalities in southern Ontario that operate AIRs and the Rink on the Brink in an attempt to provide Council with a report on all aspects of a temporary ice rink.

On September 24, 2012, staff reported to Council that the total capital cost of constructing an AIR in Montebello Park, including equipment, is estimated to be between \$1.2 million and \$1.6 million. That evening Mr. Chiavarini addressed Council to communicate his concerns regarding the capital costs outlined within the report. This report addresses these concerns.

Background

On December 17, 2007, Council received a presentation by Mr. Blain Chiavarini respecting a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park. During his presentation Mr. Chiavarini advised the members of Council that:

- Montebello Park is an ideal location as a gateway to the downtown and would attract families and enhance the quality of life for citizens and would be positive for businesses;
- The cost of a portable, seasonal rink system would be approximately \$250,000, and that Mr. Chiavarini would commit to raising \$125,000;
- There would be annual maintenance costs and City supervision required. Mr. Chiavarini proposed that costs could be offset by revenue generating opportunities and corporate sponsorship.

At its meeting on June 11, 2012, Council received a report from staff that explored the concept of developing a seasonal, outdoor ice rink in Montebello Park and seven other downtown locations (Appendix 1). The report found that, although an ice rink would deliver positive benefits related to revitalization and recreation, the sites proposed cannot support the technical and amenity requirements of a seasonal ice rink without significant capital expenditures. As such, the report concluded that a seasonal ice rink was not recommended at this time; however, such a rink should be a consideration for future infrastructure projects in the downtown.

At its meeting on September 24, 2012, Council received a second report from staff that explored all aspects for a temporary ice rink; including capital and operational costs; possibilities for generating revenue; options for funding from both levels of government; the economic impact for locations; and the impact on the neighbourhood (Appendix 2). The report presented that the total project cost of constructing an AIR in Montebello Park is estimated to be between \$1.2 Million to \$1.6 Million. The overall impact on the City's annual operating budget is estimated to be \$315,000. Possibilities for revenue generation include sponsorship and admission fees or donations. Unfortunately at this time there are no opportunities for funding from either the federal or provincial government. Further, the report reiterated the concern that an AIR will present implications for park operations throughout the remainder of the year and has the potential to impact the annual festivals held in Montebello Park.

That evening, Mr. Chiavarini made a second presentation to Council which questioned the validity of the numbers presented within the staff report. Following discussion of the staff report and Mr. Chiavarini's presentation Council referred the report back to staff to answer Mr. Chiavarini's questions.

On September 27, 2012, staff met with Mr. Chiavarini to discuss a complete breakdown of the costs included in the estimate for an AIR at Montebello Park as well as the sources of these estimates. During this meeting Mr. Chiavarini also asked staff to explore the option of constructing a concrete pad in Montebello Park as a way to mitigate some of the concerns of annual damage to the lawn area. As Council requested that staff "answer the questions of the presenter" this option was explored and is discussed within this report.

Report

Process used to produce and verify capital cost estimate

The capital cost of constructing an AIR in Montebello Park, including equipment, is estimated to be \$1.2 to \$1.6 Million. This cost was calculated by identifying all components that would be included in construction and either obtaining quotes on these items from suppliers or by pulling actual tender costs from past projects with similar components. This estimate was then compared to a 2011 report by the City of Halifax which found the capital costs of AIRs is approximately \$1 to \$2 million depending upon whether the rink is designed to be a regional destination with dedicated amenities or a neighbourhood rink relying upon existing amenities at

nearby recreation facilities. The estimates prepared by staff are consistent with their findings.

Breakdown and discussion of AIR capital costs

a) Preparation of the lawn area: \$310,000 - \$410,000

As discussed within the previous reports the maximum change in elevation permitted for an AIR is 1.5 to 2 inches over the entire surface of the rink. Unfortunately the lawn of Montebello Park slopes away from the pavilion/stage area towards the outer perimeter of the park to such an extent that the lawn area would need to be regraded to support an AIR. Creating a flat turf area in the central area of the park, where a number of annual festivals take place, would lead to drainage issues, and therefore the regrading would need to be accompanied by an underground drainage system and a connection to the storm sewer. Through this construction the existing irrigation system would need to be repaired or replaced (depending on the extent of underground work) and new electrical lines would be installed to power lights around the rink. These costs are specific to the work required for Montebello Park and would vary widely if construction in other locations were considered.

Mr. Chiavarini received a quote of \$35,000 from a local firm to regrade the lawn area; however, this estimate does not include any irrigation or electrical work, which has been included in staff's estimate. As discussed earlier, this area of Montebello Park is used extensively by three annual festivals and the festival organizers and the public have a high expectation of the lawn. Staff have concerns that the drainage system proposed for the \$35,000 quotation will not be sufficient to prevent ponding and general drainage issues which could impact these festivals. Despite this, staff agreed to re-examine the estimates initially calculated.

There may be a possibility to reduce the capital costs of preparing the lawn area by up to \$100,000 by exploring different options for the rink's orientation and location within the park. These types of decisions would typically be explored later in a project timeline, such as during the design stage. At this stage it is believed that the rink location which would result in the lowest costs for preparing the lawn area would likely impact the rink's operation. For example, through a site visit and discussions with a supplier of the refrigeration equipment a few preferred locations for the equipment were identified in a central area of the park. These locations would maximize the setback from neighbouring residences and reduce the visibility of the equipment from passersby and park users. It is believed that the rink location that has the lowest costs for lawn preparation is also the furthest from the preferred refrigeration equipment locations. As such, the refrigeration equipment would either need to be located closer to residences in a more visible area of the park (would be screened with wood-board fencing), or could remain in one of the preferred locations. The latter would require trenching of the equipment lines through the lawn area and this distance has the potential to reduce the equipment's efficiency. Unfortunately, at this time staff are unable to quantify the extent of the efficiency reductions or any impacts this could have on operating costs and potential rink closures due to weather.

If an AIR is approved for Montebello Park, these options will be explored through the design phases of the project and evaluated for their impacts on rink users and operations. This being said staff caution that preparation of the lawn area could still cost up to \$410,000, and do not believe that this work will ever be as low as the \$35,000 proposed, due to the low tolerance of ponding in this area of Montebello Park. As discussed later in the report staff also have concerns of reducing the capital cost estimate to obtain Council approval, only to later realize that additional funds are required to complete the project.

b) Ice surface and refrigeration equipment: \$170,000

This includes a 15 metres by 36 metres (50 feet by 118 feet) surface which the ice is built on, the refrigeration equipment, and an insulating cover to provide separation between the grass and ice with hopes of reducing the rink's impact on the turf. The estimate for these items is lower than those presented by Mr. Chiavarini in 2007 (\$250,000) as the size of the originally proposed ice rink would either result in the seasonal closure of some of the pedestrian access routes through the park or the removal of the trees along the historic Linden Walkway, one of the most prominent features in the park. A discussion of size and capacity details can be found in the September 24, 2012 report (Appendix 2).

Through discussions with Mr. Chiavarini and his presentation to Council no questions were raised about the estimate for this item.

c) Caretaker's shed and washrooms: \$170,000 - \$445,000

The existing caretaker's shed and washroom are not winterized, and therefore cannot support the required operations. The approach taken with the caretaker's shed has a large impact on the capital costs and is the main difference between the low and high cost estimates. The two estimates stem from the fact that while the building can be retrofitted to meet the needs of an AIR it is inefficient and was never intended to house this type of activity. The low cost estimate includes a retrofit of the existing caretakers shed to insulate and re-side the building, and install electric heat. The high cost estimate includes demolition of the caretaker's shed and washroom facilities and construction of new climate controlled building for washrooms, staff and equipment storage. Both estimates include required items such as a winterized water supply (which would also provide water for the ice surface) and a hot water source.

Through discussions with Mr. Chiavarini and his presentation to Council no questions were raised about the estimate for this item.

d) Other Items: \$350,000 - \$475,000

A small portion of this budget item is for decking and rubber mats for the perimeter of the ice rink, perimeter fencing, a noise screen for the refrigeration equipment, and a rink railing which would delineate the edge of the ice surface and assists beginning skaters and individuals with disabilities. Mr. Chiavarini presented an \$8,000 estimate for a chain link fence, while staff calculated this item to be \$9,870. The difference between these items is relatively minor and is likely the result of

anticipating different lengths of fence. A second fence estimate of \$2,500 was provided by Mr. Chiavarini at the September 27, 2012 meeting with staff. Unfortunately this estimate is for a residential fence and does not meet the standard specifications which are used for constructing fences on City property. Based on discussions with Mr. Chiavarini the estimate for rubber decking was received from the same sources and any differences would be a result of the amount of decking requested. An estimate as detailed as the exact amount of rubber decking required is again something that would typically be determined through the design phase when the exact rink location, layout and amenities are confirmed.

The majority of the estimate for “other items” is attributed to contingencies and inflation which are very typical budgetary tools that should be included in any construction budget. The estimate includes a 10% construction contingency for unexpected construction costs; and a 15% design contingency, which includes an allowance for design work and accounts for unanticipated elements at this early stage, since the project has not been fully designed. Both of these types of contingencies are common practice and when used properly can provide a safeguard for completing projects on budget.

Further, the project estimate is based on current cost data for its various components. As such, an escalation contingency was used to account for inflation to reflect the anticipated increase in pricing between when the estimate was prepared and when the contract would be awarded. Escalation is based on a projected annual inflation of 3%. As discussed within the report to Council on September 24, 2012, the estimate assumed a construction year of 2014. If the project were to be considered for the 2013 Capital Budget, its budget would range from \$1,160,000 to \$1,510,000.

Comprehensive estimate to reduce the risk of cost overruns

One of the reasons Mr. Chiavarini has proposed Montebello Park as an ideal location for an ice rink is he feels the facility would provide a gateway to the downtown, attract families, enhance the quality of life for citizens, and be positive for businesses. In order for these spin-offs to be realized an AIR would need to meet the expectations of residents and visitors. An AIR in Montebello Park would be operated by the City, open to the public and located in one of the City’s premier destination parks. Although many people have created backyard rinks over the seasons, residents will have higher expectations of a public facility and the rink would have different liability concerns. These expectations and concerns must be addressed through the rinks construction and operation, and reflected in the approved budget.

The budget presented in the September 24, 2012 report to Council, and expanded upon within this report, is comprehensive in an attempt to include as many components as can be envisioned at this early stage of a project. If Council wishes to pursue an AIR in Montebello Park the approved budget should be comprehensive. If the budget is not sufficient, it is likely that there will be costly overruns during the design, construction and/or operation phases, and/or the end

result will be a facility which does not meet the expectations of the public and is poorly attended.

Construction of a concrete pad

Most AIRs are installed on hard-surfaced areas such as water features, parking lots, tennis courts, or basketball courts. Staff have concerns that an AIR installed on an actively used turf area will present implications for turf reinstatement and park operations throughout the remainder of the year. Mr. Chiavarini asked staff to explore the option of constructing a concrete pad in Montebello Park which would hold an AIR and mitigate some of the concerns over the annual damage to the lawn area. It is anticipated that the construction of a concrete pad would result in a \$50,000 reduction in the estimated capital costs as the cost of pouring the pad would be off-set by the savings of a simplified drainage system.

If a concrete pad were to be constructed, the City would have the opportunity to install a rainwater collection system. This system could collect water from the concrete pad to be reused within the park for things such as irrigation, reducing the park's reliance on the municipal water system, and potentially decreasing long-term operating costs. Rainwater collection systems have been used on other recent infrastructure projects, such as the Aquatic Centre, the Carlisle St. Parking Garage, and the new Fire Hall. This estimated increase on the capital budget would be an additional \$150,000.

Despite the potential cost reduction, the construction of a concrete pad is not recommended and was not previously explored in-depth by staff due to the permanent impact it would have on Montebello Park. Montebello Park is one of St. Catharines' premier parks and is the main open space in downtown; its natural setting acts as an oasis from the limited open space in the surrounding neighbourhoods. The lawn area of Montebello Park is used throughout the year by people who live and work nearby for leisure activities such as picnics and passive recreation such as Frisbee and yoga. While Montebello Park has important heritage features, it was the opinion of the St. Catharines Heritage Committee that a concrete pad would "not negatively impact the long-term heritage value of Montebello Park". Staff is of the opinion, however that the construction of a concrete pad in the lawn area would impact the function and use of this area and the overall image of Montebello Park.

Due to the permanence of a concrete pad staff consulted with the organizers of the three main annual festivals which occur in Montebello Park. The Niagara Folk Arts stated that "[t]he construction of a concrete pad...would have a negative impact on the Folk Arts Festival. The areas indicated are used by families who attend the festival to set up lawn chairs or blankets on the grass to enjoy food and entertainment and a concrete pad would not be amenable to that. It would also detract from the venue in general as a relaxing park-like setting for an outdoor festival. The Niagara Grape and Wine Festival stated that "[t]he proposal would impact the current way we stage our event, the ambience of Montebello Park, impact our exhibitors, customers etc. Whether the impact is positive or negative it requires more time to discuss, assess and study." Similarly, the Rotary Club of St.

Catharines wrote that; "we do believe that the proposed alteration would have a significant impact on Ribfest operations, and therefore the revenues/profit we are able to generate and return to the community. That said, given the amount of time we were afforded for response, and the lack of specific detail, we are unable to quantify the amount of impact."

Based on the above responses and the impact on Montebello Park's natural setting, staff do not suggest constructing a concrete pad to accommodate an AIR. Staff suggest that if an AIR is approved for Montebello Park that further consultation with the main festival organizers be undertaken to evaluate the impact that any permanent changes or features would have on festival operations and to determine the course of action which would minimize these impacts. Unfortunately, at this stage we are unable to provide sufficient information for the festival operators to make an informed decision as the extent of any changes would not be known until the detailed design stage.

Financial Implications

The 2012 Capital Budget and Four Year Forecast includes numerous infrastructure projects pertaining to Recreation and Community Services. The forecast which was approved June 11, 2012 did not include an AIR project. Should Council recommend that this project be included in the 2013 Capital Budget, Staff would re-evaluate the capital projections to ensure that the projects can be accommodated. With the number of capital projects in the forecast there is very little room for additional projects as existing infrastructure programs must also be maintained.

The 2001 Capital Budget approved \$250,000 towards a skating path in Lakeside Park. The Lakeside Park Community Group along with private donors funded over \$72,000 towards studies and conceptual design plans for the Lakeside Park site, however no movement has occurred since that time.

During his presentation in 2007, Mr. Chiavarini made a commitment to raise \$125,000 towards the construction of an AIR in Montebello Park, which he reaffirmed to Council on September 24, 2012. Funding opportunities include corporate or private citizen sponsorship, such as facility and amenity naming rights, donations and advertisement. The estimates presented do not account for sponsorship, fundraising or in-kind donations which would off-set some of the capital costs. If approved, fundraising for an AIR in Montebello Park would be competing with other City fundraising initiatives in the downtown such as the Spectator Facility and Performing Arts Centre.

Conclusion

This report provides a response to the questions asked by Mr. Chiavarini at both the September 24, 2012 Council meeting and a meeting with staff on September 27, 2012 in regards to the capital cost estimate for an AIR at Montebello Park. Staff still estimate that the total cost of constructing an AIR in Montebello Park, including equipment, is between \$1.2 million and \$1.6 million. Although some cost savings may be realized through the design phase, staff caution that underestimating the budget could result in costly overruns during the design, construction and/or

operation phases, and/or the end result will be a facility which does not meet the expectations of the public and is poorly attended. Separate from the discussions on the capital costs there are outstanding concerns that an AIR will present implications for park operations throughout the remainder of the year and has the potential to impact the annual festivals held in Montebello Park. For this reason it is not recommended that Council approve the request for a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park.

Notification

It is in order to advise Mr. Blain Chiavarini.

Submitted by:

Jim Benson
Assistant Director/Manager of Parks & Facilities

Prepared by:

Michael Patterson
Process Review Analyst

Kristen Sullivan
Project and Development Planner

Approved by:

Rick Lane, R.D.M.R.
Director of Recreation & Community Services

Baraniuk / Orlando has already been deferred and funds for this project will be budgeted in the future.

The City Treasurer also has confirmed that enough funds are available in the Water Budget, P11-103 MSI Linwell Road for completion of the ongoing construction and the transfer of \$33,965 to P09-107 MSI Bunting Road.

Item No. 343

Report from Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities

Date of Report: June 1, 2012

File: 68.31.179, 68.32.99

Subject: Seasonal Ice Rink for Montebello Park/Other Downtown Locations

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT

That Council refer the report back to staff on all aspects for a temporary ice rink; including Capital and Operational costs; possibilities for generating revenue; options for funding from both levels of government; the economic impact for locations; the impact on the neighbourhood; and

That Council direct staff to enter into discussions with Blain Chiavarini, Engineers, staff and the Mayor and consult with Rink on the Brink facilitators; and

That the report be presented to Council for consideration September 24, 2012.

MOTION TO REFER CARRIED

Recommendation

That Council receive the report for information purposes; and

That the Clerk be directed to make the necessary notifications.

Summary

This report explores the concept of developing a seasonal, outdoor ice rink in Montebello Park and seven other downtown locations. An ice rink would deliver positive benefits related to revitalization and recreation. Staff cannot support the technical and amenity requirements of a seasonal ice rink at these sites, without significant capital expenditures. As such, a seasonal ice rink is not recommended at this time. Instead it should be considered with future infrastructure projects in the downtown.

Background

At its meeting on December 17, 2007, Council approved the following motion, by Councillor Elliott, St. Patrick's Ward:

"That staff be directed to report on all aspects of the temporary ice rink project including costs and possibilities for generating revenue, funding available from the federal, provincial and regional levels of government, corporate sponsorships, and the impact on the neighbourhood."

Further, staff were asked to investigate the feasibility of a similar facility in other downtown locations, including James Street between King Street and Church Street.

This motion was in response to a presentation made by Mr. Blain Chiavarini respecting a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park. During his presentation Mr. Chiavarini advised the members of Council that:

- Montebello Park is an ideal location as a gateway to the downtown and would attract families and enhance the quality of life for citizens, and would be positive for businesses;
- The cost of a portable, seasonal rink system would be approximately \$250,000 and that he would commit to raising \$125,000;
- There would be annual maintenance costs and City supervision required. Mr. Chiavarini proposed that costs could be offset by revenue generating opportunities and corporate sponsorship.

At their February 4, 2008 capital planning session, Council established an outdoor ice rink as a capital priority in the minor category (under \$2 million) along with waterplay facilities, outdoor soccer fields and a multi-use synthetic field.

This report deals with the viability of constructing a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park and six other sites in the downtown core. Staff did not pursue an in-depth analysis of “costs and possibilities for generating revenue, funding available from the federal, provincial and regional levels of government, corporate sponsorships, and the impact on the neighbourhood” as staff are recommending that Montebello Park and the other sites proposed are not able to accommodate an outdoor ice rink.

Report

Staff acknowledge that an outdoor ice rink, particularly in the downtown core would deliver positive benefits related to revitalization and recreational opportunities. Despite these benefits, staff are suggesting that due to site specific limitations the proposed locations are not ideal for the construction of seasonal outdoor ice surfaces.

Montebello Park is not a viable location for a seasonal ice rink

Montebello Park is an existing historic park located in the Queen St. Heritage District in downtown St. Catharines. It is surrounded by both commercial and residential uses. The park contains a variety of passive park amenities including a playground, rose garden, open lawn area and walkways, pavilion, band shell and summer service buildings. Although a seasonal ice rink would extend the use of the park into the winter season, it would also present implications for park operations throughout the year and may have an impact on the surrounding neighbourhood.

Site restoration of Montebello Park may interfere with the festivals

Complete rehabilitation of the lawn area occurs three times a year, following the Folk Arts Festival in May, Rib Fest in August, and the Grape and Wine Festival in September. As it is, these events place considerable stress on the lawn and the addition of a seasonal ice rink would further reduce its health and vigour and impact the carrying capacity of the park. The amount of time between the start of the growing season for the seeding required after the removal of a seasonal ice rink and the Folk Arts Festival is insufficient to ensure complete germination and coverage. This means that the area proposed for the rink may not be available in time for the Folk Arts Festival or any other park permits.

Parking demand and noise would impact neighbourhood

The limited parking and close proximity to residential homes would create operational and comfort concerns for existing homeowners. Custom Ice Rinks, the manufacturer of one of the proposed ice rink packages, indicated that there is a constant level of noise associated with the chillers for the rink. Noise and parking complaints are often received from residents regarding the annual festivals held in

Montebello Park and would be expected for a facility that creates a disruption for upwards of four months a year through the winter.

Other sites in the downtown core are not viable alternatives

In addition to Montebello Park, Council requested that staff investigate the viability of constructing a seasonal ice rink in other locations in the downtown core. Staff assessed six public sites including:

- James Street between King and Church
- Library courtyard
- Library upper lawn
- City Hall parking lot at James St. entrance
- Market Square building
- Market Square parking lot

While many of these sites would be better suited than Montebello Park from the perspective of downtown revitalization, based on site inventories, necessary conditions, circulation patterns, and safety and fire routes; they are not viable alternatives for an ice rink in their current configuration. None of these sites (including Montebello Park) are capable of supporting the technical requirements of a seasonal ice rink, or the associated amenities, without a significant capital expenditure.

Outdoor ice rink should be considered with future proposals, such as a civic square

A number of seasonal ice rinks have been constructed in communities across Southern Ontario. It should be noted however that the majority of these ice rinks were integrated into the building of new facilities. These facilities have been designed for the operation of an ice rink, to house all the required equipment, and to provide adequate space for skating and other public events, without the costly retrofitting that is required to construct an ice rink in an existing facility or park. As such, it is suggested that an outdoor ice rink should be considered with future infrastructure projects in the downtown, such as the development of a civic square.

Financial Implications

Staff caution that the establishment of an outdoor ice rink in the downtown core could have greater resource implications than outlined in the December 17, 2007 proposal. Each of the downtown locations explored would require expensive alterations and retrofitting in order to accommodate additional features required for the safe and efficient operation of an ice rink. Further, challenges associated with servicing, operation and maintenance of a seasonal ice rink could impede the City's ability to deliver other recreational amenities in the community.

Notification

It is in order to advise Blain Chiavarini.

Councillor Stack and Councillor Washuta left Council Chambers and returned after the following report from Recreation and Community Services on the Analysis of 2012 Approved Rates and Fees for Sports Fields.

pricing provided by the contractor is favorable and do not believe that retendering this work would be beneficial.

There are sufficient funds in the project budget (2012 Road and Drainage Program – Annual Budget) to accommodate the additional costs.

Item No. 511

Report from Recreation & Community Services, Parks and Facilities

Date of Report: September 4, 2012

File: 68.31.179, 68.32.99

Subject: Seasonal Ice Rink for Montebello Park

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR HARRIS

That Council refer the report back to staff to answer the questions of the presenter, Blain Chiavarini, and report back to Council on October 15, 2012.

MOTION TO REFER CARRIED FORTHWITH

Recommendation

That Council deny the request for a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park; and

That the Clerk be directed to make the necessary notifications. FORTHWITH

Summary

Council has received a proposal for an artificial ice rink (AIR) in Montebello Park from Mr. Blain Chiavarini. In response to this, staff met with Mr. Chiavarini and suppliers of AIRs and contacted other municipalities in southern Ontario that operate AIRs and the Rink on the Brink in an attempt to provide Council with a report on all aspects of a temporary ice rink.

The total project cost of constructing an AIR in Montebello Park is estimated to be between \$1.2 million to \$1.6 million. The overall impact on the City's annual operating budget is estimated to be \$315,000. Possibilities for revenue generation include sponsorship and admission fees or donations. Unfortunately, at this time, there are no opportunities for funding from either the federal or provincial government.

In addition to these items, a significant concern is that an AIR will present implications for park operations throughout the remainder of the year and has the potential to impact the annual festivals held in Montebello Park. As such, it is not recommended that Council approve the request for a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park.

Background

On December 17, 2007, Council received a presentation made by Mr. Blain Chiavarini respecting a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park. During his presentation Mr. Chiavarini advised the members of Council that:

- Montebello Park is an ideal location as a gateway to the downtown and would attract families and enhance the quality of life for citizens and would be positive for businesses;

- The cost of a portable, seasonal rink system would be approximately \$250,000, and that he would commit to raising \$125,000;
- There would be annual maintenance costs and City supervision required. Mr. Chiavarini proposed that costs could be offset by revenue generating opportunities and corporate sponsorship.

At its meeting on June 11, 2012, Council received a report from staff that explored the concept of developing a seasonal, outdoor ice rink in Montebello Park and seven other downtown locations. The report found that, although an ice rink would deliver positive benefits related to revitalization and recreation, the sites proposed cannot support the technical and amenity requirements of a seasonal ice rink without significant capital expenditures. As such, the report concluded that a seasonal ice rink was not recommended at this time, however, such a rink should be a consideration for future infrastructure projects in the downtown.

Following discussion of the staff report on June 11, 2012, Council approved the following motion:

“That Council refer the report back to staff on all aspects for a temporary ice rink; including Capital and Operational costs; possibilities for generating revenue; options for funding from both levels of government; the economic impact for locations; the impact on the neighbourhood; and

That Council direct staff to enter into discussions with Blain Chiavarini, Engineers, staff and the Mayor and consult with Rink on the Brink facilitators; and

That the report be presented to Council for consideration on September 24, 2012.”

Report

Several southern Ontario communities with outdoor artificial ice rinks (AIRs) were contacted to complete this report including Burlington, Brampton, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener, London, and Waterloo. Within the Niagara Region, the Towns of Grimsby and Beamsville operate AIRs, while the Rink on the Brink in Niagara Falls is operated by the Winter Festival of Lights; and each was consulted. Toronto has the largest inventory of outdoor refrigerated ice skating rinks in the world, operating 63 AIRs in 49 locations, and the City of Welland operates a rink at City Hall. Several attempts were made to obtain information from the City of Toronto and the City of Welland on their operations, however, calls were not returned. The City of Niagara Falls had a small outdoor rink in front of City Hall which was operated and paid for by the Downtown Business Association; however, the rink was short-lived and closed after only a few seasons as it was rarely used by the public and considered by the Association to be too expensive to operate.

Capital Costs

It is estimated that the capital costs of constructing an AIR in Montebello Park would range from \$1.1 to \$1.5 million. The total project cost, including equipment, is estimated to be \$1.2 to \$1.6 million. This is in line with a 2011 report by the City of Halifax which found the capital construction costs of AIRs is approximately \$1 to \$2 million depending upon whether the rink is designed to be a regional destination with dedicated amenities or a neighbourhood rink relying upon existing amenities at nearby recreation facilities. The project costs presented within this report do not include any furniture or amenities such as benches, which have been assumed to be relocated from other parks which are not in operation during the winter months.

Most of the municipalities surveyed constructed their AIRs in conjunction with a major capital project, often with the building of a new city hall, civic or market area, or tourist attraction. This approach provides the opportunity to include plans for an AIR and all required infrastructure from the early development stages. This has shown to be more successful because the site can be designed to meet the needs of the ice rink rather than trying to retrofit an existing site which often cannot accommodate all the desired amenities and technical requirements without greater costs.

The capital costs for constructing an AIR in Montebello Park can be broken down into four main areas:

a) Preparation of the lawn area **\$410,000**

The maximum change in elevation permitted for an AIR is 1.5 to 2 inches over the entire surface of the rink. Unfortunately, the lawn of Montebello Park slopes away from the pavilion/stage area towards the outer perimeter of the park to such an extent that the lawn area would need to be regraded to support an AIR. Creating a flat turf area in the central area of the park where a number of annual festivals take place would lead to drainage issues, and therefore, the regrading of the lawn area would need to be accompanied by an underground drainage system. Through this construction, the existing irrigation system would need to be repaired or replaced (depending on the extent of underground work) and new electrical lines would be installed to power lights around the rink. These costs are specific to the work required for Montebello Park and would vary widely if construction in other locations were considered.

b) Ice surface and refrigeration equipment **\$170,000**

This includes a 15 metre by 36 metre (50 foot by 118 foot) surface which the ice is built on, the refrigeration equipment, and an insulating cover to provide separation between the grass and ice thus reducing the rink's impact on turf.

c) Caretaker's Shed and Washrooms **\$170,000 - \$445,000**

The caretaker's shed and washroom are not winterized, and therefore, cannot support the required operations. The approach taken with the caretaker's shed has a large impact on the capital costs and is the main difference between the low and high cost estimates. The two estimates stem from the fact that, while the building can be retrofitted to meet the needs of an AIR, it is inefficient and was never intended to house this type of activity. The low cost estimate includes a retrofit of the existing caretakers shed to insulate and re-side the building and install electric heat. The high cost estimate includes demolition of the caretaker's shed and washroom facilities and construction of new climate controlled building for washrooms, staff and equipment storage. Both estimates include required items such as a winterized water supply and hot water source.

d) Other Items **\$350,000 - \$475,000**

This includes items such as decking and rubber mats for the perimeter of the ice rink, a noise screen for the refrigeration equipment, inflation to a construction year of 2014, and contingencies. Preliminary discussions with the City's insurance provider indicate that fencing may be required to secure the site while not being monitored by staff, the cost of which has been included in this item.

Annual Operating Costs

It is estimated that it would cost \$180,000 - \$185,000 per season to operate an AIR in Montebello Park. This is based on full-time and part-time staff requirements, utility costs, equipment operations, and general building and maintenance costs for a 15 metre by 36 metre (50 foot by 118 foot) rink and would fluctuate depending on rink size.

In 2007, the City of Hamilton conducted a review of other municipalities and found that annual gross operating costs for AIRs ranged from \$45,000 to \$130,000 depending upon hours of operation, maintenance standards and staffing levels (values have been adjusted for inflation, but not considering increased in utility costs). This report included cities that experience per rink cost savings by operating multiple AIRs with a roaming Arena Maintenance crew and equipment, and some of the cities in the low range of the estimate employ standards which staff would not recommend for the maintenance of safe, public facility. The Rink on the Brink, Kingston and Kitchener all indicated their operating costs for the 2011/2012 season were roughly \$140,000.

Some of the main differences between the \$180,000 - \$185,000 estimate and the annual gross operating costs presented in the report noted above are a result of site specific issues such as an annual allowance for turf reinstatement (if required) and an annual rental fee of \$35,000 for temporary lighting. This lighting would be installed only for the skating season, preventing the need to permanently erect large poles in the middle of the lawn area of historic Montebello Park.

Further, this operating estimate of \$180,000 - \$185,000 only includes the costs associated with the set-up, operation and dismantling of an AIR. It does not account for the impact on staffing levels during the remainder of the year. Given that the current staff complement cannot be reallocated to this facility, three full-time Arena Maintenance staff would need to be hired with qualifications for operating an ice rink. As Arena Maintenance staff are unionized, they would need to be hired full-time; the cost of employing this staff for the remainder of the year would have an annual operating impact of an additional \$130,000.

Revenue Generation

Revenue generation opportunities at an outdoor rink are similar to those of the City's indoor ice facilities, which can be broken down into two broad categories: sponsorship and fees, as outlined below.

a) Sponsorship

Sponsorship includes facility and amenity naming rights, advertisement, or sponsored skating hours such as Tim Horton's free skate. All sponsorship and advertising opportunities would need to be identified through the design stage and the Schedule of Rates and Fees would need to be amended accordingly.

b) Admission Fees/Donations

Most of the municipalities surveyed do not charge for admission to outdoor rinks, while the Rink on the Brink charges \$7 for an adult and \$6 for children 12 and under. If it was decided that the City would charge for an outdoor ice rink, the rate charged for indoor public skating could be used or a new rate specific to the facility could be proposed for the Schedule of Rates and Fees.

In 2011, the St. Catharines Museum eliminated set fees for regular walk-in visitors with admission now being by donation. The main donation box is in a prominent location at the entrance and visitors are encouraged to contribute what they are able. Since the removal of admission fees, Museum visitation has increased substantially while revenues have remained consistent. By-donation use may be an option if an outdoor skating rink is constructed with on-site staff monitoring the donation box and removing it at the end of each day.

Options for Federal and Provincial Funding

Unfortunately, at this time, there are no opportunities for federal or provincial funding for an AIR. Upper level funding for recreation facilities and improvements are often announced sporadically and with short application timelines. For example, in July 2012, the Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund was announced by the Federal government. This program is intended to support repairs and improvements to existing infrastructure. At the August 13, 2012 Council meeting, Council approved an application to this program for Lakeside Park revitalization. The Lakeside Park project is included in the five year Capital forecast, and applying the Federal funding provides the opportunity to fast track much needed upgrades to a local landmark that is heavily utilized by both residents and tourists to the City.

Planning Considerations and Downtown Revitalization

In considering the feasibility and benefits of installing a new outdoor skating rink in Downtown St. Catharines, staff from Planning and Development Services would advise that such an installation would help to implement a number of the City's objectives with respect to community improvement and downtown revitalization. According to the Garden City Plan, the Downtown is intended to provide the highest concentration, density, range and mix of a number of uses within the municipality, including recreational uses (Section 11.1). Downtown presently has few

opportunities for outdoor active recreation, particularly in winter months. The installation of a skating rink would help to address this shortage.

The City's Creative Cluster Master Plan provides no specific direction with respect to a need for outdoor rinks, but the plan does speak generally about the need to improve outdoor amenities in this high density area, by providing outdoor gathering places (Section 7.1.7). The approved Downtown Urban Design Guidelines do however specifically state that the provision of winter outdoor recreational uses, such as skating rinks, are encouraged (Section 3.18).

This year, the City's Downtown Development and Revitalization Committee (DDRC) has focused on the importance of the public realm and community amenities with respect to improving quality of life and attracting investment to the Downtown. Members of the DDRC have specifically recognized an outdoor skating rink as a positive opportunity for the community and identified two desirable locations for a new rink: Montebello Park and James Street. While Montebello Park was recognized as an excellent physical setting for an outdoor rink, it was the opinion of many DDRC members that a skating rink located within a potential James Street civic square (between City Hall and the library) could have broader economic and community impact. Placing a rink in the James Street location would likely better facilitate spin-off business for other downtown establishments and special or business related events. A skating rink in either location would be a significant asset; however, the James street location could have broader impact.

Impact on the Neighbourhood

The limited parking supply and close proximity to residential homes has the potential to create operational and comfort concerns for homeowners. Noise and parking complaints are received from residents regarding the annual festivals held in Montebello Park and are also anticipated for a facility that operates for three months of the year.

A public consultation meeting should be held if Council wishes to further pursue the development of an AIR at Montebello Park, James Street, or any other location. It should be noted that many of the neighbourhood impacts will be difficult to gauge through this process. For example, it is difficult to demonstrate to the public the noise that will be created by the refrigeration equipment and to determine a parking rate for an unscheduled outdoor rink. Most municipalities surveyed indicated that the noise created by the refrigeration equipment has not been an issue, however, Kingston noted that they receive complaints from the public.

Construction, Design and Details

a) Size and Capacity

The original proposal to Council suggested that an outdoor ice surface at Montebello should have a capacity of 200 skaters in order to accommodate a substantial crowd for events such as New Year's. As a comparison, the public skating capacity of one of the NHL sized ice pads at Seymour-Hannah is 175 skaters. Based on the ice load capacity guidelines developed by the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, in order to achieve a capacity of 200 skaters, the surface would need to be 1,850 square meters (20,000 square feet). The construction of an ice surface this size would either result in the seasonal closure of some of the pedestrian access routes through the park or the removal of the trees along the historic Linden Walkway, one of the most prominent features in the park. In order to prevent these obstructions, if approved, the maximum ice surface recommended for Montebello Park is 15 metres by 36 metres (50 feet by 118 feet) (capacity of 59 skaters). The AIRs at the municipalities surveyed range in size from 6 metres by 18 metres (20 feet by 60 feet) to 30 metres by 34 metres (100 feet by 110 feet) with a common size being 18 metres by 37 metres (60 feet by 120 feet).

b) Activities

Most of the municipalities surveyed only allow public skating on their AIRs, with the exception of Toronto and Grimsby. Shiny hockey is permitted at over 30 outdoor rinks in Toronto, however, is often only offered at specific times of the day/week,

and at many of the rinks, the time slots are broken down by age and skill. Grimsby schedules their rink to alternate between two hours of public skate and two hours of hockey and cautioned that hockey presents opportunities for conflict when individuals of different age groups want to play at the same time (i.e. teenagers and young children).

Kingston allows adult 3-on-3 hockey and minor hockey association games during their annual winter festival only. Rink boards are installed specifically for these scheduled and advertised games, which are organized with specific rules, are often refereed, and are a draw for spectators. The Rink on the Brink allows private rentals of the facility when groups are allowed to play hockey or figure skate. It is anticipated that, if an AIR were to be approved for St. Catharines, the rink would be solely for public skating. Different design options such as a kidney bean shape or a hollow centre can be considered to reduce the attractiveness of playing hockey. If hockey/shinny were to be considered an option for an AIR in Montebello Park, the rink would require boards at an additional cost of \$40,000 to \$50,000.

c) Season Length

Although most manufacturers indicate that an AIR can be operational for 4 to 5 months out of the year, a review of AIRs in southern Ontario found the average season length to be 3 to 3.5 months. It would be expected that an outdoor ice rink in St. Catharines could be open to the public from early December until late February, weather depending. Based on temperature data and discussion with other municipalities, 10% to 20% of days in this range have a daily high temperature that exceeds 10°C, which could impact the operation of the rink.

d) Amenities

A review of the outdoor ice rinks in southern Ontario revealed that the availability of amenities varies widely among different facilities. Amenities range from basic seating and benches to rinks with heated change facilities, concessions and locker rooms. The availability of washrooms also varies among the AIRs surveyed, with some having dedicated washrooms and others using adjacent municipal facilities for (i.e. city hall, market or arena). Beamsville does not have washrooms at or within close proximity to their rink; however, they noted that this would be beneficial and that they receive a large number of requests for on-site washrooms. Most AIRs do not have concessions unless they are available through an adjacent municipal facility. If concessions were desired, staff suggest that this could be provided through a mobile vendor. The availability of amenities impacts the comfort of facility users, and if Council considers an AIR in Montebello Park, staff recommend this topic be included in any public consultation to determine what amenities are desired by the public.

e) Timing

The detailed design and tendering of the regrading and under-drainage for the lawn area and the work required for the caretaker's shed and washroom building are estimated to take six months. The actual regrading, under-drainage and reinstatement of the lawn area can take anywhere from one to four months. This work must occur after the ground thaws in the spring and before the ground freezes in the fall, and depending on the length of time required, this could impact park permits or festivals. The length and timing of any construction would need to be explored further during the detailed design stage in an attempt to minimize any park disruptions. Further, the standard lead time required when ordering the components of the AIR is 8 to 10 weeks, which can happen concurrently to site construction. A detailed plan should also be provided to the individuals or groups involved with fundraising to allow adequate time to develop a campaign and secure funds.

Based on the above timelines, if Council wishes to proceed with an AIR in Montebello Park, an installation target of late Fall 2013 would be optimistic. If any delays are encountered during design or construction, or if the timing of any construction conflicts with any of the park's festivals, the opening could be delayed resulting in an unreasonably short first season. As such, a target date of Fall 2014 would be more realistic.

Operations

a) Staff Requirements

The daily operation of an AIR would include staff for ice maintenance, equipment testing and monitoring, rink patrol, and site upkeep. Part-time staff for rink patrol would be hired seasonally. However, there is no surplus of full-time arena maintenance staff which could be relocated to this facility, and therefore, new positions would need to be created and accommodated through the annual operating budget, as discussed above.

b) Liability to be minimized through following best practices

The provision of all recreational operations and facilities involve some degree of risk. Although the user is expected to accept some of the responsibility for safety, the owner is required to offer a high degree of responsibility and must show due diligence in protecting the public using the facility. The Ontario Recreation Facilities Association states that if an outdoor ice surface is created on municipal land and made available for use by the general public, it must be maintained to a recognized set of standards. Unfortunately, this set of standards has not been defined by legislation. In lieu of such legislation, the City's insurance provider has suggested that an outdoor ice rink would need to be maintained in accordance with the best practices of other municipalities' facilities. This includes the safe and consistent operation of the rink, regular testing and recording of conditions and occurrences, posting information to make the public aware of the ice conditions, rules and procedures of operation, and providing trained, knowledgeable and accountable staff to operate the facility.

c) Annual restoration of Montebello Park may interfere with the summer festivals

Most AIRs are installed on hard-surfaced areas such as water features, parking lots, tennis courts, or basketball courts, and of the AIRs surveyed, the Rink on the Brink is the only one that is installed on a turf area. Following the annual decommissioning of the rink, any damage to the lawn area must be restored, with the Niagara Parks Commission estimating that the turf area is generally ready for use sometime after the Victoria Day holiday. The area used for the Rink on the Brink is only used passively during the summer, and although it is highly visible, it does not receive significant foot traffic.

Complete rehabilitation of the lawn area of Montebello Park occurs three times a year, following the Folk Arts Festival in May, Rib Fest in August, and the Grape and Wine Festival in September. As it is, these events place considerable stress on the lawn, and the addition of a seasonal ice rink would further reduce its health and vigour, impacting the carrying capacity of the park.

In order to reduce the risk of damaging the turf, the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association suggests waiting for 3 to 4 weeks of freezing weather before setting up the rink surface each year. Although this would be the best approach, it would significantly delay the opening of the ice rink each year and greatly reduce the season length. As such, Custom Ice suggests using an insulating blanket between the grass and the ice surface as an alternative. This will help to mitigate some of the impacts on the turf and will reduce the amount of time required for recovery. Even with the use of an insulating blanket, staff have concerns that the amount of time between the start of the turf growing season and the Folk Arts Festival may not be sufficient to ensure complete germination and coverage. Typically sod is not available until the end of April or early May (weather dependent). This means that the area proposed for the rink may not be available in time for the Folk Arts Festival or any other early season park permits.

Alternative Options to Montebello Park

a) Outdoor ice rink should be considered with future proposals

A number of seasonal ice rinks have been constructed in communities across Southern Ontario. It should be noted, however, that the majority of these ice rinks were integrated into the building of new facilities. These facilities have been designed for the operation of an ice rink, to house all the required equipment, and to

provide adequate space for skating and other public events, without the costly retrofitting that is required to construct an ice rink in an existing facility or park. As such, one suggested is that an outdoor ice rink should be considered with future infrastructure projects in the downtown, such as the development of a civic square.

b) Outdoor ice rink should be considered for another location

The capital costs that were calculated for this report are specific to the existing conditions and work that would be required for Montebello Park. Two of the larger components of these costs are winterizing the caretaker's shed and washrooms and the regrading and under-draining the lawn area. If Council is interested in constructing an AIR within an existing park, selection of a park site that already has winterized public washrooms within a comfortable walking distance and that has a flat asphalt area (such as a tennis or basketball court) should be considered in an attempt to minimize capital costs.

c) Increase the number of free public skates at existing facilities

Outdoor ice rinks are often desired by residents as these facilities provide an opportunity for free, non-structured public skating. If this is the demand in St. Catharines, opportunities to meet this demand through existing facilities should be explored. This could include approaching corporate sponsor to provide additional free skating hours. The demand for public skating could be further researched through an updated Recreation Facility Master Plan.

Financial Implications

The 2012 Capital Budget and Four Year Forecast includes numerous infrastructure projects pertaining to Recreation and Community Services. The forecast which was approved June 11, 2012 did not include an AIR project. With the number of capital projects in the forecast, there is very little room for additional projects as existing infrastructure programs must also be maintained.

Conclusion

This report provides information in response to a proposal for an AIR in Montebello Park including Capital and Operational costs, possibilities for generating revenue, options for funding from both levels of government, the economic impact for locations, and the impact on the neighbourhood. Given the potential impact on operations and the annual festivals held in Montebello Park, it is not recommended that Council approve the request for a seasonal ice rink in Montebello Park.

Item No. 512

Report from Planning & Development Services, Implementation

Date of Report: September 12, 2012

File: 60.35.11 Vol. C

Subject: Zoning By-law Regulations for Recreational Vehicles (including Boats and Trailers) on Residential lands

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR HARRIS

That Council receive the report from Planning and Development Services, dated September 12, 2012, regarding zoning by-law regulations for recreational vehicles (including boats and trailers) on residential lands; and

That staff be directed to initiate the process for a public meeting to discuss the removal of the restrictions in Zone 8 as it pertains to recreational vehicles.

CARRIED FORTHWITH



**CITY OF
ST. CATHARINES**

Corporate Report

Report from: Economic Development & Customer Service, Office of the City Clerk

Date of Report: November 30, 2012 **Date of Meeting:** December 17, 2012

Report Number: CSS-696-2012 **File:** 10.12.1

Subject: Council Correspondence

Recommendation

That Council receive and file the items listed below, as attached; and

That Council receive and file additional correspondence distributed for the meeting held December 17, 2012. FORTHWITH

Report

Economic Development & Customer Service, Office of the City Clerk is submitting for the approval of Council, correspondence received during the period of December 1, 2012 to December 7, 2012.

- 1) Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, 2013 Volunteer Service Awards
- 2) Ontario Region Environment Canada, 2012 Lakewide Management Annual Report
- 3) Niagara Regional Housing, Quarterly Report

Prepared by:

Carol Coull

Approved by:

Bonnie Nistico-Dunk

Ministry of Citizenship
and Immigration

Minister

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10.3.35
Agenda Item 4.11 ...



NOV 29 2012
Council

November, 2012

Dear friends,

I am pleased to invite your organization to participate in the 2013 Volunteer Service Awards program. Since its inception in 1986, the VSA ceremonies have become a long-standing tradition in Ontario.

Volunteering is the most fundamental act of citizenship in our society. Every day thousands of Ontarians of all ages voluntarily give their time and talent to thousands of community organizations. By caring and contributing their time, volunteers help hold our communities together.

The VSA program recognizes volunteers from all sectors for their continuous years of service in a community organization. It provides a way for your organization and the Ontario government to thank them in a meaningful way.

This year, in recognition of the important role our youth play currently and in the present and the future of volunteering, the nomination process has been enhanced to encourage more youth nominations. Each organization may nominate up to 9 volunteers, 3 of whom must be youth. If all your nominees are adults, the number you may nominate remains at 6.

Please take this opportunity to nominate your volunteers and feel free to share this letter with other organizations that may be interested in recognizing their volunteers at a VSA ceremony. By submitting your nominations you can help ensure that your volunteers receive the recognition they deserve.

Nomination forms and program information are available on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration website at www.ontario.ca/honoursandawards. You may also contact the Ontario Honours and Awards Secretariat by phone at: 416-314-7526 or 1-877-832-8622; by TTY at 416-327-2391; or by fax at 416-314-7743.

The deadline date for submissions is **January 25** of each year, but you may submit nomination forms at any time. Nominations received after the deadline will be considered for the following year.

I look forward to celebrating the achievements of Ontario's volunteers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Michael Chan'.

Michael Chan
Minister

RECEIVED
DEC 03 2012

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ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO

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LAKE ONTARIO LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LaMP)

Annual Report 2012

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Overview

In 2011, the Lake Ontario LaMP participating agencies continued their efforts to restore and protect the lake's ecosystem through a number of actions and initiatives including: implementation of the Lake Ontario Binational Biodiversity Conservation Strategy; development of the next binational intensive study of the lake; and implementation of programs that promote the reduction of toxic chemicals and sediments impacting the nearshore.

This 2012 annual report focuses on the following key activities:

- Fisheries management plans are being updated,
- The Biodiversity Conservation Strategy is being implemented,
- A binational monitoring program for coastal wetlands is being developed.

In the upcoming year, the LaMP participating agencies will also continue to track new and emerging issues such as newly recognized chemicals of concern, invasive species, potential effects of climate change and water level regulation. ♦

Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) Amendments

Negotiations to amend the 1987 GLWQA were launched in early 2010. The Governments of Canada and the United States held the final negotiation session in early 2012 and the amended GLWQA has been finalized and approved. The amended Agreement was signed on September 7, 2012. ♦

What is the Lake Ontario LaMP?

The Lake Ontario Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) is a binational plan to restore and protect the health of Lake Ontario by reducing chemical pollutants entering the lake and addressing the biological and physical factors impacting the lake. The LaMP's activities are coordinated by Canadian and U.S. federal, state and provincial government agencies.

The Lake Ontario LaMP includes ecosystem goals, objectives and indicators. Ecosystem objectives have been identified for aquatic communities, wildlife, human health and stewardship. The twelve indicators are designed to track progress towards achieving the ecosystem objectives.



Coastal wetland indicators have been chosen for Lake Ontario, and will be used to develop a new binational monitoring program for Lake Ontario wetlands. Credit: Environment Canada.



LAKE ONTARIO LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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Accomplishments

Updated Fish Community Objectives

In 2012, the fish community objectives (FCOs) for Lake Ontario (excluding the St. Lawrence River), were updated to provide more current targets for the management of the Lake Ontario fish community. These objectives guide management agencies, interest groups and the general public as they develop more specific fisheries, habitat, and watershed management plans. The new objectives are more relevant to modern fisheries management, and take into account: ecosystem changes, aquatic invasive species, changes in fish populations, and existing government policies and legislation. In addition, these objectives will contribute to other management planning initiatives such as Remedial Action Plans for Areas of Concern. FCOs for Lake Ontario were last published in 1991 and 1999, and are closely linked to the lake ecosystem objectives in the LaMP.

FCOs for the Lake Ontario fisheries are established by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's (GLFC) Lake Ontario Committee. The committee is chaired by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR), who are agencies responsible for fisheries management within Lake Ontario and active LaMP participants. For more information please visit the GLFC web site at www.glfc.org.

Fisheries Assessment: Update on Lake Trout Populations

Recent assessments show that lake trout abundance has improved from low levels observed in the mid 2000s. That abundance is expected to remain at current levels because of stocking programs and sea lamprey control efforts. Naturally spawned one- and two-year-old lake trout have been found in assessment surveys, along with mature, naturally reproducing lake trout. In order to continue efforts towards the LaMP participants' objective of a self-sustaining lake trout population, annual lakewide lake trout assessments will continue in selected regions of Lake Ontario. This monitoring will be conducted by the U.S. Geological Service (USGS), NYSDEC, and OMNR.

Binational Collaboration Benefits Lake Ontario Fish

With funding from the U.S. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the Credit River Anglers Association (CRAA) and OMNR collaborated to construct a fish ladder at the Norval dam, on the Credit River northwest of Toronto. The project received US\$60,000 from U.S. sources and CDN\$190,000 from Canadian sources. In addition the project was supported by the efforts of many volunteers and agency staff.

The Norval Dam was built in the 1830s and has been an obstruction to fish passage ever since. To remedy this, a fish ladder was built at the site in early 2011 and opened in June. Native Lake Ontario fish species now have direct access to over 39 miles (60 kilometres) of stream and 310 acres (125 hectares)

of upstream coldwater habitat in the middle and upper Credit River. This benefits many fish species, including: trout, Atlantic salmon, American eel, basses and minnows.

In its first season of operation, 20 species have successfully used the ladder, including adult Atlantic salmon (once extinct in Ontario), juvenile smallmouth bass and a juvenile American eel (an endangered species in Ontario). This project promotes progress towards FCOs.



A fisheries biologist releases a fish at the Norval fish ladder. Credit: Credit Valley Conservation.

Implementing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

The 2011 *Lake Ontario Binational Biodiversity Conservation Strategy* (BBCS) implementation report highlights a new focus on conserving and restoring the species and habitats of Lake Ontario.

The BBCS was completed in 2009 and it is now being implemented in both Canada and the United States. Progress is already being made. For example:

- **Research is underway on the restoration of native prey fish.** The GLFC is actively pursuing research and studies needed to re-introduce native deepwater ciscoes. Current research focuses on bloater chub. Restoration of native prey fish, including chubs, is an important step towards restoring naturally reproducing populations of lake trout and salmon.
- **Actions are underway to conserve American eel.** Recovery actions include banning fishing, improving eel ladders to encourage upstream migration of young eels at the Moses-Saunders Dam and transporting both young and mature eels around dams. American eels are one of the most unique fishes in the Great Lakes, and are listed as an endangered species in Ontario.
- **Coastal habitats are being protected and restored.** The U.S. Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is funding the restoration of agricultural land back to native sedge/grass meadow along West Creek, near Rochester, New York. Indicators are also being developed to monitor wetland health.
- **Atlantic salmon are starting to reproduce.** The NYSDEC has been stocking Atlantic salmon in Lake Ontario since 1983. In Ontario, the 'Bring Back the Salmon' initiative was launched in 2006 by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and OMNR, along with more than 50 partners to help restore a self-sustaining Atlantic salmon population. (see <http://www.bringbackthesalmon.ca/>)



Challenges

Restoring Deepwater Cisco Populations

Until the mid 1950s, Lake Ontario was home to four deepwater cisco fish species which were the primary prey fish. All four species, including bloater chub, eventually disappeared from the lake and were replaced by non-native prey species. These non-native prey species contain an enzyme that has led to reproductive declines in key predator fish such as salmon and trout, leading to an overall negative impact on the aquatic food web.

The GLFC's Lake Ontario Committee is committed to re-establishing a self-sustaining population of deepwater ciscoes in Lake Ontario within the next 25 years. Lake Ontario LaMP participants are committed to restoring and enhancing self-sustaining diverse biological communities, including native prey fish species. Potential benefits include: improving reproduction of predator fish, increasing the diversity and resilience of the food web, and restoring its historical structure and function.

To explore the feasibility of re-introducing deepwater ciscoes to Lake Ontario, the NYSDEC, OMNR, USGS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have been working to collect bloater chub eggs from the upper Great Lakes for culturing.

To address the unique challenges of collecting these eggs, 2012 efforts experimented with revised spawning techniques and successfully transferred approximately 300,000 eggs to newly dedicated quarantine facilities in Ontario and New York state. Plans call for continued culture experiments and eventual reintroduction of these important fish to Lake Ontario. ♦

Next Steps

Building an Adaptive Management Approach to Conserve Coastal Wetlands

Since 1960, water levels and flows of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River have been regulated to allow for power generation, commercial navigation, and protection of coastal property. As a consequence, the natural pattern of water flows was altered, significantly reducing the natural variation of lake levels, as well as the seasonal occurrence and durations of levels that are essential for maintaining the biodiversity of coastal wetlands, beaches and dunes. Many of these areas are vital habitat for native fish and wildlife species.

The International Joint Commission (IJC) recognizes these problems and is developing a new plan for Lake Ontario that will restore more natural flows to benefit the environment, while considering other uses of the lake. The IJC and the Lake Ontario LaMP participants support the use of an adaptive management approach that would evaluate the new plan's

performance and possibly make changes based on environmental performance indicators. A final decision on a new plan is expected later this year.

One key requirement for the success of this approach is the establishment of an effective monitoring protocol. The Nature Conservancy and the Canadian Wildlife Service are working to develop a binational approach to coastal wetland monitoring to support the IJC's adaptive management monitoring needs. Field studies and aerial photography are being used to monitor meadow marsh cover and the extent of rare and sensitive plants and mammals. The protocol will allow the IJC to evaluate the effectiveness of a new regulation plan and measure potential benefits to Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River coastal wetlands. ♦

Niagara River Update

The Niagara River and its watersheds are located adjacent to and upstream of Lake Ontario. Historically, these areas, including the infamous Love Canal, have been polluted by human activities. Current remediation efforts are underway on both sides of the River in the U.S. and Canadian Areas of Concern. In addition, the binational Niagara River Toxics Management Plan (NRTMP) continues to monitor and report on contaminant levels in the Niagara River itself.

On the U.S. side, NYSDEC has begun a study to reassess loadings of priority toxic substances from legacy sources along the Niagara River, including significant public and industrial permitted point sources and remediated hazardous waste sites. The study will also assess water quality from primary tributaries to the Niagara River outside of the U.S. Area of Concern to determine the potential need for further source trackdown.

On the Canadian side, there are no further actions required under the Canadian Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) to identify or remediate contaminants in the Canadian AOC. The known point sources to the Niagara River were addressed in the early 1990s through other programs. All 14 areas of contaminated sediment in the Canadian AOC have now been assessed and management action has been taken. The Canadian RAP is entering its final phase and working toward delisting of the AOC. Future contaminant issues will be addressed through routine federal, provincial and municipal abatement and enforcement programs.



LAKE ONTARIO LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Annual Report 2012

Advancing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

While knowledge and stewardship of Lake Ontario has improved in recent decades, there are still challenges to conserving and protecting the biodiversity of Lake Ontario. Ongoing implementation of the BBCS will help to address these challenges. The most significant problems facing Lake Ontario are new and evolving ecosystem conditions, such as: the arrival of invasive species, changes in nutrient cycling and the food web, and increasing temperatures. Today, Lake Ontario supports a multi-million dollar recreational fishery, but the long-term consequences of new and evolving ecosystem conditions to aquatic communities are unknown. In conjunction with routine fisheries assessments and monitoring, implementation of the BBCS will remain a high priority for Lake Ontario. ♦

Lake Ontario Basin

Lake Ontario is the lowermost in the chain of Great Lakes that straddle the Canada/United States border, and is bordered by the Province of Ontario and New York State. Lake Ontario is the smallest of the Great Lakes, with a surface area of 18,960 km² (7,340 square miles), but it has the highest ratio of watershed area to lake surface area.



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LAKE SUPERIOR LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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What is the LaMP?

Under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the governments of Canada and the United States are obligated to protect the physical, biological and chemical integrity of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.

The Lakewide Management Program (LaMP) is the binational mechanism to establish shared goals, identify threats and priorities, take coordinated action, and monitor results. The Lake Superior Binational Program includes the LaMP and the Zero Discharge Demonstration Program, unique to Lake Superior, with the goal to virtually eliminate the input of nine chemical pollutants. Many actions are implemented through the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem and the United States Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

The Lake Superior Binational Forum is a volunteer-driven stakeholder involvement and advisory group representing industrial, Tribal/First Nations, business, environmental, recreational, tourism, health, labour, and academic interests. The Forum and the LaMP share a common vision for Lake Superior.

Overview

For over 20 years, federal, provincial, state and tribal agencies have worked cooperatively with local communities and private stakeholders through the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) to restore and protect Lake Superior. As a result, the Lake Superior ecosystem is in relatively good condition. To ensure protection of this beautiful and important resource, continued vigilance and protective actions are necessary.

The Lake Superior ecosystem is in good condition:

- fisheries are in good to excellent condition;
- lower food web is robust and stable;
- persistent toxic contaminants are generally decreasing or remaining stable, with a few exceptions; and
- forest cover has increased since the 1980s, although the composition is changing.

There are, however, ongoing and emerging stressors and threats:

- some contaminants continue to cause fish advisories and exceed water quality guidelines;
- some chemicals of emerging concern (e.g. flame retardants) are increasing;
- impacts from climate change, the spread of invasive species, and some land use practices, including shoreline development, are stressing the ecosystem; and,
- mining activity and hydropower dams are expected to increase in the Lake Superior basin, potentially degrading fish and wildlife habitat and releasing contaminants, such as mercury, to the ecosystem. 💧

Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) Amendments

Negotiations to amend the 1987 GLWQA were launched in early 2010. The Governments of Canada and the United States held the final negotiation session in early 2012 and the amended GLWQA has been finalized and approved. The amended Agreement was signed on September 7, 2012. 💧



Credit: Lynelle Hanson, University of Wisconsin-Extension. Through the LaMP, representatives from federal, provincial, state and tribal agencies coordinate Lake Superior plans and actions.



Accomplishments

Lake Superior Year of Monitoring -2011

In addition to routine monitoring, Lake Superior partners conduct an intensive science and monitoring effort every five years. Research from the 2011 Binational Monitoring Year produced the following preliminary findings:

- lake sturgeon numbers are increasing in response to long-term rehabilitation and protection efforts;
- Lake Superior has the best native to non-native biomass ratio of all the Great Lakes, an important measure of non-native species management and prevention actions;
- no new non-native fish species were found during intensive monitoring of four high-risk harbours; and,
- a basin-wide decrease in precipitation over the last 30 years has led to reduced stream flows into Lake Superior. Reduced stream flows stress fish populations and are a consideration for future water management decisions.

Preventing Non-native Invasive Species

An important accomplishment in Lake Superior was that no new non-native species were detected in 2011. Currently, 89 non-native aquatic species are established in Lake Superior, including the sea lamprey (since 1938), spiny waterflea (since 1987), and Eurasian watermilfoil (since 2006). Many non-native species are invasive, out-competing native species for food and habitat, disrupting the food-web, and negatively impacting ecosystem health and economic interests.

The prevention of new non-native species is tied to actions implemented under the Lake Superior Aquatic Invasive Species Complete Prevention Plan. These actions include working with border officials to educate travellers on how to stop invasive hitchhikers, engaging aquarium and garden store owners about the risks, teaching school children about invasive species identification and prevention, and a renewed commitment to invasive species monitoring. The most recent ballast water regulations have also helped to reduce the risk of new introductions from trans-oceanic ships.

Reducing Critical Chemical Pollutants

All of the 2010 chemical reduction targets were achieved under the Zero Discharge Demonstration Program. Trends continue to show a decline toward the goal of virtually eliminating inputs of nine critical pollutants by 2020. For example, between 1990 and 2010, in-basin mercury emissions were reduced by 80% and dioxin emissions by 86%. Pesticide disposal trends indicate that amounts of DDT and other banned pesticides have significantly dropped since 2001.

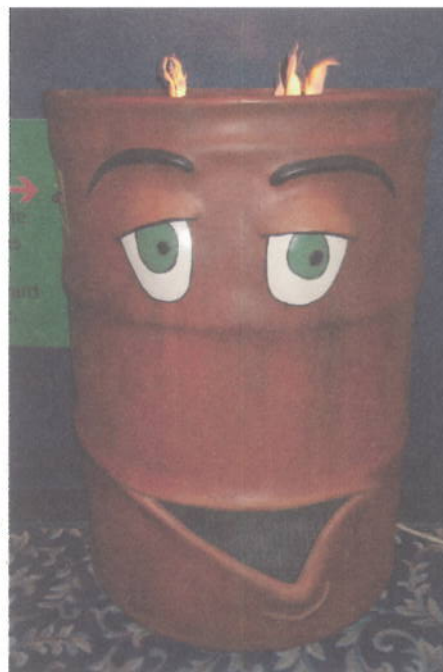
Chemical reduction actions implemented under the LaMP include a PCB transformer replacement program, mercury product collections, community hazardous waste collection events and public campaigns to stop household burning of garbage. The LaMP also tracks regulations, national chemical management programs, and energy demands related to critical chemical pollutants.

Binational Forum: Citizens Taking Action

The volunteer-driven Lake Superior Binational Forum mobilizes communities to achieve the LaMP objectives. For example, due to popular demand, two new "Bernie the Burn Barrel" displays have been created for loan to schools, community groups and events. These displays teach people about the environmental and human health effects of burning their garbage. Garbage burning is the largest remaining source of dioxins to the lake.

The Binational Forum, in conjunction with Great Lakes United and with funding from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, is engaged in the environmental assessment of the proposed Stillwater Inc. mine near Marathon, Ontario. The Binational Forum will encourage the incorporation of LaMP objectives throughout the lifecycle of the mining development.

The newly-designed Lake Superior Binational Forum website can be found at www.superiorforum.org. The website is an excellent resource for information and discussion about Lake Superior issues, including a new mining section. All Lake Superior residents are encouraged to join the "Lake Superior Stewards" program, found on the website.



Credit: Jim Bailey, Eco Superior. Bernie the Burn Barrel spreads the message to stop backyard burning of garbage.



Making Progress in Areas of Concern

Restoring Lake Superior's eight Areas of Concern (AOCs) is a high priority. AOCs are contamination hotspots where beneficial uses (e.g. drinking water, fish consumption, fish and wildlife habitat) are impaired.

- St. Louis River, MN/WI: After decades of habitat restoration and stocking, lake sturgeon have successfully reproduced for the first time in over a century.
- Thunder Bay, ON: Monitoring since 2009 has confirmed the area once again supports healthy and self-sustaining populations of lake trout and lake whitefish.
- Nipigon Bay, ON: With federal and provincial funding assistance, the town of Nipigon has constructed a new municipal wastewater treatment plant.
- Jackfish Bay, ON: Compliance with federal and provincial environmental regulations has led to improved fish health.
- Peninsula Harbour, ON: Following years of effort and investigation, the federal and provincial governments are working together to clean up contaminated sediment. Completion is expected in 2012.
- St. Marys River, MI/ON: With support of a U.S. federal grant, plans to restore habitat in the Little Rapids have been developed. In Canada, the 2011 sediment assessment showed that contaminants buried below the river bottom in the area of Bellevue Marine Park do not pose a risk to the environment; management actions, therefore, are not required in this location.
- Deer Lake, MI: After years of effort by federal, state and local partners, including upgrades to the Ishpeming wastewater treatment plant, two of the three remaining beneficial use impairments were removed in 2011.
- Torch Lake, MI: Honeywell International is completing an interim response action at the old Calumet and Hecla Power Plant site (located adjacent to the lake) to remove immediate threats to human health posed by heavy metals, asbestos, and PCBs. 💧

Challenges

Vulnerable to Climate Change

The Lake Superior ecosystem is vulnerable to the effects of climate change. By 2050, under high and low greenhouse gas emission scenarios, the summer climate of Michigan's Upper Peninsula is projected to be similar to traditional summers experienced in Iowa or northern Illinois.

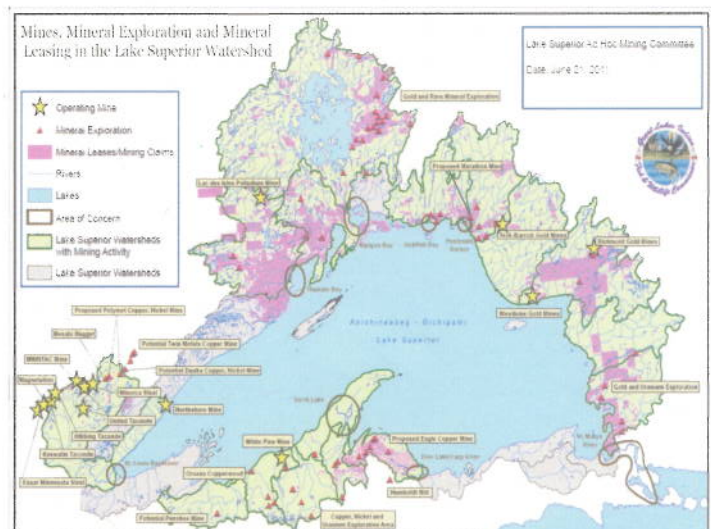
Scientists anticipate that warming waters will benefit warm water fish (e.g. bass, carp, and sunfish) but also invasive species originating from more temperate climates, such as the zebra and quagga mussels.

On the other hand, cold water fish (e.g. trout and salmon) will be stressed by warming waters. Around the lake, most of the present tree species (e.g. spruce-fir, pine, and aspen-birch) will remain, but the mix of species and relative abundances will change. The rate of species migrating from warmer southern forests (e.g. oak-hickory) will depend upon many factors but one study indicates that northward tree migration in the Lake Superior area may currently be occurring at a rate of 100km (62 miles) per century.

Chemicals Make Their Home in Lake Superior

Mercury levels in lake trout remain higher than the other Great Lakes, despite significant reductions in the amount of mercury being released from around the lake. Eating contaminated fish is a primary source of mercury exposure for people. A recent study measuring mercury in blood from nearly 1,500 infants born to mothers living on the U.S. side of the Lake Superior basin, found 8% had levels above the safe dose limit set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Pollutants which do not degrade easily through natural processes, such as mercury and toxaphene, remain for a very long time in Lake Superior because of the lake's large size and other unique characteristics. This long retention time means that pollution prevention is extremely important for Lake Superior. The largest source of mercury from within the Lake Superior basin is the mining sector, at 63% of total emissions. Since the Lake Superior basin and nearby watersheds are experiencing an increase in mining activity, best mining management practices and emission control technologies will be essential to achieving contaminant discharge and emission reduction targets. 💧



Credit: Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission . Map illustrates existing mines (yellow stars), new mining explorations (red triangles), and mining leases and claims (pink coloured areas).



LAKE SUPERIOR LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Annual Report 2012

Agenda Item 4.11 ...

Protecting Lake Superior Habitat

The Lake Superior basin has some of the healthiest remaining habitat in the Great Lakes basin. The bald eagle, wild rice, lake trout and the birch tree – all iconic symbols of Lake Superior – require healthy, sustainable habitats. However, fish, wildlife and plant habitats are being stressed by many factors including mining, climate change and poorly planned shoreline development.

Mining, for example, results in direct habitat loss, changes to hydrological systems, and in some cases, pollution from acid mine drainage. Management attention and financial investments are currently directed at addressing ecosystem impairments from legacy mining, including the restoration of the Torch Lake and Deer Lake Areas of Concern. Actions are also targeted at the effects of elevated levels of pollutants many miles downstream from mining and mineral processing operations. The challenge is to apply lessons learned from past practices to prevent future Areas of Concern, and to restore legacy mining sites so as to achieve ecosystem goals and the long-term vitality of Lake Superior's communities and culture. ♦

Next Steps

Some future activities for the LaMP agencies include:

- implementing on-the-ground projects to further reduce critical pollutants;
- preventing new introductions and the spread of aquatic invasive species;
- protecting and restoring critical habitat;

- working with the mining and water power sectors to ensure protection of the Lake Superior ecosystem;
- implementing measures to adapt to climate change;
- sharing Lake Superior science and information:
 - 2010 Critical Chemical Milestone report;
 - watershed fact sheets;
 - results from 2011 intensive year of cooperative science and monitoring. ♦

Watershed Map

Lake Superior is the world's largest lake by area, and contains 9% of the planet's surface freshwater.

Lake Superior Drainage Basin



Special Events

Get Ready for Lake Superior Day!



Sunday July 15, 2012 is a day to celebrate the world's largest lake. Food, music and fun activities are organized in many communities. To see what celebrations are planned in your area visit the Lake Superior Binational Forum's website or follow them on Facebook or Twitter.

For More Information:

Visit one of the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan web sites www.binational.net or www.epa.gov/glnpo or contact:

Canada:

Rob Hyde
Superior Work Group
Environment Canada
867 Lakeshore Rd.
Burlington, ON L7R 4A6
greatlakes-grandslacs@ec.gc.ca

United States:

Elizabeth LaPlante
Co-chair Superior Work Group
U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency
Phone: (312) 353-2694
Laplante.Elizabeth@epa.gov



LAKE HURON BINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Annual Report 2012

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What is the Lake Huron Binational Partnership?

The Lake Huron Binational Partnership was formed in 2002 to meet commitments in the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement for lakewide management, by prioritizing and coordinating environmental activities within the Lake Huron basin.

The Partnership facilitates information sharing and priority setting for binational environmental protection and restoration. It promotes a flexible membership and the development of broader partnerships to undertake efforts, on an issue by issue basis that cannot be accomplished by individual agencies alone.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Environment Canada, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ontario Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources form the core of the Partnership which also includes all levels of government, Tribes/First Nations, non-government organizations and the public.

Overview

The Lake Huron Binational Partnership is an effort that focuses on key priorities and on the ground actions that help to improve and protect the overall quality of Lake Huron. The Partnership's 2012 Annual Report provides information on the following topics:

- Accomplishments: Progress on the Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Waters, Clean Beaches Campaign; Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative; International Upper Great Lakes Water Level Study and Public Outreach, and the Lake Huron Migratory Fish Barrier Project;
- Challenges: Implementing the 2012 Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative and Nearshore Fisheries Intensive Monitoring programs; Developing and implementing management programs to meet the objectives of the revised Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement;
- Next Steps: Upcoming activities around Lake Huron, and;
- Contacts: Information on how to obtain more detailed information on any of the Partnership activities.

The partners involved in protecting and restoring Lake Huron hope that you find this brief report informative and interesting. We encourage you to learn more about the lake and the collaborative approaches taken to understand its ecosystem, how we are protecting high quality areas and restoring areas that have been degraded.

For more information visit: www.binational.net. ♦

Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) Amendments
Negotiations to amend the 1987 GLWQA were launched in early 2010. The Governments of Canada and the United States held the final negotiation session in early 2012 and the amended GLWQA has been finalized and approved. The amended Agreement was signed on September 7, 2012. ♦



Credit: Dave Reid, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources



LAKE HURON BINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Annual Report 2012

Accomplishments

The Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Waters, Clean Beaches Campaign

Government agencies and local organizations have formed a unique partnership to ensure that popular sandy beaches on Lake Huron's southeast shore are safe and clean. *The Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Waters, Clean Beaches* initiative focuses on reducing beach postings due to bacteria levels and the growth of nuisance algae along the coastline from north of Sarnia to Tobermory.

The partners are working together to ensure available resources are targeted at priority areas and to support the efforts of communities and groups that volunteer their time on local water quality improvement projects. Five watersheds are identified as priority areas for action, including: Lambton Shores around Ipperwash Beach; Main and North Bayfield; the North Shore (Garvey/Glen Drain) near Port Albert, and Pine River, south of Kincardine around Point Clark.

Initiatives such as developing and implementing farm stewardship plans, reducing creek bank erosion during storms, and improving septic systems are completed or underway. The plans will also identify requirements for scientific monitoring and targets to measure progress.

For more information visit: www.healthylakehuron.com.



Credit: Map of priority watersheds, Ontario Ministry of Environment



Credit: Dredging and shoreline alteration near Collingwood, Ontario. Google Earth, 2010

Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative

The unique natural setting of the southern Georgian Bay coast between Tobermory and Port Severn has undergone significant human alteration. Although portions of the shoreline remain relatively intact, many areas continue to experience dense development, extensive dredging, and the construction of shoreline protection works. Left unchecked, these activities could have detrimental impacts on natural coastal processes, ecological functions, and aquatic and coastal habitats and species.

Public and agency concern over shoreline alteration spurred the formation of a Steering Committee made up of federal, provincial, and municipal representatives. To date, a great deal of work has been completed, including: a review of how agencies regulate shoreline development; an assessment of shoreline alterations between Tobermory and Port Severn, a guide that clarifies permit application requirements, and a draft stewardship guide for property owners, builders, and planners. Ultimately, the goal is to conserve and restore nearshore and coastal habitat structure and function while allowing for environmentally sustainable development.

International Upper Great Lakes Water Level Study and Public Outreach

The International Upper Great Lakes (IUGLS) Study Board and its Public Interest Advisory Group (PIAG) engaged residents around Lake Huron during the summer of 2011. The Study Board presented preliminary findings and recommendations on potential improvements to the current water level regulation plan for Lake Superior outflows at Sault Ste. Marie and an analysis of restoration scenarios for raising Lake Michigan-Huron water levels. A report discussing options for restoring Lake Michigan-Huron water levels can be found at: (<http://www.iugls.org/IndependentPeerReview.aspx>).



A progress report covering activities from April 1 through September 30, 2011 is available at: <http://www.iugls.org/Docs/10th%20IUGLS%20Progress%20Report.pdf>. Comments from the public show that preferred water levels are very much a perception of the individual, with conflicting views and interests depending on shoreline location. Future efforts to facilitate discussions between people from different regions who have contrasting views are being planned.

Lake Huron Migratory Fish Barrier Project

Migratory river-spawning fishes directly link the Great Lakes to our inland rivers. Because of the importance of these species to both the lakes and their tributaries, they were identified as a key feature for biodiversity conservation in Lake Huron. For most native river-spawning fishes, migration from the lake to tributaries has been reduced through the construction of dams and barriers and certain populations have declined or disappeared. This is particularly evident in species such as lake sturgeon whose low numbers warranted its threatened status in Michigan.

Better information on population distribution will allow managers to more effectively conserve existing migratory fish populations and to prioritize potential locations for restoration where barriers exist. To address this critical need, a list of 28 native river-spawning fish was assembled. Historic and recent information on eleven coastal or riverine fish have been obtained on the U.S. side and important connected and unconnected tributaries were identified for each species. While different parts of the basin are important to different species, some watersheds are more important to a greater number of species than others. Identification of these areas can be used to focus conservation efforts like habitat protection and restoration. ♦



Lake Huron tributary Credit: Dave Reid, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Challenges

Nearshore Fisheries Intensive Sampling for the Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative

The 2011 State of the Great Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) provided a status report on Lake Huron highlighting dramatic ecosystem changes affecting the open waters and nearshore aquatic ecosystems. Shifts in nutrient cycling and the distribution of nutrients within and between nearshore and offshore regions may be restructuring fish communities and impacting food chains that are critical in supporting the diversity of aquatic life in the lake. Organisms living in the offshore waters of the lake are declining in abundance while nearshore waters are experiencing nutrient enrichment favouring benthic fish communities.

Increased fish production in nearshore waters means rethinking fish community monitoring approaches. As part of the 2012 Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative, the (EPA) will fund the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MiDNR) to document fish species composition and diversity (native and non-native), look for evidence of predatory controls of native and invasive prey fish, and provide information that will allow governmental agencies to better monitor and manage the commercial and recreational fisheries of Lake Huron.

Understanding nearshore fish community dynamics and predicting future changes are significant challenges; especially in the face of uncertainty and the competing public interests. ♦

Next Steps

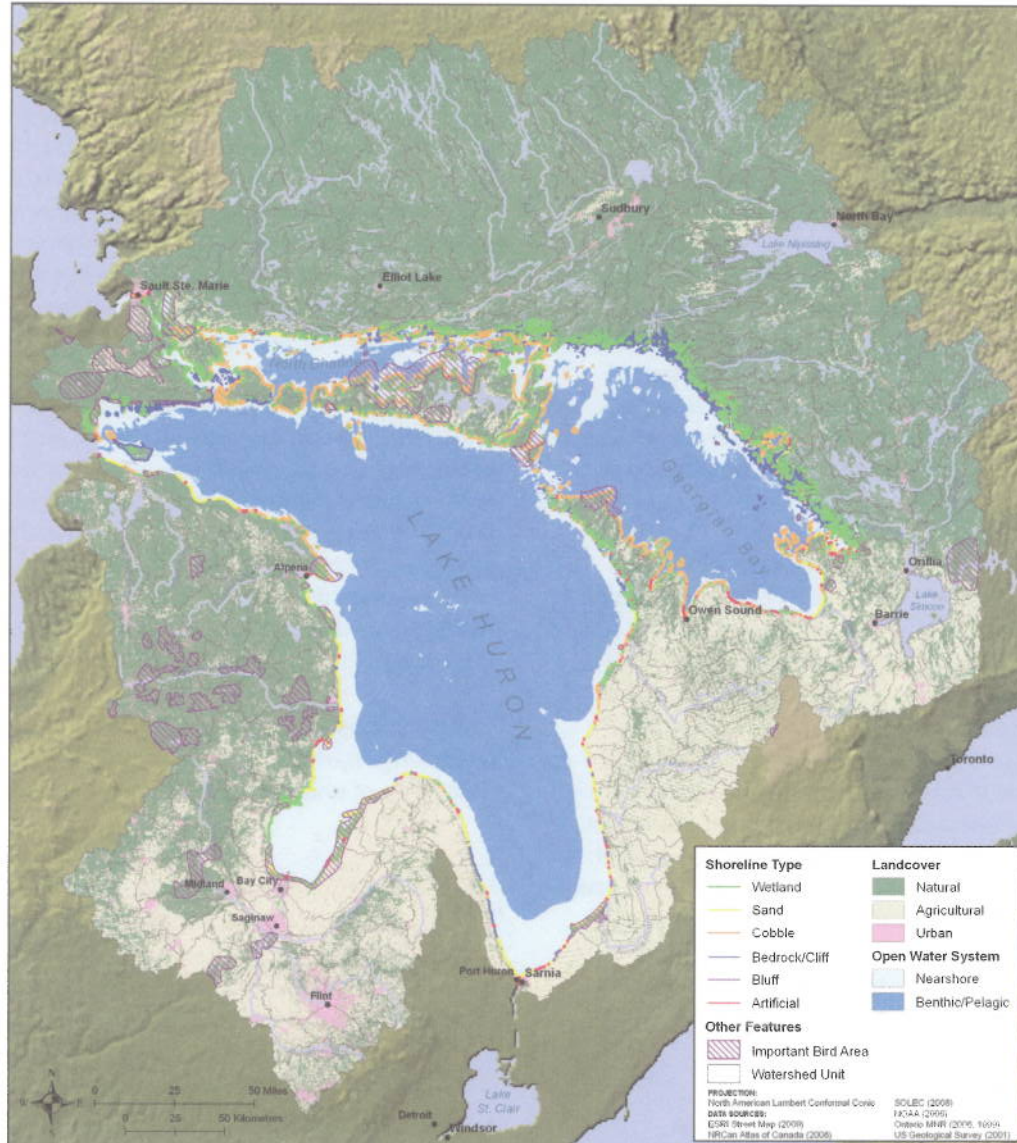
Upcoming activities taking place on Lake Huron include:

- Implementing the Lake Huron Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative in the 2012 field season;
- Coordinating efforts to implement the *Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Waters, Clean Beaches* Plans;
- Completing a Southern Georgian Bay Coastal Stewardship Guide for Property Owners, Builders, and Planners; and
- Implementing a Lake Huron Watershed Community Collaboration and Youth Summit by the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments modeled after the Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Watershed Framework for Community Action. ♦



Lake Huron's Biodiversity Features

Effective management of Lake Huron's open and nearshore waters, coastal wetland and coastal terrestrial ecosystems, islands, aerial migrants, and native migratory fish will ensure the conservation of its native biodiversity.



For More Information:

Please visit our website at www.binational.net or contact:

In Canada:

Greg Mayne
Environment Canada
Phone: (905) 336-6021
Email: greatlakes-grandslacs@ec.gc.ca

In the United States:

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LAKE ERIE LAKEWIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Annual Report 2012

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What is the LaMP?

Under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the governments of Canada and the United States agreed "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem".

This is accomplished in part through the development and implementation of binational Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs) for each lake. Lake Erie LaMP participants have identified ecosystem goals and objectives and assessed the state of lake. Through the development of issue related strategies, the LaMP will identify actions required to restore and protect the lake and evaluate the effectiveness of those actions.

The Lake Erie LaMP is coordinated by a committee of water quality and natural resource managers from both Canada and the United States, with participation from federal, provincial, state and local governments that have a role in implementation.

For more information about the Lake Erie LaMP, visit: www.binational.net or <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/erie.html>.

Overview

The Lake Erie ecosystem is unique. It is the shallowest and the most biologically diverse of all the Great Lakes. The Lake Erie watershed is home to over 11 million people, supports one of the largest freshwater fisheries in the world, and provides many recreational and tourism opportunities.

Lake Erie's ecosystem and economy are under threat from excess algal blooms that have become a regular occurrence throughout the Western basin of the lake during summer months, leading to poor aesthetics, recreational beach closures and reduced tourism revenue. The blooms are attributed to excessive nutrient inputs and urban and rural land uses. In addition, Lake Erie is sensitive to habitat loss and degradation and the introduction of non-native invasive species.

The top priority for Lake Erie Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) participants is to address excess algal blooms by reducing nutrient inputs to the lake. This Annual Report summarizes recent progress, as well as challenges and next steps. Highlights in this report include:

- An update on nutrient reduction efforts at local and regional scales;
- Report on projects supported by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA);
- Progress reports on the St. Clair-Detroit Connecting Waterway, and priority watersheds in Canada and the United States;
- An update on the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy; and
- Actions that individuals and groups can take to reduce their nutrient use.

Although progress continues, there is still much work to be done. If you would like to know more, please visit www.binational.net or use the contacts listed on the back page.

Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) Amendments

Negotiations to amend the 1987 GLWQA were launched in early 2010. The Governments of Canada and the United States held the final negotiation session in early 2012 and the amended GLWQA has been finalized and approved. The amended Agreement was signed on September 7, 2012. ♦

In March 2012, large amounts of algae and suspended sediment were already visible in Lake Erie. These are attributed to warm winter temperatures that led to increased rainfall and much higher than average amounts of runoff from tributaries. Credit: NASA Visible Earth Gallery, www.visibleearth.nasa.gov



Accomplishments

Local Projects Funded to Address Lake Priorities

Over the past two years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), through Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding, conducted two competitive grant competitions to support restoration activities over the entire Great Lakes basin. These competitions resulted in the awarding of nearly US\$25 million for projects in the Lake Erie basin to address LaMP priorities such as phosphorus reduction, habitat restoration, and the creation of nearshore monitoring programs. Detailed information on GLRI projects can be found at: <http://greatlakesrestoration.us>.

In Canada, action on LaMP priorities is supported through federal funding and COA. In 2011, the Government of Canada announced CDN\$5 million over two years for the Great Lakes, to improve nearshore water and ecosystem health, and to better address the presence of phosphorus. Accomplishments in 2011 include: reporting on the current status and proposed ecosystem restoration strategies for the lower Grand River priority watershed; completion of the Lake Erie binational nutrient management strategy; ongoing LaMP management; and continuing research, monitoring and implementation actions to address LaMP priorities. An overview of recent successes and accomplishments of the 2007-2010 COA, as well as challenges that have been faced, can be found at <http://www.ec.gc.ca/grandslacs-greatlakes/default.asp?lang=En&n=B903EE0D-1>.

Enhanced Public Forum Implements Nutrient Projects

In 2011, the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) received funding to effectively promote the implementation of the goals and priorities of the Lake Erie LaMP.

The project will focus on reducing nutrient loadings from tributaries through an aggressive outreach program. The project will engage the LaMP Public Forum network and new partners, such as resource conservation and development networks. Using a web site, PowerPoint presentations, and fact sheets, the OEC will coordinate an intensive and strategic outreach program aimed at reducing the most problematic sources of nutrients, including agricultural nonpoint sources.

The OEC's goal is to reach out to the agricultural community and local governments. The OEC will provide these audiences with information about the damaging impacts of nutrient pollution, links between certain farming practices and nutrient loss, and conservation practices that can reduce nutrient losses.

Targeting Resources in Priority Watersheds

U.S. Priority Watershed: Maumee River

The Lake Erie LaMP places a priority focus on the Maumee River watershed, because it is the source of approximately half

of the total phosphorus entering Lake Erie from the U.S. side. The USEPA is coordinating numerous GLRI projects and activities with other federal agencies, local partners and the agricultural community to reduce the amount of phosphorus leaving farm fields in the Maumee River watershed. The USEPA is currently in discussion with its GLRI federal partners to identify subwatersheds within the Maumee River watershed for even more intensive, targeted implementation in 2013 and beyond.

At the same time, habitat protection and restoration projects are also underway in the Maumee River watershed. GLRI projects totaling more than US\$6 million are effectively restoring wetland, coastal, and riparian habitats resulting in improved water quality, healthier fish and wildlife populations, and increased property values near restored areas. These projects are benefitting many species of concern.



Students participate in a shoreline re-vegetation project that will help to reduce nutrients and improve water quality in the nearby stream and ultimately Lake Erie. Credit: Grand River Conservation Authority.

Canadian Priority Watershed: Grand River

The Grand River, Thames River and Essex Region watersheds have been identified as parts of the Canadian Lake Erie basin that have a high impact on water quality in the lake. The Grand River is the largest Canadian tributary, draining into the eastern basin.

A new Grand River Water Management Plan (GRWMP) is being developed to ensure water quality and water quantity are maintained and improved over the next 25 years. When completed, this plan will: ensure sustainable water supplies for communities, economies and ecosystems, reduce flood damage potential, improve water quality to improve river health and reduce its impact on Lake Erie, and increase resiliency to deal with climate change.

Agencies helping to develop the new plan include: federal, provincial, and municipal governments; First Nations; and the Grand River Conservation Authority. Many of these same agencies are involved with the Lake Erie LaMP, and are working to ensure that the GRWMP supports the LaMP.



In 2012, the GRWMP received CDN\$900,000 from the Government of Ontario's *Showcasing Water Innovation* program, which was matched with funds from other project partners. In addition, municipal projects that support the broad goals of the GRWMP received over CDN\$4 million.

The GRWMP is scheduled for completion in 2013. For more information, please visit www.grandriver.ca/wmp. ♦

Challenges

Help Needed to Reduce Nutrients

In order to reduce the amount of nutrients entering Lake Erie, there is an urgent need for coordinated and strategic actions.

In 2011, the Government of Canada announced CDN\$5 million over two years for the Great Lakes to improve nearshore water and ecosystem health and to better address the presence of phosphorus. In the United States, the GLRI has dedicated more than US\$200 million over the past three years to improve nearshore water and mitigate the effects of nonpoint source pollution, particularly phosphorus throughout the entire Great Lakes basin.

You can help by taking action at home and in your community. At home, you can compost your food wastes; use low-phosphorus or slow release fertilizers, and only when dry weather is expected; and ensure septic systems are regularly inspected and maintained. In your community, you can raise local awareness about the importance of nutrient reduction in the Lake Erie basin.

For more information, please visit Environment Canada's web site at www.ec.gc.ca/greatlakes or the USEPA web site <http://epa.gov/greatlakes>.

Harmful Algal Blooms Continue

The 2011 *Microcystis* bloom in the western basin of Lake Erie appears to be the largest in the past 10-15 years, and posed a human health risk to swimmers at Maumee Bay area beaches. Phosphorus is a major contributor to excess algal blooms in Lake Erie, and identifying phosphorus sources is a key step towards developing and implementing effective reduction efforts. Researchers and scientists believe the 2011 algal bloom can primarily be attributed to farming practices in the Maumee River watershed, such as the type of fertilizer applied, the application method and the timing. These practices led to increased nutrient loadings from significant wet weather runoff events in the spring, which then triggered extensive summer algal bloom growth in the western basin of Lake Erie.

Preventing the Invasion of Asian Carp

The invasion of Asian carp poses a very significant biological threat to Lake Erie. Between 1995 and 2003, five live Asian carp have been individually collected from western Lake Erie.

However, monitoring of western Lake Erie at Sandusky and Toledo by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since 2004 suggests that a reproducing Asian carp population does not currently exist. There is a potential risk of Asian Carp being transported to the Lake Erie basin in the event of a flood or high water levels, because flood conditions could create temporary connections between the Mississippi and Great Lakes basins in Ohio.

Individual fish can weigh up to 100 lbs (45 kg) and each day a fish can consume between 5-20% of its weight in plankton and other microscopic organisms. This voracious appetite would deprive most native fish of their key food source, and would threaten native mussel and sturgeon populations. One species of carp is easily startled by the sound of boat motors, and can leap out of the water and damage boats or injure boaters.

A multi-agency federal, state, local, and private stakeholder Regional Coordinating Committee has been established to implement actions to prevent the introduction of Asian carp into the Great Lakes. Details of these efforts can be found at: <http://asiancarp.us>. ♦

St. Clair – Detroit Connecting Waterway Update

Multiple federal, state, provincial, local, and non-profit agencies are partners on numerous restoration projects within the St. Clair – Detroit Connecting Waterway to increase habitat, clean up contaminated sediment, remediate Areas of Concern (AOCs), control pollution, and decrease stormwater inputs.

In 2010, GLRI provided US\$9.6 million in funding for eight projects that restore shoreline, coastal marshes, and fish habitat. Recent Canadian accomplishments include softened shoreline and restoration of aquatic, terrestrial, and wetland habitat. An assessment of sediment management options on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River AOC and a cleanup investigation of sediments in the Upper Trenton Channel of the Detroit River AOC are also underway.

In Southeastern Michigan, GLRI has also provided over US\$5 million in funding to "green infrastructure" construction projects that use vegetation to capture and treat stormwater runoff and associated pollutants, and to reduce combined sewer overflows to the Lake Erie basin. In Ontario, loadings of phosphorus are being reduced as a result of CDN\$240 million worth of upgrades to secondary treatment systems in Windsor, Amherstburg, Corunna, and Courtright, and construction of a Combined Sewer Overflow retention basin along the Windsor riverfront.

Next Steps

Completing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

Of all the Great Lakes, Lake Erie is the most biologically diverse and has the greatest fish production. In order to restore and protect these assets for future generations, a binational Lake Erie Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) is being developed. This process is being led by The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Natural Features Inventory, and Nature Conservancy Canada, with support from Environment Canada and USEPA, and participation from hundreds of individuals and organizations from around the Lake Erie watershed and beyond. This is the second of two years where this process will produce lake-specific strategies that will recommend tailored approaches to most effectively conserve the unique biodiversity features of Lake Erie.

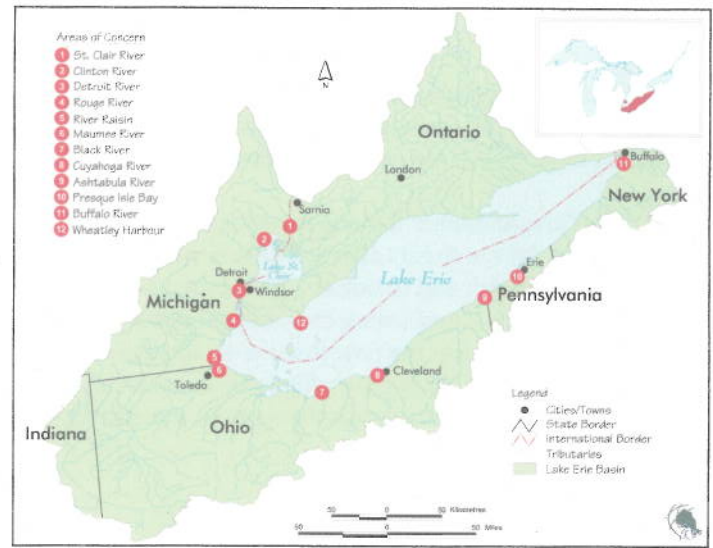
The geographic scope of the BCS encompasses Lake Erie and its watershed, as well as the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River, and the Niagara River above Niagara Falls.

Six biodiversity features have been identified as priority targets for conservation: the aquatic ecosystem, native migratory fish, coastal wetlands, islands, the coastal terrestrial ecosystem, and aerial migratory species. Threats to these targets include: invasive species, climate change, pollution from agriculture, shoreline alteration, and housing development.

Now that targets and threats have been identified, the project team is developing and refining custom conservation strategies for each area. For more information about the BCS, please visit <http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/erieblueprint>.

The Lake Erie Drainage Basin

Lake Erie naturally functions as three distinct basins. Its shoreline includes Point Pelee, the most southerly point in Canada, as well as portions of Ontario and the states of Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. Eleven Areas of Concern and one delisted Area of Concern, Wheatley Harbour, are found in the drainage basin.



For More Information:

For more information about the Lake Erie Lakewide Management Plan, visit the web site at www.binational.net or contact:

In Canada:

Luca Cagnelli
Environment Canada
Phone: (905) 739-4476
Fax: (905) 336-6272
Email: greatlakes-grandslacs@ec.gc.ca

In the United States:

Daniel O'Riordan
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Phone: (312) 886-7981
Fax: (312) 886-6869
Email: oriordan.daniel@epa.gov



NRH 12-2012
12-116-3.1.
November 2, 2012

Report to: Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors
Subject: Quarterly Report to Council

QUARTERLY REPORT TO REGIONAL COUNCIL

July 1, 2012 – September 30, 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Construction Has Started!



Work is underway on the NRH apartment building at 235 Fitch Street in Welland. This 67 unit, energy-efficient building will have geothermal heating/cooling, irrigation cistern, metal roofing and will be "solar ready". Tenants can age in place in this fully accessible building and enjoy common areas and green space.

Our thanks to Regional Council for the approval of the project, Regional staff for their input and Welland staff for their assistance in the planning and building permit stage!



Harald Ensslen, architect, is shown here with Jennifer McRae and Christopher Mazzuca from the city of Welland

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RECOMMENDATION

That Niagara Regional Housing's Quarterly Report be approved and forwarded to the Health & Social Services Committee and Regional and Municipal Councils for information.

Submitted By:

Lora Beckwith, General Manager

www.nrh.ca

Approved By:

Karen Murray, NRH Chair



BOARD DIRECTORS

3rd Quarter 2012

July 1, 2012 – September 30, 2012

KAREN MURRAY Chair Public at Large St. Catharines	CATHERINE JOLLIFFE Treasurer Stakeholder, Welland	SHIRLEY CORDINER Public-at-large Fort Erie	PATRICK O'NEILL Stakeholder St.Catharines
HENRY D'ANGELA Vice-Chair Regional Councillor Thorold	BETTY ANN BAKER Secretary Stakeholder, Welland	BARBARA HANNAH Tenant Niagara Falls	JOHN OSCZYPKO Public-at-large Welland
	DAVID BARRICK Regional Councillor Port Colborne	ALAN KING Stakeholder Welland	TIM RIGBY Regional Councillor St. Catharines
	KAREN BLACKLEY Stakeholder Thorold	GEORGE MARSHALL Regional Councillor Welland	RONNA KATZMAN Regional Councillor St. Catharines

If you have any questions please contact
Lora Beckwith, General Manager
at 905-682-9201x3900

GOVERNANCE

Niagara Regional Housing is governed by a cross-representational Board of Directors which consists of 14 members, representing regional council, tenants, housing providers, and the public-at-large. This section describes key activities and decisions made by the Board during the period of the report.

Reports

The following reports were received and/or approved by the Board:

1. 235 Fitch Street – Construction Phase
2. Awarding of Fitch Street Tender
3. 2nd Quarter – April to June 30, 2012 Report to Council
4. 2nd Quarter – April 1 to June 30, 2012 Report on Operations
5. Bill 140 – *Housing Services Act* - Local Rules: Housing Provider Training & Succession Plans and Minimum Number of Board Meetings
6. UDPATE – Enterprise Risk Management Framework
7. Reappointment of Directors
8. Proposed 10 Year Capital Plan
9. Proposed 2013 Capital Budget
10. Proposed 2013 Operating Budget
11. Financial Statement as at July 31, 2012
12. 10-Year Capital Plan – Variance from previous 10-Year Plan
13. Proposed Board of Directors Meeting Schedule for 2013
14. Operational Reviews Semi-Annual Status Report – January 2012 – June 2012
15. Draft 2013 Operating Budget
16. Multi-Year Operating Budgets – 2013 – 2015
17. Risk Management Framework – Housing Providers
18. Results from Strategic Planning Session
19. Financial Statement as at August 31, 2012

Note: The above list does not include confidential reports



APPLICANTS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Households interested in affordable housing submit their application and have their eligibility assessed to be on the Affordable Waiting List for Niagara region. This Waiting List offers applicants the choice of where they would like to live including: accommodation with non-profit and co-operative housing providers; NRH owned units; or privately owned buildings.

Affordable Housing Wait List

The waiting list is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Households are given the opportunity to confirm their interest and update information allowing NRH to verify ongoing eligibility. If a household is no longer interested or ineligible, their application is cancelled.

This Quarter						
Waiting List Sept30/12	Waiting List Jun 30/12	Waiting List Mar 31/12	Applications Received	Ineligible Applications	Cancelled Applications	Housed Applications
5910	5675	5593	595	27	222	140

There has been a continual increase in the wait list for the past few years.



Priority Groups

Applicants are offered units based on their date of application (chronological) with the exception of three groups that are granted priority status through Legislation: Victims of Violence, Health & Safety and Homeless. This priority allows them to be offered units before other applicants on the Waiting List.

3rd Quarter 2012					
Priority Group	Total as of Sept 30, 2012	% of Total Wait List	Received	Approved	Denied
Victims of Violence	158	2.7	82	69	13
Health & Safety	156	2.6	116	58	58
Homeless	591	10.0	116	109	7
Total	905	15.3	314	236	78



NRH OWNED UNITS

Niagara Regional Housing owns and manages a portfolio of **2,694** units consisting of high-rise and low-rise apartment buildings, townhouses and detached houses. Over 6,500 residents (families, single adults and seniors) live in these units and pay rent based on their household income. The Operations Division oversees day-to-day building maintenance, renovations and capital upgrades, and provides tenant services.

TENANT MOVE-OUTS

There has been a 3.22% increase in move-outs this quarter over the same quarter last year. The higher number of move outs is mainly a result of households being transferred where vacancies are required for substantial unit repairs or community remediation.

Number of Move-outs

	1 st Q Monthly	2 nd Q Monthly	3 rd Q Monthly	4 th Q Monthly	Annual/ YTD Total
2009	75	109	103	78	365
2010	87	84	77	90	338
2011	70	76	93	119	358
2012	95	96	96		287

2012 Tenant Move-outs by Reason

<i>Health</i>	18	<i>NRH Transfer</i>	75
<i>Long Term Care Facility</i>	24	<i>Moved to Coop or NFP</i>	3
<i>Deceased</i>	54	<i>Bought a Home</i>	2
<i>Private Rental</i>	45	<i>Left Without Notice</i>	5
<i>Voluntarily Left Under Notice</i>	15	<i>None Given</i>	3
<i>Eviction – Tribunal*</i>	12	<i>No Longer Eligible for Subsidy</i>	0
<i>Other</i>	14	<i>Total Move-outs</i>	287

*Of the above evictions, 5 were assisted by the Sheriff, the balance left voluntarily under an Ontario Landlord Tenant Board (LTB) order.

APPLICANT/TENANT APPEALS

Status of Appeals

The Housing Services Act stipulates that applicants and tenants be provided with an opportunity to appeal any specific adverse decision and comment on any third party information that might form a significant basis for the decision.

Total Appeals Sept. Year-To-Date		This Quarter		
2011	2012	Total	Upheld	Overtured
19	15	3	3	0

DAY-TO-DAY MAINTENANCE

Work Orders

There were 58 more work orders issued in this quarter than for the same quarter in 2011.

	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Total Annual/YTD
Avg. Work Orders Issued 2009	2,310	2,115	2,403	2,313	9,141
Avg. Work Orders Issued 2010	2,307	2,346	2,481	2,694	9,828
Act. Work Orders Issued in 2011	2,450	2,263	2,353	2,480	9,546
Act. Work Orders Issued in 2012	2,387	2,365	2,411		7,163

CAPITAL PROGRAM

Capital Works Projects

The capital program is on target

	2012 Total to Date				3rd Quarter Activity	
	Total	Tendered/ Quoted	Awarded	Completed	Tendered/ Quoted	Awarded
# of Capital Projects	64	50	50	33	23	23



NON-PROFIT AND CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING PROVIDERS

Niagara Regional Housing administers the affordable housing program to 66 non-profit and co-operative housing providers. These independent corporations own and manage a portfolio of over 3,900 market and rent-geared-to-income units. NRH also administers the rent supplement program with private market landlords who offer an additional 905 units of rent-geared-to-income housing.

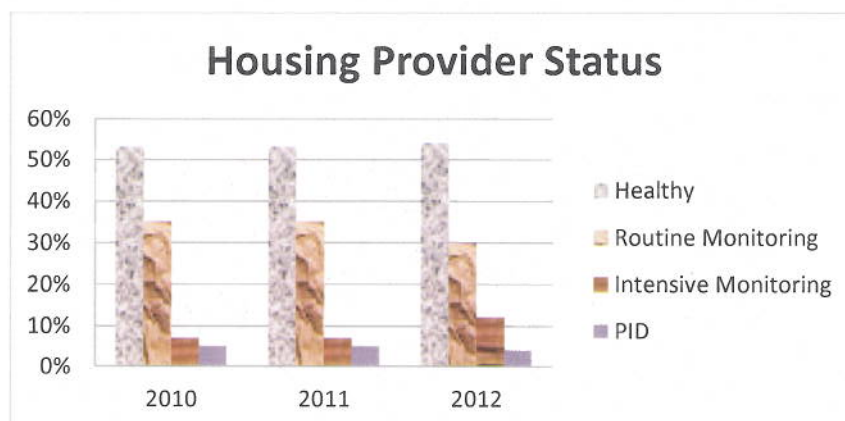
OVERSIGHT OF HOUSING PROVIDERS

Operational Reviews

The Housing Services Act allows a service manager “to appoint any of its employees or agents to conduct an audit or investigation for the purpose of ensuring that a housing provider operating a housing project is complying with the Act and the Regulations.”

NRH undertakes operational reviews of its housing providers on a 4 year cycle, depending on the provider's overall performance rating. Providers that are rated as a potential risk are reviewed more frequently (i.e., annually), while providers that are in full compliance are reviewed on a 4-year cycle, which allows staff to work closely with providers who need the additional assistance to bring them into compliance.

The majority of housing providers (56%) are healthy indicating that there is good governance and management. However several providers require additional support (31% require routine monitoring/11% require intensive monitoring). The remaining 2% are deemed projects in difficulty and corrective action is underway with these providers.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The following is a full list of services and supports in NRH communities this quarter. Full program lists are included in the 3rd and 4th Quarterly Reports in order to capture the regular fall/winter/spring and summer schedules in NRH communities.

Community	Partner	Program	Age Group	Average # of Participants per Program /Class
Fort Erie				
Bowden Families	Big Brothers Big Sisters Niagara	Peer Connection	6 and over	N/A
	Bridges Community Health Centre	Community Outreach	all ages	N/A
	Bridges Community Health Centre	Kids Who Can Cook	12-18	6 - 9
	Bulleit Proof Baseball	*Baseball Camp	6 - 14	15
	Fort Erie Multicultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee & Conversation • Game Night / Craft Night • Homework help • Language/Literacy and Support • Summer Programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults • all ages • all ages • Adults • 18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 - 4 • 10 -15 • 15 • N/A • 1 - 16
Grimsby				
30 Robinson	CSSN	*Grab Bar Presentation	Seniors	13
	Healthwell	Physiotherapy	Seniors	8 - 12
	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	10-15
Lincoln (Beamsville)				
4278 Queen Street	Community Support Services Niagara (CSSN)	*Grab Bar Presentation	Seniors	12
	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	8 - 10

Community	Partner	Program	Age Group	Average # of Participants per Program /Class
Niagara Falls				
3874 Portage	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	15-20
4900 Buckley	Community Health Centres	Wellness Clinic	Seniors	20-30
	CSSN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted Shopping Pet Therapy 	Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 20
	Seniors Community Programs	Exercise Program/ Buckley Buddies/Chronic Pain Management	Seniors	15-20
	March of Dimes (MOD) /Community Support Services of Niagara (CSSN) /Seniors Community Programs (SCP)	Wellness Supportive Living Program (WSLP)	Seniors	N/A
6868 Ailanthus Avenue	Project Share/ YMCA & Community Health Centre	*Community Conversation	Senior & Families	21
Warden and Waters Families	Niagara Worship Centre	Drop-in Centre	All	11
	Niagara Region Waste Management	*Waste Management Presentation	6 - 16	8
	Public Health	Kick Butts Presentation	6 - 16	8
	RAFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kids Help Phone Presentation Paddlepalooza Summer Programming Youth Culture Connect Youth Gambling Awareness Presentation 	6-16	8
	YMCA	After School Program	6-18	15

Community	Partner	Program	Age Group	Average # of Participants per Program /Class
Niagara-on-the-Lake				
300 Davy Street	Reflexology	Reflexology	Seniors	N/A
St. Catharines				
Old Pine Trail Families	iBAM, Brock University	Research Study Program	6 - 16	12
	Public Health	Kick Butts Presentation	6 - 16	19
	RAFT	Kids Help Phone Presentation	6 - 16	10
	Niagara Region Waste Management	*Waste Management Presentation	6 - 16	14
	RAFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not So Pro Beach Box Trip • Paddlepalooza • RAFT Summer Program • Youth Culture Connect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 – 17 • 6 - 16 • 6 – 16 • 8 - 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 • 16 • 17 • 10
	RAFT / Community Connector	Family Program	Families	N/A
14 Centre Street	Court Street Pharmacy	Different Health Topics	Seniors	30 - 40
	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	8 - 15
Manchester Families	Bethlehem Place	Drop-in Centre	0-6 and parents	61 adults 47 children
	Niagara Child & Youth Services	Music Program	12-18	11
	RAFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddlepalooza • After School/Evening Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 - 16 • 12-18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 • 11-13
	The Boys & Girls Club	Homework Help	12-18	13
	YWCA	Girls Group	12-18	11
45 Manchester and Family Communities	The City of St. Catharines/ Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold	Community Garden	All	40

Community	Partner	Program	Age Group	Average # of Participants per Program /Class
Manchester Families	Bulleit Proof Baseball	Baseball Camp	6 - 18	5
	iBAM, Brock University	Research Study Program	6 - 16	12
	Niagara Region Waste Management	*Waste Management Presentation	6 - 16	14
	Public Health	Kick Butts Presentation	6- 16	24
	RAFT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kids Help Phone Presentation Not so Pro Beach Box Trip Summer Programming Youth Culture Connect 	6-16	15-18
479 Carlton	Community Support Services Niagara	Assisted Shopping	Seniors	10
	CSSN	Pet Therapy	Seniors	12
	Seniors Community Programs	Chronic Pain Management	Seniors	8-12
	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	9-16
	The Salvation Army	Warm Meal Program	Seniors	60
	March of Dimes (MOD) /Community Support Services of Niagara (CSSN) /Seniors Community Programs (SCP)	Wellness Supportive Living Program (WSLP)	Seniors	N/A
Rykert Families	4 Squares	Family connection	Families	20 -40
	iBAM, Brock University	Research Study Program	6 - 16	18
	Niagara Region Waste Management	*Waste Management Presentation	6 - 16	20
	Public Health	Kick Butts Presentation	6- 16	24

Community	Partner	Program	Age Group	Average # of Participants per Program /Class
Rykert Families	RAFT /Community Connector	Family Programs	Families	N/A
	RAFT	Rykert Youth Program homework, cooking, science, drama, etc.	12-16	12 -20
		Kids Help Phone Presentation	6 -16	15
		Not so Pro Beach Box Trip	6 - 16	18
		Paddlepalooza	6 -16	23
		Summer Programming	6 - 16	15
		Youth Culture Connect	12- 16	10
Gale Crescent	(WSL) March of Dimes	Attendant Care Services and Personal Care	Seniors	12 - 18
	(WSL) Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	15- 20
	(WSL)Community Support Services of Niagara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted Shopping Craft Program Good Food Box Pet Therapy Security Checks 	Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 - 15 10 - 20 5 – 12 22 N/A
	Court Street Pharmacy	Health and Education	Seniors	15- 20
	Salvation Army	Community Dinner	Seniors	45 - 50
	Start Me Up Niagara	Drum Making Projects	55 and over	15–20
	Welland			
124/140 Elmview	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	10-15
Fitch Street	Community Care Access Centre	Support and Visits	Seniors	5-8
	Seniors Community Programs	Healthy Safe and Strong Exercise program	Seniors	7 - 10

Community	Partner	Program	Age Group	Average # of Participants per Program /Class	
211 King Street	(WSL) Seniors Community Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diabetic Foot Care Clinic• Exercise Program• Friendly Recipe Club• Wellness Clinic	Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5-10• 10-20• 10• 20-30	
	(WSL)Community Support Services of Niagara	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assisted Shopping• Craft Program• Friendly Recipe Club• Good Food Box• Security Checks	Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3• 5-10• 6-10• N/A• 18	
	CSSN	Pet Therapy	Seniors	16	
	(WSL) March of Dimes	Attendant Care Services and Personal Care	Seniors	N/A	
McLaughlin Famalies	Faith Welland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Banana Café” (variety of after-school programs)• Family Ties• Homework Club• JumpStart Niagara College Academy• Life Tree Café Ladies Group (cooking, sewing and knitting, etc.)• Music lessons• Summer Program• Sunday Coffee Break CelebratingFriendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School age• Kids and adults• School age• ages 6 - 16• Ladies• Kids and adults• ages 6 - 16• All	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 – 30• 20• 18• 25• 15• 17• 20-25• 7	
		Niagara College	Mega Sports Camp	ages 6 - 16	22
		RAFT	Good Food Box	Families	3-5 families
		Welland Library	Book Nook / Not Just Homework	Kids	15 - 20

* Special Programs - are one-time only and not part of regularly-scheduled programs



PRIVATE MARKET ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

NRH has two key programs that make private market accommodation available to the residents of Niagara:

1. The Rent Bank Program, provides financial assistance to help tenants under threat of eviction to make their rental payments.
2. The Rent Supplement program which makes privately owned units available to applicants from the centralized waiting list on a rent-geared-to-income basis or a set allowance basis.

Rent Bank Program

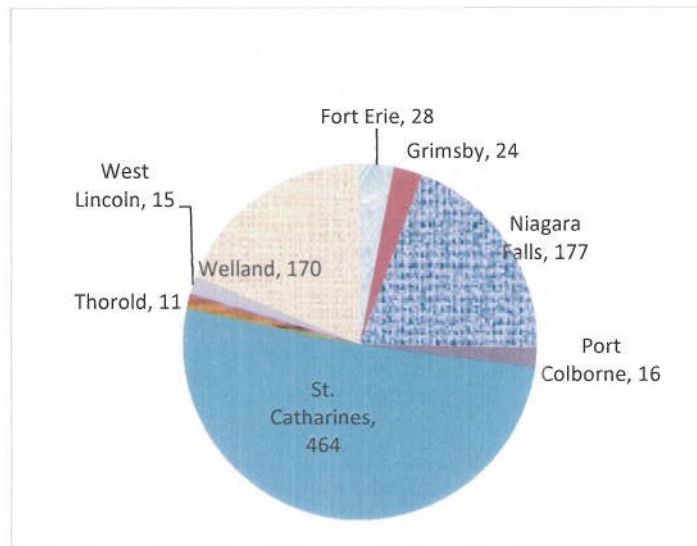
NRH has partnered with Credit Counseling of Regional Niagara to administer the Rent Bank program. Tenants access the program through a network of community and social service agencies, landlords and the Credit Counseling of Regional Niagara. **Twenty six clients** received assistance this quarter.

<u>Quarter</u>	<u># Clients</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Denied</u>	<u>Appeals</u>	<u>Average Payout per client</u>
<u>1st Quarter</u> Jan. 1 – Mar 31, 2012	28	22	7	1	\$1,286.27
<u>2nd Quarter</u> Apr. 1 – June 30, 2012	30	27	3	0	\$1,229.69
<u>3rd Quarter</u> Jul. 1 – Sept 30, 2012	35	26	9	1	\$1,214.46

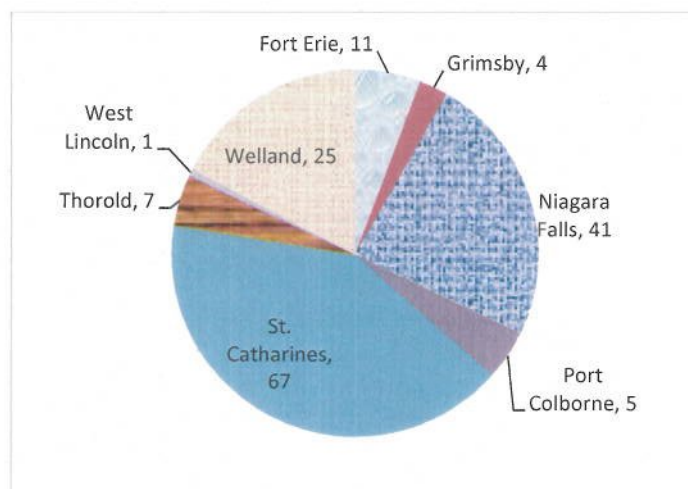
Rent Supplement Program

PROGRAM	Units		
	3rd Quarter 2012	2nd Quarter 2012	1 st Quarter 2012
Regular-Commercial (Includes 94 OCHAP Units)	421	420	426
New NRH Rent Supplement	146	149	122
Strong Communities Program	162	162	167
Supportive Housing Program	77	77	77
Eviction Prevention Program	0	0	0
Housing Allowance Program	79	88	96
IAH Program	20	7	0
TOTAL	905	903	888

Total Rent Supplement Units September 30, 2012



Total Rent Supplement Landlords September 30, 2012



Homeownership Program

The Homeownership component of the *Investing in Affordable Housing* in Ontario assists low to moderate income rental households in the purchase of a home by providing down payment assistance in the form of a forgivable loan. This program was extended to include an allocation to Habitat for Humanity.

Homeownership - "Welcome Home Niagara"

This spring the *Welcome Home Niagara* program was launched again with \$156,369 of Provincial funding allocated. Over 40 applications have been received and 15 homes have been purchased and occupied. There is currently a balance of \$41,280 of Provincial funds awaiting confirmation of home purchase.

In addition, there is a balance of \$93,094.73 in the revolving homeownership fund.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Niagara Regional Housing has participated in all four of the Federal/Provincial development programs that have been offered to date. These programs offer capital forgivable loans to interested developers and housing providers who are interested in developing new, or renovating existing buildings to create affordable housing units.

New Development

There are now 4 (including IAH) development programs since 2006 resulting in a total of 530 new AHP units of affordable housing in Niagara and 67 new IAH units under construction:

1. **Opening Doors Together – Pilot Program (2006)** **COMPLETED**
*Total Federal/Provincial Funding \$5,117,182**
*Total # of Units: 178 **
*Total # of Proponents: 7 **
*(*2 units in St. Catharines sold to new owner but remain under program and included in inventory)*
2. **Wave 1 Program (2008)** **7 Projects COMPLETED**
Total Federal/Provincial Funding: \$11,489,900 **1 Under Construction (23 units)**
Total # of Units: 165
Total # of Proponents: 8

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>3. 2009 Extension Program
 <i>Total Federal/Provincial Funding: \$21,373,934</i>
 <i>Total # of Units: 187</i>
 <i>Total # of Proponents: 8</i></p> | <p>6 COMPLETED in 2012
 2 UNDER CONSTRUCTION (45 units)</p> |
| <p>4. IAH Program (Fitch Street)
 <i>Total Federal/Provincial Funding: \$3,100,000</i>
 <i>Total # of Units: 67</i>
 <i>Total # of Proponents: 1 (NRH)</i></p> | <p>0 COMPLETED in 2012
 1 UNDER CONSTRUCTION</p> |



PUBLIC AWARENESS

Affordable housing communities are an integral part of Niagara's neighbourhoods and depend on positive relationships with local partners and surrounding communities to create healthy, productive environments. It is important that the public is made aware of the many progressive programs and initiatives that take place in affordable housing communities to improve the lives of the tenants and, through them, the larger neighbourhoods.

Community Gardens

The 2012 Community Gardens at Torosian Park in St. Catharines had another successful year. This partnership with Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold, the City of St. Catharines, Jeffrey's Greenhouse and Stokes Seeds encourages tenants and non-tenants to experience the benefits of gardening and growing their own food.

A gardening competition at Welland's McLaughlin community drew 17 participants who beautified their properties and provided an example for the rest of the street. Ten prizes were awarded at the McLaughlin Street party in July.

Brock University Partnerships

Brock University's Faculty of Applied Health Sciences conducted the *iBam* research study in Manchester, Rykert, McLaughlin and Old Pine Trail. The five-week study tested strength and performance over one hour daily exercise programs. The study was designed to be fun for the children and included snacks and a small weekly financial incentive. Pre and post-testing days were held at the University and included lunch.

As a result of our expanding relationship, Brock University approached NRH with a proposal to subsidize two community children to attend their Youth University Camp in the summer. In addition to exciting programs like CSI, Hollywood Movie and Icy Sticky Science, Youth University camps expose children to enthusiastic university instructors and the allure of the university campus and its amenities. Tenants received \$100 each toward Youth U.

McLaughlin Street Party

The McLaughlin Street Party was a huge success again this year, with Faith Welland providing a day full of pony rides, a live band, train rides and other activities. The Welland Tribune noted that, "Smiles were in abundance and the atmosphere welcoming as hundreds flocked to the neighbourhood".

Back to School Backpacks

NRH's partnership with Central Community Church continues to grow. The Church donated 48 backpacks full of supplies to Bowden Street, McLaughlin Street and Rykert Street.

JumpStart Baseball Camp

On September 8, JumpStart and Bullett Proof Baseball Academy partnered with NRH to provide a full day baseball camp for NRH children. Young tenants were picked up and dropped off at Welland Baseball Stadium, where they enjoyed baseball activities and lunch, and received a totebag full of school supplies, a t-shirt, a baseball, and a baseball cap and glove.

HSC Legacy Project Event – Rykert Playground Renewal

A community renewal initiative event was held on September 12, 2012 at 59 Rykert Street in St. Catharines. This event was held in partnership with Housing Services Corporation (HSC), Niagara Region, Central Community Church and the RAFT. A basketball court was resurfaced, stencils added and the Rykert Street kids took part in the creation of this active play area through painting, music, play and greening activities. The event was well-attended by tenants, partners and local dignitaries.

This event was part of HSC's *Big 10 Tune-Up*, which consists of 10 community build projects across Ontario in honour of HSC's 10th anniversary. It also celebrated the 10th anniversary of Niagara Regional Housing.

Homeless Help Brochure

This brochure provides additional resource information to applicants that are approved under the Homeless status or to anyone who has indicated that they are at risk of being homeless.

Applicant Information Guide

This guide informs applicants of the application process, wait times, what to expect while waiting for housing and applicant responsibilities. This information is designed to make the process easier for the public to understand and to reduce unnecessary inquiries of Staff.



Affordable Housing by Municipality

<u>Fort Erie</u>		<u>Grimsby</u>		<u>Lincoln (Beamsville)</u>	
Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units
NRH Owned Units	116	NRH Owned Units	55	NRH Owned Units	61
Housing Providers	429	Housing Providers	N/A	Housing Providers	120
Rent Supplement	28	Rent Supplement	24	Rent Supplement	N/A
New Development	N/A	New Development	N/A	New Development	N/A
Households on Waiting List	621	Households on Waiting List	191	Households on Waiting List	377
<u>Niagara Falls</u>		<u>NOTL</u>		<u>Pelham</u>	
Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units
NRH Owned Units	894	NRH Owned Units	40	NRH Owned Units	N/A
Housing Providers	828	Housing Providers	N/A	Housing Providers	64
Rent Supplement	177	Rent Supplement	N/A	Rent Supplement	N/A
New Development	74	New Development	N/A	New Development	N/A
Households on Waiting List	2,214	Households on Waiting List	99	Households on Waiting List	127
<u>Port Colborne</u>		<u>St. Catharines</u>		<u>Thorold</u>	
Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units
NRH Owned Units	88	NRH Owned Units	1017	NRH Owned Units	29
Housing Providers	139	Housing Providers	1766	Housing Providers	124
Rent Supplement	16	Rent Supplement	464	Rent Supplement	11
New Development	35	New Development	306	New Development	23
Households on Waiting List	474	Households on Waiting List	2,987	Households on Waiting List	487
<u>Welland</u>		<u>West Lincoln (Smithville)</u>		<u>Region Wide</u>	
Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units	Type of Unit	Units
NRH Owned Units	394	NRH Owned Units	N/A	NRH Owned Units	2,694
Housing Providers	427	Housing Providers	86	Housing Providers	3,983
Rent Supplement	170	Rent Supplement	15	Rent Supplement	905
New Development	92	New Development	N/A	New Development	530
Households on Waiting List	1,224	Households on Waiting List	188	Households on Waiting List (see pg 3)	5,910

*There are no affordable housing units in Wainfleet

*Note: The Rent Supplement figures include units under the Housing Allowance, OCHAP, and Eviction Prevention Programs.