

**City of Port Colborne
Council Meeting Addendum**

Date: December 13, 2021
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, City Hall
66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne

Pages

9. Staff Reports

9.7. Niagara Transit Governance - Creation of a Consolidated Transit Commission, 2021-317

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| *a. | Delegation material from Lori Kleinsmith, Bridges Community Health Centre | 1 |
| *b. | Delegation material from the Port Colborne Public Library | 2 |
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December 10, 2021

Port Colborne City Council
66 Charlotte St, Port Colborne, ON
L3K 3C8

Dear Members of Council,

On behalf of Bridges Community Health Centre (CHC), I am writing to lend support in favour of the creation of Consolidated Transit Commission that will lead to a regional public transit system for all of Niagara region.

Many clients at Bridges CHC rely on public transit for transportation to and from medical appointments both within Port Colborne and in other municipalities in Niagara. A fully integrated regional public transit system would be of great benefit to many of our clients, particularly as most specialist appointments are only available outside of Port Colborne.

As well, we know that many residents of Port Colborne would benefit from having access to an integrated regional public transit system to seek and maintain employment opportunities throughout Niagara.

In short, a seamless, integrated, and affordable regional public transit system will address many barriers that currently face residents of Port Colborne and will ultimately lead to better health outcomes for all.

Sincerely,

Taralea McLean
Executive Director, Bridges Community Health Centre

December 13, 2021

Dear Mayor Steele and Council,

This letter is written on behalf of the Port Colborne Public Library Board and staff to express the library's support of a Regional transit system.

The Library participated in one of the Region's sessions for libraries and provided feedback on the impact of a regional transit service. We were excited to learn how an integrated transit system could have a positive impact on connecting residents with library services across the Region.

The library's vision is to enrich, empower and educate. The Board and staff proudly serve the City of Port Colborne to meet the needs of our user communities. The ability to meet the library's mission is predicated on the provision of equitable and barrier-free access to library services. This includes transportation to and from the library. Unfortunately, many residents do not have access to reliable, dependable and affordable transportation. Although the library conducts community outreach services, staff are not able to reach everyone. For many residents and families, the lack of reliable transportation is a barrier to enjoying the free resources, Internet access, programs and services that the library provides.

The library's user base has also expanded. At one point, our library users resided mainly within the borders of our city. Now, library services extend region-wide with our residents enjoying the benefits of the Port Colborne Public Library's participation in a working partnership with local Niagara Region libraries.

The library joined the Libraries in Niagara Cooperative (LiNC) in December 2020. Comprised of ten regional Niagara libraries plus Niagara College library, LiNC was established to deepen and expand the collaboration among local libraries to provide resources and services to all residents of the Niagara Region. Thousands of library books and materials are transported throughout the Region and into the hands of satisfied LiNC cardholders.

However, libraries are not just about books and digital resources. Libraries are lived-experiences, about making in-person connections, reducing isolation, participating in programming for all ages, and creating opportunities for exploration and discovery in a place that is free, accessible, safe, and welcoming. For many residents, getting to their own local library is a challenge; for many others, travelling throughout the Region to

enjoy the recreational and informational resources at other libraries is not even a possibility.

The journey to enrichment, empowerment and education starts not only with the library's ability to reach its users, but also with the ability of its users to get to the library. The journey will be made easier for many residents if they are provided with access to affordable, comfortable and barrier-free Regional transit to take them on their way.

We thank Council for your outstanding commitment to the well-being of our residents, and for prioritizing the breaking down of barriers by endorsing a unified Regional transit system.

Sincerely,

Michael Cooper
Port Colborne Public Library Board Chair

Susan Therrien
Director of Library Services



PORT COLBORNE-WAINFLEET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

December 10, 2021

Mayor Steele and Members of Council

On behalf of the Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce, we strongly support the integration of transit in Niagara. We particularly like the current "On Demand" model and feel this is an excellent way to build up enough density to make a more permanent route financially viable. This is a sensible approach.

While a centrally operated regional transit makes sense in terms of the obvious: increase efficiency, increase negotiating power for purchases and bring the region together, there is a larger benefit to our members.

Our Chamber of Commerce represents a variety of employers. Our members are currently facing challenges in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce, and many would welcome the opportunity to have a reliable, accessible coordinated transit system to transport people from various parts of the region to jobs here in Port Colborne. Anything that we can do as a community to provide this type of accessibility in terms of transportation will assist an issue that will continue to be problematic and potentially devastating to many of our businesses.

We thank you kindly for your consideration of our input and would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Dolores Fabiano

Executive Director



**Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce Niagara Falls, Canada,
Welland/Pelham Chamber of Commerce, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce**

Charlotte Madden

From: George McKibbon [REDACTED]
Sent: December 13, 2021 9:27 AM
To: Deputy Clerk
Cc: Harry Wells; Mark Bagu
Subject: Regional transit

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Michelle Idzenga asked the Environmental Advisory Committee Chair, George McKibbon, for comment on the Regional transit proposals Council will be considering. Earlier members of Port Colborne's Environmental Advisory Committee were asked to attend a webinar on the regional transit proposal. Three members attended including Norbert Geiger, Steven Rivers and myself, George McKibbon. We reported on our efforts at our August EAC Meeting.

We expressed concerns that whatever action is taken on this organizational innovation, consideration needs to be given to the electrification of vehicular fleets and the rapid introduction of autonomous vehicle technology. These changes will transform our communities: witness the articles in the Toronto Star and Hamilton Spectator this weekend on the use of robots to move parcels on sidewalks and bike lanes. I have some experience in these new technologies as I am one of the W. Booth School of Engineering Practice and Technology (McMaster University) faculty leads helping others develop an ISO standard on robotic delivery devices. The question we asked at the earlier Regional presentation is what would a viable transit system look like with these technological changes and what organizational adaptations will be needed to implement them? The links to the reports being presented to you which S. Idzenga forwarded to me Friday for a brief and quick review do not appear to answer these questions.

I think the decision you are being asked to make is significant and very important! I recommend you ask Regional proponents to answer how this proposal will address these technological transportation changes in order to provide Port Colborne with a viable scheme that will be as sustainable as possible going forward.

Regards

George McKibbon
Chair
Environmental Advisory Committee
[REDACTED]