



**City of Port Colborne**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026  
**Time:** 6:30 pm  
**Location:** Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, City Hall  
66 Charlotte Street, Port Colborne

**Members Present:** M. Aquilina, Councillor  
M. Bagu, Councillor  
E. Beauregard, Councillor  
R. Bodner, Councillor  
G. Bruno, Councillor  
F. Danch, Councillor  
D. Elliott, Councillor  
T. Hoyle, Councillor  
W. Steele, Mayor (presiding officer)

**Staff Present:** E. Acs, Chief Planner  
B. Boles, Chief Administrative Officer  
J. Beaupre, Deputy Clerk  
S. Double, Fire Chief  
C. Madden, City Clerk  
K. Martel, Manager of Planning  
S. Morris, Supervisor of Environmental Compliance  
J. Peazel-Graham, Manager of Communications  
E. Rzczyca, Election Coordinator  
S. Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works

**Others Present:** W. Wright, Walter Fedy Group  
B. Kon, Indigenous Educator  
V. Badawey, Regional Councillor

- 1. Call to Order**  
Mayor Steele called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.
- 2. National Anthem**

Everyone stood for the National Anthem.

**3. Land Acknowledgement**

The Land Acknowledgement was read:

The Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hattiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The City of Port Colborne stands with all Indigenous people, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

**4. Adoption of Agenda**

Two delegations and one item of correspondence were added to the agenda.

**C-25- 030**

Moved by Councillor R. Bodner  
Seconded by Councillor T. Hoyle

That the Regular Council Agenda dated February 24, 2026, be confirmed, as amended.

Carried

**5. Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**6. Proclamations**

There were no proclamations.

**7. Presentations**

**7.1 Indigenous Colonial Relations - Communities Connecting**

Brian Kon presented to Council on Indigenous Colonial Relations and Communities Connecting.

**8. Delegations**

**8.1 Aaron Butler - NPG Planning Solutions Inc.**

Aaron Butler delegated on item 11.3 c, Recommendation Report for Draft Plan of Subdivision- Approval for Mapleview Subdivision (File D12-01-24), 2026-29.

## **8.2 Maureen Anthes - 25 Third Avenue**

Maureen Anthes provided a written delegation on 11.3 c, Recommendation Report for Draft Plan of Subdivision- Approval for Maplevue Subdivision (File D12-01-24), 2026-29.

## **9. Mayor's Report**

A copy of the Mayor's Report is attached.

## **10. Regional Councillor's Report**

Vance Badawey, Regional Councillor, provided a report to Council.

## **11. Consent Agenda**

Item 11.3 a was lifted from the consent agenda and considered as item 12.3 under Items Requiring Separate Discussion. Item 11.3 c was lifted from the consent agenda and was considered as item 12.4 under Items Requiring Separate Discussion.

### **C-25- 031**

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu  
Seconded by Councillor G. Bruno

That Council hereby approves the listed consent items on the February 24, 2026, Council agenda; and

That the consent items be approved on the recommendations as contained therein.

Carried

## **11.1 Approval of Minutes**

- a. Special Council Meeting - November 4, 2025**
- b. Regular Council Meeting - February 10, 2026**

## **11.2 Receipt of Minutes of Boards & Committees**

- a. Healthcare Advisory Committee Meeting - January 12, 2026**
- b. Port Colborne Public Library Board - January 7, 2026**
- c. Healthcare Advisory Committee Meeting - January 26, 2026**

## **11.3 Staff Reports**

- b. **Green House Gas Reduction Feasibility Studies Grant Funding, 2026-30**
- d. **Sale of Surplus City Property Raglan Street (AKA Bell Street), 2026-04**
- e. **Recommendation Report - Downtown Community Improvement Plan Area (CIPA) Expansion – 395 Elm Street, 2026-20**

**11.4 Receipt of Correspondence Items**

- a. **Prince Edward County - Bill 21, Protect our Food Act**
- b. **City of St. Catharines - City Discontinuing the Use of Platform X**
- c. **Township of Joly - Support for Steel and Lumber Sectors**
- d. **Regional Governance in Niagara - Office of the Niagara Regional Chair**

**12. Items Requiring Separate Discussion**

**12.1 Nickel Beach Report 2026, 2026-19**

Luke Rowe, Recreation Supervisor, and Kennedy Stock, Events & Recreation Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator, presented to Council on the 2025 Nickel Beach season.

**C-25- 032**

Moved by Councillor T. Hoyle  
 Seconded by Councillor E. Beauregard

That Recreation and Tourism Department Report 2026-19 be received for information.

Carried

**12.2 Partners for Climate Protection Program and Corporate Climate Action Plan, 2026-28**

Samantha Morris, Supervisor of Environmental Compliance, and Will Wright from Walter Fedy Group presented to Council on the Climate Protection Program and Corporate Climate Action Plan.

**C-25- 033**

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu  
Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That Public Works Department Report 2026-28, respecting FCM-ICLEI Partners for Climate Protection Program – Joining Resolution, BE RECEIVED; and

That the City of Port Colborne's participation in the FCM-ICLEI (Local Government for Sustainability) Partners for Climate Protection Program, BE APPROVED; and

That the Supervisor of Environmental Compliance for the City of Port Colborne, and Mark Bagu, Member of Council of The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne, BE APPOINTED to oversee the implementation of the Partners for Climate Protection Program (PCP) milestones and serve as the primary points of contact for the City of Port Colborne; and

That the Mayor and City Clerk BE AUTHORIZED to execute the Council Resolution to Join the FCM-ICLEI Partners for Climate Protection Program, attached hereto as Appendix A.

That Council adopt a revised corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target, replacing previous corporate target, to fulfill Milestone 2 of the PCP program.

That the Corporate Climate Action Plan attached hereto as Appendix C, BE APPROVED.

Carried

**12.3 Brownfield Community Improvement Plan Tax Increment Grant With Development Charge Grant Agreement – 714 and 706 King Street, 2026-05**

**C-25- 034**

Moved by Councillor D. Elliott  
Seconded by Councillor E. Beauregard

That Planning and Development Department Report 2026-05 be received; and

That the by-law attached as Appendix B, being a by-law to enter into the Agreement with Cornerstone Homes (Niagara) Ltd. (Brandon Anger) for a Tax Increment-Based Grant with Development Charge Grant in the

Brownfield Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) under the Comprehensive Community Improvement Plan (CIP), for 714 and 706 King Street, be brought forward for Council's approval.

Carried

**12.4 Recommendation Report for Draft Plan of Subdivision- Approval for Mapleview Subdivision (File D12-01-24), 2026-29**

**C-25- 035**

Moved by Councillor G. Bruno  
Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That Planning and Development Department Report 2026-29 be received;  
and

That the Draft Plan of Subdivision and associated Draft Plan Conditions attached as Appendix A to this report, be approved; and,

That the City Clerk be directed to issue the Notices of Decisions regarding the By-laws in accordance with the Planning Act.

Carried

**Amendment:**

Moved by Councillor G. Bruno  
Seconded by Councillor F. Danch

That the Chief Planner and Director of Public Works be directed to undertake a review of options to manage and control traffic on Third Avenue, including the potential closure of Third Avenue at Killaly Street;  
and

That the Chief Planner and Director of Public Works report back to Council with recommended options, associated timelines, and estimated costs by May 2026.

Carried

**13. Staff Remarks**

Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works, explained that the Niagara Region's Public Works committee approved a recommendation to extend the current

curbside waste collection contract to 2030, and will go to Regional Council Thursday for approval. If approved, this would push the timeline back by around 1 year. He noted that staff will still be coming to Council this year to speak about the green cart switch out program.

Erik Acs, Chief Planner, noted an Official Plan background report has been published to the City's website and he encouraged anyone who is interested to review the report and fill out the online feedback form. Lastly, he noted they will be coming to the March 24th Council meeting to provide an updated on the Official Plan and engagement.

Jasmine Peazel-Graham, Manager of Communications, noted they are beginning the City website re-design project, as the platform the website is currently hosted on will no longer be operable at the end of 2026. She noted they went through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and had 26 submissions. They have selected the Canadian vendor Up and Up and will do public consultation on features they would like to see on the website. The launch of the new website is scheduled for September 2026.

Greg Zwiep, Manager of Recreation and Tourism, provided an update to Council on the minor hockey league associations that they both recently held tournaments, and he wanted to recognize all the volunteers who helped to support these events.

Bryan Boles, Chief Administrative Officer, noted the City keeps running despite the current discussions of amalgamation. He noted that staff have met and are committed to carrying out the goals set by Council. There will be discussion coming forward about community consultation on healthcare in the coming months. He also thanked staff for stepping up and continuing to do their work everyday.

#### **14. Councillors' Remarks**

Councillor Bodner inquired to Steve Shypowskyj, Director of Public Works about garbage collection in the pleasant beach area.

Councillor Hoyle thanked staff for answering his questions. He also reminded folks to contact their ward councillors and the Mayor to express their opinions on amalgamation.

Councillor Elliott inquired to Jasmine Peazel-Graham, Manager of Communications, if the RFP process for the website included only Canadian companies. He also expressed that he is not for amalgamation, and that Council and staff are working hard for the City of Port Colborne. He also encouraged

people to look at the City's website for more information, and to watch the recent Town of Fort Erie council meeting video.

Councillor Bruno noted the Regional Chair has already attended a council meeting, prior to the topic of amalgamation being brought up. He noted he would be welcome back to talk about amalgamation.

Councillor Bagu thanked the Director of Public Works for responding to his call about a broken fire hydrant, and asked for him to look into the Public Works on-call number. He also noted he will be attending the State of the Region event, and will report back to Council on the event.

Councillor Beauregard thanked the Director of Public Works for his assistance on a matter. He also noted he agrees with the Mayor and Councillors regarding amalgamation; he does not want to see Port Colborne change.

Councillor Aquilina thanked the Mayor and staff for being quick to pivot after the amalgamation news. Nothing has been decided yet, and is hopeful that eases any worries for staff. She inquired to the Director of Public Works if there were any updates regarding notifications with the road ends and key access.

**15. Motions**

There were no motions.

**16. Notice of Motions**

There were no notices of motions.

**17. Procedural Motions**

There were no procedural motions.

**18. By-laws**

**C-25- 036**

Moved by Councillor M. Bagu

Seconded by Councillor T. Hoyle

That the following by-law(s) be passed and enacted, as presented:

- By-law No. 7433/17/26
- By-law No. 7434/18/26
- By-law No. 7435/19/26

Carried

**18.1 By-law No. 7433/17/26**

**18.2 By-law No. 7434/18/26**

**18.3 By-law No. 7435/19/26**

**19. Adjournment**

Mayor Steele adjourned the meeting at 9:29 p.m.

---

William C. Steele, Mayor

---

Charlotte Madden, City Clerk



PORT COLBORNE

## Mayor Steele Speaking Notes

### Mayor's Update at Council February 24, 2026

- **Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026
- **Place:** Council Chambers
- **Topic:** Governance Changes in Niagara

I want to take a moment to speak about the recent discussions around potential changes to municipal governance in Niagara, including possible amalgamation, following the letter from Niagara Region Chair Bob Gale that's on our addendum today.

I know many of you are wondering what this could mean for Port Colborne, and while we currently have more questions than answers, I wanted to speak to you directly as we work through these conversations together.

As I said in my public statement on Friday, I am disappointed in how this discussion has come about. Port Colborne is a strong and independent community with significant momentum, and I do not believe we need to be forcefully amalgamated with other municipalities to continue building on that success.

Discussions of this magnitude, given their potential to fundamentally reshape how our communities are governed, must be approached thoughtfully and transparently, with meaningful consultation involving municipalities, residents, and community partners.

Our residents expect decisions of this scale to be guided by **evidence**, open dialogue, and respect for local voices.

At the same time, I recognize that there are legitimate challenges worth examining, particularly at the upper-tier level. Across Niagara, we continue to face pressures related to the delivery and cost of major infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and regional roads. I support a serious and constructive review that looks at how we can

improve coordination, reduce duplication, and ensure taxpayers are receiving value for money. That conversation is both necessary and appropriate.

However, a review of governance does not automatically mean amalgamation. Both scholarly research and experiences across Ontario show that amalgamation is not a guaranteed path to savings or improved outcomes.

Last night, Chair Gale appeared before Fort Erie Town Council to discuss his proposal.

It was an important opportunity to hear directly about his views on governance reform, but the discussion also highlighted significant gaps in his proposal. While he spoke at length about rising costs for taxpayers, deferred infrastructure funding, and the need for change, he acknowledged that he not done **any** sort of analysis, does not have **any** data demonstrating savings, and has not developed even a semblance of a business case or transition plan.

He confirmed that options such as amalgamation are being put forward without modelling impacts on service levels, policing costs, labour harmonization, or local planning processes, and that he expects the Province to do that work later. That approach raises serious concerns about advancing structural change before fully understanding the consequences for residents and communities.

Amalgamation is not a silver bullet and does not automatically reduce costs, particularly when the largest drivers, such as policing and infrastructure obligations, remain unchanged regardless of governance structure.

If you want your voice heard, I encourage you to share your feedback directly with Chair Gale by email at [Bob.Gale@NiagaraRegion.ca](mailto:Bob.Gale@NiagaraRegion.ca) or to me at [Mayor@PortColborne.ca](mailto:Mayor@PortColborne.ca). Please note that the deadline for comments is next week, so I encourage you to share your thoughts as soon as possible.

The City has also added information to our website to help residents stay informed, and we are committed to being as transparent as possible as we work through this —

because as I've said already in my remarks today, **transparency and accountability are important to us.**

As I've said, here in Port Colborne we are a strong, independent community that has built real momentum in recent years. We have attracted more than \$2 billion in new investment and jobs over the past two years, are strengthening our marine and industrial base, advancing critical priorities like affordable and missing-middle housing and new child-care spaces, and taking proactive steps to secure a strong healthcare future for our residents.

We have also stepped up to meet the Province's identified priorities by accelerating housing, reducing development charges to encourage investment, and working closely with provincial partners on new governance tools — including establishing a municipal services corporation to help fund the servicing of the East Side Employment Lands.

Council and senior staff believe there is a better path forward that focuses on practical solutions rather than large-scale amalgamation. Today, some of the water, wastewater, and road infrastructure within our community is operated and maintained by the Niagara Region – which is a driving force behind the high costs of water and wastewater in Port Colborne.

We believe the City of Port Colborne is well positioned to take on the responsibility for all the water, wastewater and road infrastructure locally. We are confident we could manage these services in a way that is more affordable for taxpayers and grounded in strong, responsible asset management. We have a plan in place and a proven track record of managing our infrastructure carefully, and we believe this approach can help control costs and protect service levels without the disruption and potential cost increases that often come with amalgamation.

Like our Prime Minister recently said, if you're not at the table, you're on the menu. As Mayor, I intend to make sure Port Colborne is at the table — standing up for our community, putting forward practical solutions, and making sure our voice is heard clearly in these discussions. We will advocate for what is in the best interest of our

residents, protect the progress we've made, and work constructively with our partners to shape a path forward that reflects the needs and values of Port Colborne.

In closing, let me be clear – I believe in a strong and independent Port Colborne today and for years to come, and I look forward to continuing this conversation in a way that reflects the values and interests of our community.