

Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Budget Public Input Meeting

Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, ON

Present were: Chair S. Strickland, L. Armstrong, E. Clarke, D. Craig, S. Foxtton, T. Galloway, D. Jaworsky, H. Jowett, K. Kiefer, J. Mitchell, J. Nowak, K. Redman, K. Seiling, S. Shantz and B. Vrbanovic

Members absent: G. Lorentz

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under the “Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”

None declared.

S. Strickland provided opening comments noting that this is the second and final public input meeting for the 2017 Regional budget and that final budget approval will take place on January 11, 2017.

Delegations

1. Uwe Kretschmann, City of Cambridge, addressed the Committee on the issue of Regional services and investments. He expressed his concerns with local and Regional government investments in growth, specifically downtown revitalization efforts and the Regional airport. He identified programs and services where he would prefer investments, including affordable daycare services, safe drinking water and protection of the environment. When a Committee member inquired if he felt an investment in

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Ontario Works Discretionary Benefits was worthy of taxpayer contributions, he agreed it was.

2. [Catherine Bischoff, Board Member, CAFKA](#), addressed the Committee on the matter of public art funding; a copy of her presentation is appended to the original minutes. She outlined the benefits of public art and her presentation included examples both locally and internationally.

S. Strickland noted that there are Budget Issue Papers that deal with public art funding and will be considered as part of the 2017 budget review.

The Committee commented on the value of public art in the Region and requested that the Region's Public Art Policy be circulated to all members, in conjunction with the planned Budget Issue Paper.

3. [Stephanie Sobek-Swant, Executive Director, rare](#) Charitable Research Reserve, addressed the Committee and thanked the Region for its support. A copy of her presentation is appended to the original minutes. She asked that *rare* continue to be considered for future funding. She provided an overview of the vision and mandate of the organization, as well as the programs offered and the benefits to the community. She noted that *rare* has been involved in research projects that are mutually beneficial to the Region, specifically the relationship between urban and rural lands. *rare* is working with community partners, including the Region, for securement of land.

In response to a Committee question about *rare*'s relationship with the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), S. Sobek-Swant advised that a GRCA representative is part of their advisory committee and *rare* maintains a working partnership with the GRCA.

4. James Dick, City of Kitchener, spoke to the Committee on the issue of the review of Children's Centres Funding; he stated that he is concerned with the possible elimination of infant care spaces at the Elmira Childcare Centre. While he and his family won't be using the centre, the maintenance of these spaces is important to him. He outlined the benefits of continuing to fund the infant spaces at the Elmira Childcare Centre.

S. Strickland advised Mr. Dick that the Region is considering adding nine (9) infant care spaces to the Elmira Childcare Centre as part of the 2017 budget review; Mr. Dick expressed his satisfaction with this recommendation.

In response to Mr. Dick's question, Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Commissioner, Community Services, stated that the staffing model at the Elmira Childcare Centre will remain the same; there are no plans to alter staffing positions to part-time.

5. [Angela Carter](#), City of Kitchener, addressed the Committee regarding the issue of childcare. Her son has attended the Edith McIntosh Childcare Centre. She highlighted the benefits of quality childcare. She noted the high quality of care provided in Regional childcare centres and encouraged the Committee to approve the Budget Issue Papers under review dealing with childcare centres. She added that the cost per household is money well spent and that the Regional model could be a model for Ontario and beyond.

6. Michael Boos addressed the Committee regarding the proposed transit service improvement, specifically the iExpress route 205. His family chose their residence based on the available transit options. He stated that frequency is vital for increased transit use and he encouraged Regional Council to stay the course with the Regional Transportation Master Plan. He mentioned the online engagement survey and noted the frequency of support for transit in any questions dealing with transit.

Call for Delegations

S. Strickland called for other delegations wishing to address the Committee; no one came forward.

Correspondence

The written submission from John Shortreed, regarding the Grand River Transit Business Plan Implementation, was received for information.

Adjourn

Moved by S. Foxton

Seconded by S. Shantz

That the meeting adjourn at 6:55 p.m.

Carried

Committee Chair, S. Strickland

Committee Clerk, S. Natolochny

Volunteer Orientation

3500+ hrs in 2014 / 1700+ hrs in 2016



In 2014, CAFKA produced 29 educational programs for 320 students & 451 adults



Monuments

Acapulco (Quebec City, PQ) 2016

Photo by: Míc helle Purchase

Waterloo Region is where artists come to work with the best, most innovative companies in the world

Jenn E Norton (Guelph, ON) 2011



“Could we ever know each other in the slightest without the arts?” – Gabrielle Roy



**CAF
K+A**
CONTEMPORARY
ART FORUM
KITCHENER +
AREA

Soheila Esfahani (Waterloo, ON) 2011

Wednesday December 14th, 2016
Why should the Region increase the budget for Public Art?

Representatives from the CAFKA board of directors are here today to support the proposed budget increase to the Public Art Program.

Gordon Hatt – Executive Director CAFKA
Michelle Purchase – Chair, CAFKA
Brian Hawthornthwaite, Treasurer, CAFKA
Catherine Bischoff - Director, CAFKA

CAFKA – Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area is a non-profit, artist-run organization that presents a free biennial exhibition of contemporary art in the public spaces of the City of Kitchener and across the Region of Waterloo. Between exhibitions and throughout the year CAFKA promotes art education through its public tours and workshops, videos, public lectures and other ancillary programs and events. At CAFKA we advocate, promote, produce, and educate about public art.

CAFKA does not currently receive funding from the Region.

1. Public art helps create an attachment to one's community

It engages the public in conversations around issues of public and private space. It enriches the lives of both residents and visitors. Public Art is accessible and free, it doesn't discriminate, it is open to all ages and incomes. Public art can help to make our public spaces safer, more child-friendly, more multifunctional and more welcoming. The sign of a great city is the strength of its cultural life: public art can create recognizable city landmarks and memorable experiences.

2. As a grass-roots, artist-run, non-profit organization CAFKA can verify that **there is a great swell of local support for public art in the community** as demonstrated by engagement in our activities. In 2014, CAFKA produced 29 educational programs for 320 students and 451 adults. In 2016 alone, over 80 different volunteers contributed 1700+ hours to create art in public spaces for CAFKA. We have documentation showing that our public and school art tours; educational workshop activities; bike, pub & coffee crawls; office lunch & learn talks, opening ceremony, and Public Art Jane's Walk were attended by almost 5000 people. Overall exposure to our 2016 public art biennial is estimated at 70,000+ persons.

Our first ever Jane's Walk received comments from attendees including " It was a very enriching experience", " I had walked past pieces many times without really noticing them. Not any more!", and " thank you for making us more aware of the art treasures residing in the City of Kitchener" (from Senta Ross - May 2016)

A strong public art landscape is a significant attraction for high-skill talent and tourism. Artists and residents in Waterloo Region don't have to move to bigger cities to participate in the "contemporary art world", it is happening right here. We have received comments from new residents to the city such as:

When I began my tenure-track post at the University of Waterloo in 2013 I was pleased to learn of the very vibrant and established art scene in the region. More specifically, the dedication to public art and the ways in which this art was met favorably by city residents was notable. In my experience, public art can be both diluted by sheer volume of events and by an over-presence of corporate sponsorship in larger urban settings. In KW, the public art practice is oriented toward accessible citizen engagement in meaningful and productive ways. It both highlights strengths of the city and its population and bring in an impressive list of international artists to enhance our local conversation about the value of art in the city. As an artist and researcher, I have greatly benefited from the dedication to public art fostered in the area."

Shana MacDonald, Assistant Professor, Drama and Speech Communication, University of Waterloo - December 2016 (previously lived in Montreal)
shana.macdonald@uwaterloo.ca

3. **CAFKA supports an increase in the regional public art budget**

We would also like to emphasize that CAFKA is an ideal external partner for the Region to help implement public art programs. We are a leader in public art production in the province (have been established in the region since 2001, longer than other public art festivals such as Nuit Blanche Toronto - 2006) and although we produce a biennial program we are operating year-round. We are well-connected and respected in the community, we do a lot with very little money, and we already have a large and highly engaged roster of volunteers and members.

Thank you for your time.

CAFKA Board of Directors

<http://www.cafka.org>

rare Charitable Research Reserve

Building Partnerships in Research and Conservation

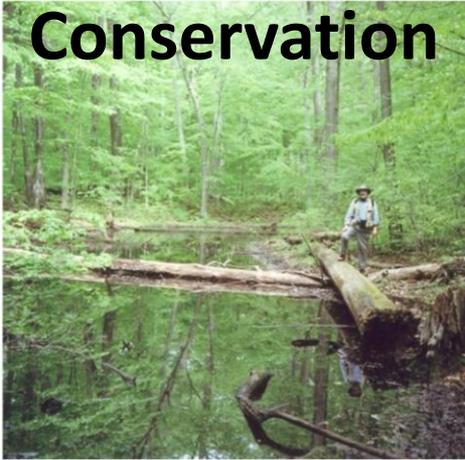


ra re

Who we are & where we are



Conservation



Research



Education



rare's Vision

To offer the community, including the international community and future generations, a diverse network of connected natural areas, protected intact and in perpetuity.

Research & Monitoring



Chain of Learning

65+ research projects in 10 years



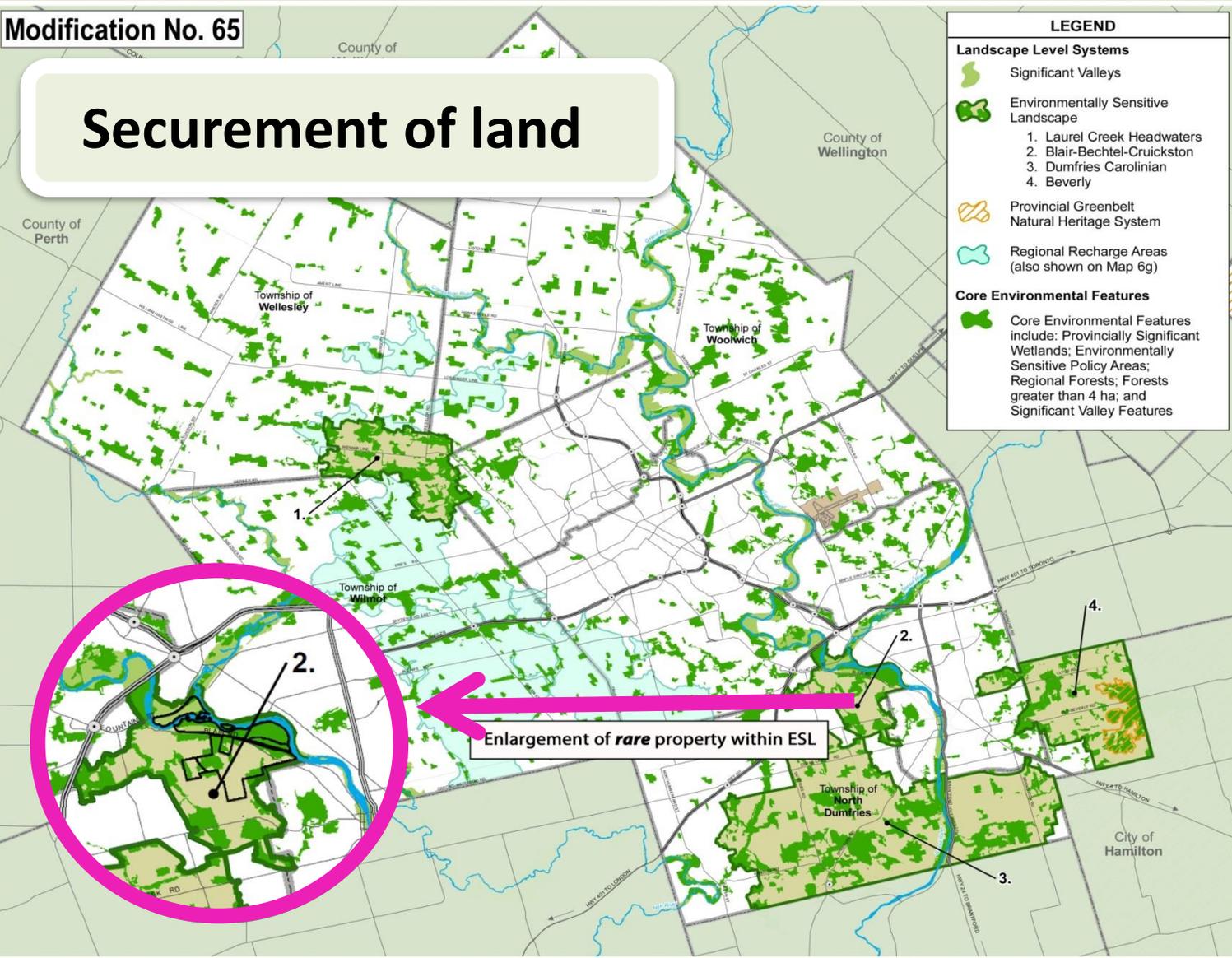
Photo by: P. Kelly

Conservation- *rare* sites



Modification No. 65

Securement of land



LEGEND

Landscape Level Systems

- Significant Valleys
- Environmentally Sensitive Landscape
 1. Laurel Creek Headwaters
 2. Blair-Bechtel-Cruickston
 3. Dumfries Carolinian
 4. Beverly
- Provincial Greenbelt
- Natural Heritage System
- Regional Recharge Areas (also shown on Map 6g)

Core Environmental Features

- Core Environmental Features include: Provincially Significant Wetlands; Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas; Regional Forests; Forests greater than 4 ha; and Significant Valley Features



Regional Official Plan
SHAPING OUR FUTURE

MAP 4 GREENLANDS NETWORK

LEGEND

- Provincial Highway
- Regional Road
- River
- Region of Waterloo International Airport
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway

0 1 2 4 Km

Sources: Region of Waterloo, Ministry of Natural Resources

2010

This image has been modified to show *rare* property within ESL

Note: As of January 24, 2011, this Plan in its entirety, is currently under appeal before the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). Before using this document, care should be taken to check the updated status of the appeal process on the Region of Waterloo's website.

Note: Permanent and intermittent watercourses are identified in the Technical Appendix for Landscape Level Systems and Core Environmental Features.

Note: This map forms part of the Official Plan of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and must be read in conjunction with the policies of this Plan.

Building community

Stewardship and volunteer opportunities – get “hands on”



Thank you for supporting



Thank you, Regional Councilors, for the opportunity to participate in this public input meeting.

My name is Angela Carter and I am the mother of a three year old who receives excellent care at one of the region's Children's Centre, Edith MacIntosh Children's Centre. My son will be entering the school system in the fall, but I am committed to helping to spread the word about these incredible centres and joining with you in protecting and growing them for future families.

In the fall of 2015, families and community members filled these chambers to speak with you about the importance of the Region keeping its commitment to offer nationally-renowned childcare through its five childcare centres. We were impressed at the comments many of you made during that discussion—many of you have an obvious and longstanding commitment to regional childcare.

Now, as we are in the midst of discussions about Budget 2017, I wanted to return to re-iterate some of the concerns and hopes of local parents, and offer a few specific comments on the budget.

Research on the general impact of public investments in childcare is unambiguous: communities reap the long-term rewards of this early investment in children for decades to come.

A recent Region of Waterloo report¹ notes a long list of economic and social benefits gained from high quality, accessible child care such as increased tax revenue and lower social assistance costs (given that childcare allows more parents to work) and local economic activity thanks to the good jobs created in the childcare sector. High quality childcare also helps children off on a strong start with the long-term benefit of healthier communities (and less need for social supports later).

Access to high quality early childhood education is also a great equalizer across incomes, helping to ensure children from disadvantaged backgrounds are not left behind before school even begins. As Bruce Lauckner of the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network has recently noted, "Fewer than five percent of children of every socio-economic level are born with clinically detectable limitation in their development but, by school age, vulnerability in developmental health has grown to more than 26 percent. And profound socio-economic inequalities in development emerge."² Increased access to high quality early childhood education gives children an equal chance to start school on strong footing.

More specifically, supporting the Region's direct-delivery centres is particularly important for a few key reasons.

¹ <http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/AF/FA2015-0915.1.pdf>

² *Alternatives Journal*, 2016, 42:3.

First, families here have great difficulty finding childcare, particularly for licensed childcare, and particularly for infants. There is a crisis in childcare in Ontario—families are desperate for safe, quality care for their kids. One report from the Region of Waterloo emphasized that 84% of children up to 4 years of age do not have access to licensed early learning and child care in our region.³

And yet no comparable private solution is forthcoming. No other providers are stepping forward to provide a similar level of care to meet this demand.

Second, these centres offer exceptionally rated care. The Region's children's centres implement a research-based curriculum, the HighScope program. In fact, these centres are HighScope demonstration sites—only four other programs have achieved this standing in the Province of Ontario and eleven across Canada. In this way, our Region's centres are at the forefront of forwarding independent learning for children while also playing a special role in teaching other educators and future teachers.

Along the way, these centres provide care for children with special needs that cannot easily be found in private or homecare settings. Parents of children with special needs tell me that health practitioners have specifically recommended them would not be able to find comparable care elsewhere.

Finally, these centres provide over sixty good jobs in our communities, jobs for highly trained professionals delivering a top-notch service (all teachers at these centres are registered Early Childhood Educators and certified HighScope teachers). I would stress here that I think it is important for the Region to consider how it might do its part to ensure new jobs are full-time, high-quality jobs, rather than jobs that contribute to the worrisome growth of part-time temporary work. Treating early childhood educators and staff fairly means they make a long-term commitment to their workplaces and the children in our community. And children feel most secure and then can learn better with consistent care, as opposed to high staff turnover rates, as seen in private centres.

I'd like now to turn to the details of Budget 2017. The additional costs for these centres as noted in the Budget 2017 documents relate to extra funds needed to pay for additional staff (6.6 FTEs) to ensure our centres meet new legislative changes. Given the value of these centres, this is a valid and reasonable expense.

Another additional cost relates to ensuring the newly built Elmira Children's Centre has the capacity to open its doors to welcome 30 additional children—including, importantly, infants. The lack of licensed infant spaces is a major problem throughout this region. But it is even more acutely felt in Elmira where there are no licensed infant spaces but where there is significant demand.

³ Data from the Region of Waterloo's "Children's Planning Table"
http://communityservices.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/childrensServices/resources/DOCS_ADMIN-1851660-v3-CPT_-_Potential_Community_Indicators.pdf.

It would be a great loss for the region to have supported the building of this new centre and then withhold the last funding needed to have it reach its potential. It is my understanding that if these extra funds are not approved, the new building will sit half empty. This would be a great disappointment, especially to the families currently on the wait lists.

Yet the impact of these additional funds represents so very little for individual households. As I understand it, the “2017 Preliminary Budget” indicates that on average, households would pay just \$2 more next year to fund the entire Children’s Services Division which includes this additional funding for these centres.

I would generally like to comment that my family is more than happy to pay taxes that will fund public services, even if we are not using these services. In our view, public services and institutions are common resources that we share, and they ultimately build our community and society. Choosing to invest in public services is a way that we take care of each other and try to ensure that others are not left behind. These investments contribute to well-being and a sense of belonging across our community.

We count public childcare as an essential public investment, not unlike our transportation infrastructure, police services and health services. Given the research on the long-term, wide-spread benefits of early childhood education, it is hard to imagine a more important public investment.

Now is the right time to continue this investment. Indeed, the Region of Waterloo might find itself at the right place at the right time in terms of ongoing childcare debates. We may very well be on the cusp of a strong federal and provincial partnership supporting childcare. The Trudeau government has committed to providing funding for childcare, setting aside \$400 million to develop a framework in collaboration with the provinces this coming year. Meanwhile, the Government of Ontario made an ambitious announcement in the fall to add 100,000 child care spaces for infants to four year old children. This will amount to doubling currently existing spaces in five years. Right now, the provincial Ministry of Education is holding public meetings across the province—in Kitchener tomorrow evening—to hear from citizens about their experiences and hopes for provincial programs.

The Region of Waterloo is very well placed to be a leader in these conversations. The Region’s direct-delivery model for its childcare centres could be the example to replicate across the province and beyond. Moreover, the Region may soon find it has additional provincial and federal support. So now is not the time to withdraw support for expanding these centres.

Given the opportunities that might be coming from the federal and provincial government, it seems now is the right moment to have conversations at the regional level about a plan for expanding childcare. Now is an opportune moment to develop a plan for the next five decades of regionally-operated childcare centres, one that expands existing spaces,

particularly the desperately needed infant spaces, and builds new centres in areas of most need so that every family can choose to access this high-quality care.

Perhaps this could take the form of a public forum bringing together childcare researchers and experts, early childhood educators, practitioners from the school systems, informed and passionate parents of our centres (past and present), political leaders, and more—many who spoke to you in fall 2015—to develop the region’s long-term childcare master plan.

I will close by noting that the Region of Waterloo is earning a reputation for being a growing, innovating, forward-looking region. This reputation comes in part thanks to the Region’s public investments—and investments in childcare are central in this. The Region’s children’s centres are a defining feature of our region.

Again I emphasize that these centres are woven into the very fabric of this region’s history. For 45 years, children have benefited from the quality childcare provided in these children’s centres. And the importance of these centres extends far into our region’s future. So let’s grow them and pass them on.