

Report #2 of the Finance & Administration Committee

For consideration by Regional Council

March 27, 2024

The Finance & Administration Committee recommends approval of the following:

1. Motion Regarding Senior Government Funding

Whereas Durham Region along with other regional governments in Ontario were excluded from major new federal and provincial infrastructure programs to enable housing; namely the Housing Accelerator Fund and the Building Faster Fund;

Whereas regional governments are responsible to deliver costly infrastructure to enable growth such as water and sewer infrastructure and transit investments;

Whereas there is a homelessness, housing affordability and supply crisis;

Whereas there is currently a gap in senior government infrastructure funding programs and new funding commitments are required to close the gap in a timely fashion;

Whereas Durham Region residents deserve a fair share of investment from senior level government;

Be it therefore resolved that Durham Region request the federal and provincial government to include regional governments in any new infrastructure program to enable growth and that new major infrastructure programs are established urgently;

And further, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Prime Minister, Premier of Ontario, Durham MPs and MPPs, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

2. The Remuneration and Expenses in 2023 of Members of Regional Council and Regional Council Appointees to Local Boards, as Required by Section 284(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25 ([2024-F-1](#))

That Report #2024-F-1 of the Commissioner of Finance be received for information.

3. Region of Durham Paramedic Services (RDPS) Logistics Vehicle to Support Community Programs (CP) ([2024-F-4](#))

That the purchase of a new Logistics Delivery vehicle, at an estimated upset limit of \$95,000 and financed 100 per cent from reallocation of surplus Provincial funding, be approved to better assist with delivery of

supplies to address the need of our enhanced workload related to Community Programs (CP).

4. 2024 Strategic Property Tax Study (2024-F-2)

- A) That for the 2024 property taxation year, the municipal property tax ratios for the following property classes and subclasses for the Regional Municipality of Durham and its area municipalities be set as follows, consistent with the 2023 ratios, and the requisite by-law be prepared, and approval be granted,

Multi-Residential	1.8665
New Multi-Residential	1.1000
Landfill	1.1000
Pipelines	1.2294
Farmland	0.2000
Managed Forests	0.2500

Commercial Broad Class

(Including Shopping Centres, Office Buildings, Parking Lots and Residual)

Occupied	1.4500
Vacant Land	1.4500
Excess Land	1.4500
On Farm	1.4500

Industrial Broad Class

(Including Large Industrial and Residual)

Occupied	2.0235
Vacant Land	2.0235
Excess Land	2.0235
On Farm	2.0235

- B) That to achieve greater fairness and equity in the Current Value Assessment (CVA) system and property taxation policy, the Province be requested to:
- update the Provincial statutory rate applicable to nuclear generating facilities;
 - institute an annual mechanism to ensure the rate continues to be updated in the future, and;
 - redirect proxy property tax payments currently paid by the Region's two nuclear generating facilities to the Ontario Electricity Financial Corporation (OEFC) for the Ontario Hydro stranded debt to the host municipalities and the Region following retirement of the stranded debt.

5. The 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget for Property Tax Purposes, including General Purpose, Solid Waste Management and Durham Region Transit ([2024-F-3](#))

2024 General Purpose Property Tax Business Plans and Budget

- A) That the 2024 Business Plans and Property Tax Budget for General Purposes (excluding Durham Region Transit and Solid Waste Management) be approved, at a total net property tax requirement of \$746,567,000 as detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget, which are highlighted in this report and summarized as follows:

	2024 Tax Requirements (\$000s)
Regional Operations	
i) Departmental Operations - excluding Long-term Care	333,627
ii) Departmental Operations – Long-term Care	69,416
iii) Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act Provision	5,558
iv) Regional Roads Reserve – Growth	12,549
v) Regional Roads – Rehabilitation Reserve Fund	26,050
vi) Regional Bridges – Rehabilitation Reserve Fund	5,525
Total Regional Operations	452,725
 vii) Police Services	 267,966
 viii) Conservation Authorities	 9,383
Special Contributions:	
ix) Land Conservation and Protection Reserve Fund	394
x) Durham Region Community Investment Grant	6,220
Total Special Contributions	6,614
 SUBTOTAL	 736,688
 xi) Deferral for Seaton Assessment Growth	 9,879
TOTAL GENERAL PROPERTY TAX PURPOSES	746,567

- B) That the 2024 Capital Program for General Property Tax Purposes and financing (excluding Solid Waste, Durham Region Transit and Conservation Authorities' requirements), as outlined in Attachment #5 to Report #2024-F-3 of the Commissioner of Finance and as further detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget, in the amount of \$281,936,000 be approved including up to \$46,833,000 in debenture financing;
- C) That the 2025 to 2033 Capital Forecast for General Property Tax Purposes (excluding Solid Waste, Durham Region Transit and Conservation

Authorities' requirements), as outlined in Attachment #5 to Report #2024-F-3 of the Commissioner of Finance and as further detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget in the amount of \$3,782,409,000 be received for information purposes only and be subject to future approvals.

Contributions for Regional Roads and Bridges

- D) That a 2024 contribution of \$12,549,000 to the Regional Roads Reserve – Growth be authorized to allow for financing of Road Capital Construction Projects;
- E) That a 2024 contribution of \$26,050,000 to the Regional Roads Rehabilitation Reserve Fund be authorized to assist with road rehabilitation requirements;
- F) That a 2024 contribution of \$5,525,000 to the Regional Bridges Rehabilitation Reserve Fund be authorized to assist with bridge rehabilitation requirements.

Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation

- G) That the 2024 Budget for the Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation be approved at a total net property tax requirement of \$14,991,550.

Conservation Authorities

H)	That funding totalling \$6,963,838 for 2024 operations be approved for the Region's five Conservation Authorities as summarized below:	
	Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (including transitioning the 2019-2023 Restoration pilot program to a permanent program in 2024)	\$4,620,240
	Kawartha Region Conservation Authority	729,104
	Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority	658,597
	Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	724,800
	Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority*	231,097
	Total Conservation Authority Operations Funding	\$6,963,838

*The 2024 operating budget provision for Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority includes all Category 1 Corporate Services costs.

I)	That funding totalling \$1,679,259 for 2024 special projects be approved for the Region's Conservation Authorities as summarized below:	
	Kawartha Region Conservation Authority	\$146,100
	Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority	249,559
	Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	994,371
	Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority	289,229
	Total Conservation Authority Special Projects Funding	\$1,679,259

- J) That funding totalling \$200,000 for 2024 land management expenditures be approved for properties within Durham Region as outlined below:

Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority	\$85,000
Kawartha Region Conservation Authority	15,000
Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority	37,000
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	41,000
Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority	22,000
Total Conservation Authority Land Management Funding	\$200,000

- K) That the Oak Ridges Moraine Groundwater Program (ORMGP) Initiatives be continued in 2024 at a funding level of \$175,000 for ongoing groundwater protection initiatives jointly funded with the City of Toronto, Region of York and Region of Peel;
- L) That the special funding requests as outlined below be approved subject to the accountability of project costs incurred and project completion:
- a) Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority for improvement to the entrance at Enniskillen Conservation Area and Russ Powell Nature Centre in the amount of \$120,000;
 - b) Kawartha Conservation Authority for updates to their Watershed Planning in the amount of \$30,500;
 - c) Kawartha Conservation Authority for phase five of five for the digitization of corporate records in the amount of \$5,446; and
 - d) Kawartha Conservation Authority for the implementation of their 10-year Environmental Monitoring Strategy in the amount of \$9,077;
- M) That the special funding request from the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority as outlined below be approved subject to securing the remainder of the project funding from the National Adaptation Strategy and Hydrologic Prediction and Innovation Program, project completion and accountability of project costs incurred:
- a) LiDAR base mapping for the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority watershed to assist with floodplain mapping programs in the amount of \$80,000;
- N) That the approval for the special funding request from the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority for a Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan Pilot Project (SNAP) in the amount of \$120,000 be delegated to the Commissioner of Finance pending final review of the pilot project selected and its alignment with Regional responsibilities and priorities. The advancement of any funding approved for this special request will be subject to project completion and accountability of project costs incurred;

- O) That a contribution of \$393,977 to the Land Conservation and Protection Reserve Fund be authorized to assist in financing requests for funding received from the five Conservation Authorities to acquire environmentally sensitive lands within the Region, based on eligibility criteria per the approved Regional Land Acquisition Reserve Fund Policy.

Solid Waste Management 2024 Business Plan and Budget

- P) That the 2024 Business Plan and Budget for Solid Waste Management at a net property tax requirement of \$60,075,000 be approved as detailed in the 2024 Solid Waste Management Business Plan and Budget;
- Q) That the 2024 Capital Program for Solid Waste Management and financing, as outlined in Attachment #5 to Report #2024-F-3 of the Commissioner of Finance and as further detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plan and Budget for Solid Waste Management, in the amount of \$4,732,000 be approved;
- R) That the 2025 to 2033 Capital Forecast for Solid Waste Management as outlined in Attachment #5 to Report #2024-F-3 of the Commissioner of Finance and as further detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget in the amount of \$242,030,000 be received for information purposes only and be subject to future approvals.

Durham Region Transit 2024 Business Plan and Budget

- S) That the 2024 Business Plan and Budget for Durham Region Transit be approved at a total net property tax requirement of \$92,816,000, as detailed in the 2024 Durham Region Transit Business Plan and Budget;
- T) That the 2024 Capital Program for Durham Region Transit and financing, as outlined in Attachment #5 to Report #2024-F-3 of the Commissioner of Finance and as further detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget, in the gross amount of \$342,336,000 be approved, including up to \$63,095,000 in debenture financing (including \$20,230,000 in long-term financing from the Canada Infrastructure Bank) subject to federal funding approval for applicable projects;
- U) That the 2025 to 2033 Capital Forecast for Durham Region Transit as outlined in Attachment #5 to Report #2024-F-3 of the Commissioner of Finance and as further detailed within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget in the amount of \$1,028,132,000 be received for information purposes only and be subject to future approvals;
- V) That staff report back to the Transit Executive Committee and Finance and Administration Committee in advance of the 2025 Business Plan and Budget should sufficient senior government funding not be forthcoming to support the implementation of Durham Region Transit's fleet electrification

strategy and forecasted service enhancements, with recommendations on updating the Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023 – 2032) to reflect funding realities.

Financial Management and Accountability

- W) That the Listing of 2024 Regional Fees and Charges, as set forth in the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget be approved and made available to the public and all applicable by-laws be amended accordingly;
- X) That a transfer of \$450,000 to the Climate Change Mitigation and Environmental Reserve Fund from savings in the Region's natural gas hedging account be approved;
- Y) That a transfer of \$3,068,880 to the Equipment Reserve from the Capital Impact Stabilization Reserve Fund be approved to support the ongoing sustainability of the reserve for fleet equipment replacement;
- Z) That the Growth Related General Infrastructure (Property Tax) Reserve Fund be established to finance the shortfall in development charge receipts from the mandatory phase-in, freezing, exemptions and discounts introduced through Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, 2023 and related legislation, and that for 2023, any property tax surplus up to the maximum amount of the estimated 2023 development charge shortfall for property tax services be allocated to the Growth Related Property Tax Infrastructure Reserve Fund;
- AA) That the necessary By-laws for the establishment of the recommended Growth Related General Infrastructure (Property Tax) Reserve Fund be presented to Regional Council;
- BB) That the Region continue to advocate directly and jointly with our municipal partners and associations for senior government funding for shortfalls in development charge funding resulting from Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, 2023 and related legislation as well as for the unplanned and accelerated infrastructure needs to meet the provincial housing targets;
- CC) That Council support the Federation of Canadian Municipalities call on the Government of Canada for urgent investment in infrastructure and commitments to enhancements to the Canada Community Building Fund, establishing a permanent Public Transit Fund and enhanced investment in Reaching Homes funding;
- DD) That the Province of Ontario be requested to provide stability and certainty to the Provincial Gas Tax program to support transit operations and capital priorities;

- EE) That based upon the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget as recommended herein, the Commissioner of Finance be authorized to set 2024 Regional Property Tax Rates for General Purposes, Solid Waste Management and Durham Region Transit and approval be granted for the requisite By-laws;
- FF) That for any Regional program change or capital expenditure included within the 2024 Regional Business Plans and Budget which is proposed to be financed in whole, or in part, from Provincial/Federal subsidies, grants or related revenues, neither staffing, capital nor other related Regional expenditures can be committed until such time as adequate confirmation, to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Finance/Treasurer, is received from the respective provincial/federal ministry to commit to the subsidy, grant or related revenues in accordance with the Regional Budget Management Policy;
- GG) That funding totalling up to \$83,250 be approved for the Pickering Auxiliary Rescue Association with the funding to be provided from within the Finance Department's 2024 Business Plan and Budget to be administered by the Finance Department in consultation with the Durham Regional Police Service, based upon services rendered;
- HH) That funding totalling up to \$52,160 be approved for COMRA Marine Rescue Association with the funding to be provided from within the Finance Department's 2024 Business Plan and Budget to be administered by the Finance Department in consultation with the Durham Regional Police Service, based upon services rendered;
- II) That the Commissioner of Finance be delegated authority, for purposes of the Region's Humanitarian response to asylum-seekers and refugees, to extend the Region's agreement with Community Development Council Durham to June 30, 2024, execute any transfer payment agreements, expend funds up to a maximum of an additional \$5,528,000 in accordance with the program guidelines, make any modifications to the program(s) to ensure desired outcomes are achieved, receive any federal and/or provincial funds for this response, and waive the Region's Purchasing By-law and Budget Management Policy as required for this response; and that any costs associated with the extension of this agreement not reimbursed under the federal Interim Housing Assistance Program or the provincial Homelessness Prevention Program or any other federal or provincial funds be funded at the discretion of the Commissioner of Finance;
- JJ) That the federal government be requested to urgently reimburse the Region of Durham for all costs incurred to date and anticipated to be incurred up to June 30, 2024 for the Region's Humanitarian response to asylum-seekers and refugees and establish an ongoing funding program from July 1, 2024 onward to cover the costs of providing settlement services for asylum-seekers and refugees to prevent the cancellation of any programs offered

by the Region of Durham after June 30, 2024;

- KK) That the Region continue to advocate for sustained senior government funding for growth related capital infrastructure to support the housing goals within the Region of Durham;
- LL) That staff be directed to prepare a 10-year Housing Service and Financing Strategy to be brought forward to Council in conjunction with the 2025 Business Plans and Budget;
- MM) That the reporting of the Impact of Excluded Expenses for tangible capital asset amortization, post-employment benefits and solid waste landfill closure/post-closure expenses be adopted, per requirements under the Ontario Regulation 284/09 of the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB);

**Estimated Impact of Excluded Expenses on Accumulated Surplus
For the 2024 Business Plans and Budgets (\$,000's)**

	<u>2023</u>		<u>2024</u>		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Property Tax</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Sewer</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
<u>PSAS Additions to Budget</u>					
Tangible Capital Asset Amortization	164,648	104,174	29,860	36,776	170,810
Post-Employment Benefit Expense	27,301	43,820	738	890	45,448
Asset Retirement Obligation - Increase/(Decrease)	(248)	1,317	161	86	1,564
Transfers from Reserves and Reserve Funds	145,359	246,889	31,417	19,785	298,091
Proceeds of Debt issued for Regional Purposes	160,883	109,928	-	45,868	155,796
Total PSAS Additions	497,943	506,128	62,176	103,405	671,709
<u>PSAS Reductions to Budget</u>					
Gross Tangible Capital Asset Acquisitions	(784,858)	(628,307)	(143,006)	(215,158)	(986,471)
Less: Tangible Capital Asset Recoveries	40,691	-	-	60,172	60,172
Net Tangible Capital Asset Acquisitions	(744,167)	(628,307)	(143,006)	(154,986)	(926,299)
Debt Principal Payments	(18,643)	(18,589)	(695)	(2,802)	(22,086)
Transfers to Reserves and Reserve Funds	(155,268)	(152,579)	(9,836)	(20,773)	(183,188)
Contributed Tangible Capital Assets	(20,017)	(1,270)	(9,360)	(13,396)	(24,026)
Total PSAS Reductions	(938,095)	(800,745)	(162,897)	(191,957)	(1,155,599)
Net Impact - (Increase) to Accumulated Surplus	(440,152)	(294,617)	(100,721)	(88,552)	(483,890)

- NN) That sections of this resolution be forwarded to each relevant party to inform them of their approved funding and/or Council's position on the appropriate matter.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Ashe, Chair, Finance & Administration Committee