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The Regional Municipality of Durham

Community Growth and Economic Development Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

A regular meeting of the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee was held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 9:30 AM.

Councillor Chapman assumed the Chair.

1. Roll Call

Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

* indicates individuals who participated electronically.

Members

Present: Councillor Chapman, Chair
Councillor Pickles, Vice-Chair*, attended the meeting at 9:32 AM
Councillor Collier* left the meeting at 10: 04 AM
Councillor Kerr
Councillor Shahid
Councillor Woo
Councillor Wotten*
Regional Chair Henry left the meeting at 10:10 AM

Also

Present: Councillor Carter*
Councillor Neal*
Councillor Pettingill*

Staff Present: S. Austin, E. Baxter-Trahair*, M. Broderick*, D. Ellis*, H. Finlay*, L. Fleury, L. Foulds, T. Fraser, S. Gill, C. Goodchild, A. Harras*, R. Inacio, S. Jibb, J. Kelly, C. Leitch, S. Lemon, I. McVey, N. Prasad, L. Trombino* and R. Woon.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Motion #12

Moved by Councillor Kerr, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
That the minutes of the regular Community Growth and Economic Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, be adopted.

Carried

4. **Statutory Public Meetings**

There were no statutory public meetings.

5. **Presentations**

- 5.1 Pam Lancaster, Conservation Lands Coordinator, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority; and Roy Mosher, Restoration Coordinator, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
Re: Update on Durham TREES Program – Celebrating 5 Years of Success (2026-CG-7)
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P. Lancaster, Conservation Lands Coordinator, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, and R. Mosher, Restoration Coordinator, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, provided a presentation with an update on the Durham TREES Program. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Durham TREES Delivery Area
- Durham Trees - Locally Developed
- Durham Trees - Collaborative
- Durham Trees - Engagement Focused
- Durham Trees - Project Based Results
- Durham TREES by the numbers
- Benefits Beyond the Tree
- Collaborating for Climate Resilience
- Extension of Service
- New Durham TREES Offering

P. Lancaster and R. Mosher responded to questions with respect to program funding; requirements for the afforestation program; the resources provided; the engagement of community groups for planting; locations where trees have been planted; whether areas susceptible to or demonstrating erosion are part of targeted areas; the tree planting target for Phase 2 versus the total trees planted in Phase 1; the survival rate; spacing between trees; site preparation; the reasons for program success; projected climate impacts on commonly planted tree species; the program website (durhamtrees.org); the possibility of planting trees to create a snow fence; and the Clarington Trees for Rural Roads program.

- 5.2 Stacey Jibb, Manager, Agriculture and Rural Economic Development, and Steffan Lemon, Program Specialist, Agriculture and Rural
Re: Growing Agri-Food Durham Annual Report (2026-EDT-1)
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S. Jibb, Manager, Agriculture and Rural Economic Development, and S. Lemon, Program Specialist, Agriculture and Rural, provided a presentation regarding Growing Agri-Food Durham Annual Report.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Growing Agri-Food Durham Purpose
- Goal Areas
 - Goal 1: Retain and expand local food businesses
 - Goal 2: Streamline the regulation and approval process for agri-food business
 - Goal 3: Enable and encourage agriculture related and on-farm diversified uses related to agriculture
 - Goal 4: Advocate for infrastructure support
 - Goal 5: Support businesses to increase agri-food processing capacity
 - Goal 6: Identify opportunities and solutions for the workforce and labour shortages in the agri-food sector
 - Goal 7: Provide resources for aging and young farmers
 - Goal 8: Partner with agriculture organizations to deliver and expand agriculture literacy in the Region
 - Goal 9: Enable a culture of innovation in agriculture and food
 - Goal 10: Enhance urban agriculture
- Annual Reporting and 2026 Priorities

S. Jibb responded to questions with respect to typical areas that farm businesses are diversifying into; the existence of a program advisory committee for the Durham College Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture; whether there is an initiative to increase course offerings at community colleges to encourage entry into the agricultural sector; encouraging innovation in agriculture; Goal 3 and the status of implementing policies related to enabling agriculture related and on-farm diversified uses in the Township of Uxbridge; Goal 2 and staff's presentation at an on-farm diversified uses workshop organized by the Municipality of Clarington; and activities related to Goal 7.

6. Delegations

There were no delegations.

7. Community Growth

7.1 Correspondence

- A) Correspondence from County of Prince Edward, Re: Resolution passed at their Council meeting held on January 29, 2026, in support of Bill 21, Protect Our Food Act, 2025
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Councillor Neal suggested that the correspondence be referred to the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Motion #13

Moved by Councillor Woo, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,
That the correspondence received from the County of Prince Edward regarding the resolution passed at their Council meeting held on January 29, 2026, in support of Bill 21, Protect Our Food Act, 2025, be received for information.

**Referred to the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee
(See Following Motion)**

Motion #14

Moved by Councillor Woo, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,
That the correspondence received from the County of Prince Edward regarding the resolution passed at their Council meeting held on January 29, 2026, in support of Bill 21, Protect Our Food Act, 2025, be referred to the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee for comment.

Carried

- B) Correspondence from Doug Glass, Ajax resident, re: Report #2026-CG-7: Update on Durham TREES Program – Celebrating 5 Years of Success; Report #2026-CG-8: Smart Mobility Durham 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Workplan; and Report #2026-EDT-1: Growing Agri-Food Durham Annual Report
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Motion #15

Moved by Councillor Kerr, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
That the correspondence received from Doug Glass, Ajax resident, regarding Report #2026-CG-7, Report #2026-CG-8, and Report #2026-EDT-1, be referred to consideration of Items 7.2 A), 7.2 B), and 8.2 A).

Carried

7.2 Reports

- A) Update on Durham TREES Program – Celebrating 5 Years of Success (2026-CG-7)
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Report #2026-CG-7 from S. Austin, Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development, was received.

Motion #16

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,
That Report #2026-CG-7 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development be received for information.

Carried

B) Smart Mobility Durham 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Workplan
(2026-CG-8)

Report #2026-CG-8 from S. Austin, Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development, was received.

Motion #17

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by Councillor Kerr,
That we recommend to Council:

- A) That Report #2026-CG-8 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development, including the Smart Mobility Durham's 2025 Annual Report as outlined in Attachment 1, be received;
- B) That Smart Mobility Durham's 2026 Workplan be approved, as outlined in Attachment 2 to Report #2026-CG-8; and
- C) That a copy of Report #2026-CG-8 be forwarded to the Durham Active Transportation Committee and the Area Municipalities.

Carried

8. Economic Development

8.1 Correspondence

There were no communications to consider.

8.2 Reports

A) Growing Agri-Food Durham Annual Report
(2026-EDT-1)

Report #2026-EDT-1 from S. Austin, Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development, was received.

Motion #18

Moved by Councillor Woo, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
That Report #2026-EDT-1 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development be received for information.

Carried

9. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

10. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

11. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Community Growth and Economic Development Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 9:30 AM in Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

13. Adjournment

Motion #19

Moved by Councillor Kerr, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM

Respectfully submitted,

B. Chapman
Chair

T. Fraser
Committee Clerk