

For Immediate Release

Friday, March 29, 2019



CITY HOSTS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Welland – ON Welland Mayor Frank Champion and senior staff held a roundtable discussion yesterday afternoon at Civic Square with builders, developers, and real estate agents. These meetings have been organized on an annual basis since 2016 as part of the City’s ongoing commitment to stakeholder engagement, strategic communications, and continuous improvement.

“The City’s pro-business approach is attracting residential development, industrial investment, and creating jobs in a highly competitive global economy,” said Welland Mayor Frank Champion. “We value our relationships with the development community and the feedback we receive at these roundtable meetings is extremely valuable as we continue to partner to create attractive developments to grow our City.”

“We need to ensure that our service levels and our pre-consultation and approval processes give builders and developers confidence and a competitive advantage in a business environment where time is money,” said CAO Gary Long. “We also want to work with the development community to build on conversations they’re having in marketing Welland to potential residents and telling our story about the character of our community, our programs and amenities, and the quality of life we offer.”

Many builders and developers encouraged the City to stay the course and were very complimentary of City staff for being great to work with and for providing timely, knowledgeable, and helpful responses and guidance throughout the development process. Several indicated that they consider Welland to be one of the top municipalities in Niagara for doing business and promoting development as a result of the strong support from Council and the service provided by City staff.

City staff from Administration, Building, Corporate Services, Economic Development, Fire, Infrastructure, and Planning attended the meeting and provided the following updates:

- a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan is being completed and feedback from the development community is encouraged;
- the Mayor and senior staff have had several meetings with provincial officials to discuss reducing red tape and barriers to investment, and to provide our perspective on provincial planning and development policies;

- the City is continuing to move forward with its waterfront redevelopment plans to enhance recreational programming and attract residential and commercial development;
- the Building Division is focusing on service delivery innovation in providing on-line digital options for permit applications and booking inspections;
- the City's Enterprise Drive industrial subdivision is sold out and almost half of the lots created in the new River Road industrial subdivision are sold;
- many of Welland's companies are hiring;
- the City is working with public and private sector partners to redevelop brownfields and revitalize the downtown through the Downtown and Health and Wellness Cluster Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and its Brownfield CIP;
- Building, Engineering, and Planning fees are being reviewed by a consultant to ensure full cost recovery;
- Welland's Development Charges By-law is being updated and we welcome comments from builders and developers;
- Welland's population, based on independent projections, is expected to grow by an additional 18,000 residents by 2041; and
- Council and staff continue to be very supportive of CIP programs and funding and have been strong advocates at Niagara Region to ensure they fund their matching share and maintain Smarter Niagara Incentive Program (SNIP) funding.

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