



**KINGSTON CITY COUNCIL
REPORT CARD
Q2 2023**

For 182 years, The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce has been facilitating connections and collective action to strengthen our business community.

This report card is part of our continued advocacy efforts to ensure that City Council remains transparent and accountable to our vibrant business community.

How to read our report card

Our team has reviewed motions voted on in public at full City Council meetings over the second quarter of 2023, and identified the motions that are most relevant to the Kingston business community and how council voted on those motions. This includes May 2 through July 11, 2023.

Ratings Explained



Red: Council is seen to be offside with the priorities of the business community. Issues important to the business community and workers are not being considered or are being voted down.



Yellow: Council is somewhat aligned on business issues. There is occasional consideration given to business concerns and vote outcomes sometimes reflect the needs of local employers and workers.



Green: Council is generally aligned with the priorities of the business community. Issues important to the business community are regularly being discussed and considered, and votes on business issues typically pass.

Individual councillors' voting records are included at the end of the report for your information. In recording council votes, a green indicates a vote in favour, red indicates a vote to reject, yellow indicates abstention, and black indicates absence. Note there are 13 members of city council.

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

May 2 Meeting

Ontario Land Tribunal Proposed Settlement – 275 & 283 Queen Street & 364 Barrie Street

About: After deferring by two weeks a decision on the settlement agreement for this redevelopment proposal, despite staff recommending against a deferral, city council approved the settlement agreement.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: Ten in favour, three oppose

Note: This vote does not mean the development may now proceed, as there is still an Ontario Land Tribunal case to settle.

2023 Final Tax Levy and Rates

About: City council approved an average property tax increase of 3.35 percent. When including requisitions for the County of Frontenac and the University Hospitals Kingston Foundation, the increase climbs to an average of 3.49 percent, with west-end residents seeing a slightly higher increase and east-end residents slightly lower.

While property taxes are inevitable and the increase is low relative to some other municipalities, the Chamber would have preferred to see a lower increase given the difficult economic circumstances.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 13 in favour (unanimous)

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

Homes for Heroes – Offset of Development Fees

About: Council approved a tiny home development for homeless veterans located at 730 King St. West. The development, being established by the Homes For Heroes Foundation, will consist of 20 tiny homes, a resource center, social service offices, community gardens, and a community recreation space. All three levels of government contributed to the project.

Housing and homelessness remains an important business issue, and we hope both businesses and governments are inspired by this project to pursue more innovative housing proposals.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 13 in favour (unanimous)

Conference Centre Request for Information (RFI)

About: Council voted to proceed to an RFI and seek out companies to construct a conference centre and hotel in downtown Kingston on a parking lot beside the Leon's Centre. This facility could support the City's economic growth without creating a significant burden on taxpayers.

Your Chamber supports this project and eagerly awaits the outcome of the RFI which should provide greater clarity on timelines and the feasibility of this approach.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 12 in favour, 1 oppose

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

Gas Disconnection Process

About: Staff will be reporting back to council this fall regarding Utilities Kingston's fees as it relates to natural gas disconnection. Staff report that several residents have complained about the fees.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 11 in favour, 2 absent

May 16 Meeting

44-62 Barbara Avenue

About: Council voted to provide funding to a landowner seeking to renovate and add suites to their existing townhouses in the Kingscourt area. The funding will ensure five of the units remain affordable for the next 20 years.

Given the shortage of tradespeople and high cost of development we are currently experiencing, these types of partnerships will be essential to address Kingston's high rent and chronically low vacancy rate.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 11 in favour, 2 absent

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

Development Analysis

About: Staff have been directed to prepare a development analysis which will include:

- the number of planning applications submitted in the last three years,
- number of units approved,
- number of affordable housing units,
- number of units appealed, and
- development charges and taxes associated with all units.

Staff will also estimate the impact of such delays on precarious housing, homelessness, and the vacancy rate.

The analysis is due out in Q4 of 2023 and we look forward to it with great interest.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 11 in favour, 2 absent

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

May 30 Meeting

Strategic Plan

About: City council received the strategic plan for 2023–2026, which includes five pillars: Support Housing Affordability, Lead Environmental Stewardship and Climate Action, Build an Active and Connected Community, Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community, and Drive Inclusive Economic Growth. The city also released an implementation plan.

Of note to business: this term, council will evaluate an aquatics centre (partly for tourism purposes), begin drafting plans for the future of Portsmouth Olympic Harbour, tackle graffiti, make public transit improvements, execute road repairs, invest in doctor attraction, work on newcomer integration and attracting airlines, consider expanding available employment lands, incubate life sciences and food businesses, work on childcare access, consider the aforementioned conference centre, increase recreational tourism, add more garbage cleanup downtown, establish a film studio, and work closely with the post-secondary institutions on student/community issues.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 12 in favour, 1 absent

Note: The next council meeting following this one was June 6, and no items deemed broadly significant to the business community were discussed. Our review continues on the next page with the June 20 meeting.

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

June 20 Meeting

Changes to the Development Review Process in Response to Fee Refunds

About: In an effort to reduce housing costs, the provincial government has changed the development review process via Bill 109. This bill shortens the timeline for municipal approvals under penalty of development fee refunds to the development applicants. This report outlined potential pathways for the City to proceed while remaining compliant with the law while providing a minimum of fee refunds.

Ontario has the longest development timelines of any province in Canada, which increases project costs. The response by staff, in this case, did not seem to identify ways of making the approval process faster in the spirit of the provincial legislation. Instead, the recommendations mainly revolved around how to frontload the process. The specific response to Bill 109 is cause for concern.

Chamber Desired Outcome: Oppose

Council Result: 12 in favour, 1 absent

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

Strong Mayor Powers

About: City Council voted in favour of a motion to rebuke the provincial government regarding the 'strong mayor' powers granted to Kingston's mayor, as well as 25 other Ontario mayors, effective Jul. 1.

The powers, which are modelled after powers already available to U.S. mayors, were introduced by the Ontario government to better address development gridlock and other municipal-provincial priorities.

The motion by council and resulting letter to the province will have no effect other than to further strain relationships with the province and use up staff and council time that could be spent on municipal priorities.

Chamber Desired Outcome: Oppose

Council Result: 10 in favour, 1 oppose, 1 absent

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

Limestone City Co-operative Housing Ltd. Affordable Housing Project

About: City council voted in favour of providing \$50,000 in seed funding to an innovative co-operative housing project. The project, which has no reported timelines, could be located at a plot of city land earmarked for affordable housing. Staff will subsequently make a recommendation on the land transfer to this organization.

The project sounds excellent, albeit very preliminary, and we encourage the City to take all precautions to ensure the process remains transparent.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 12 in favour, 1 absent

Note: The next council meeting following this one was June 27, which was mainly a training opportunity for councillors. Our review continues on the next page with the July 11 meeting.

2ND QUARTER VOTING ON BUSINESS ISSUES

July 11 Meeting

New Community Benefits Charge Strategy

About: Community benefits charges (CBCs) are a tool for municipalities to fund community improvements when a neighbouring development or redevelopment occurs. The City was required by the province to develop a new CBC strategy when Bill 197 became law.

The new CBC tool allows municipalities to levy a charge against new developments that are at least five storeys in height and that provide at least ten residential units, with limited exceptions. The administration of these fees must be done carefully to avoid further escalating the cost of necessary housing development.

Chamber Desired Outcome: In favour

Council Result: 11 in favour, two absent

Textile Recycling Pilot Project

About: Council voted to defer a decision until September on a partnership between the City of Kingston and RenewalSquared Inc. which would have seen textile recycling bins set up across town. Council directed staff to consult with not-for-profits to evaluate the potential impact on clothing donations.

Textile recycling is important in extending the life of our municipal dump and advancing sustainability goals. A short deferral is reasonable to amend the regrettable error of inadequate consultation.

Chamber Desired Outcome: Oppose (in order to defer)

Council Result: 10 in favour, 1 opposed, two absent

Q2 2023 COUNCIL SCORE

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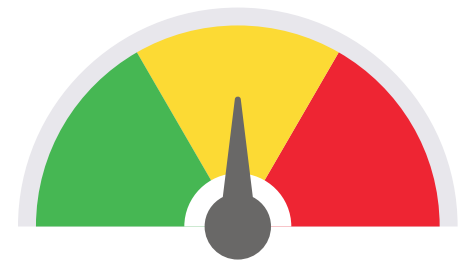
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We will summarize our second quarter assessment as 'yellow', with a few areas of concern particularly on the development front.

Of particular note, during this quarter, a new report was issued by the CMHC which identified municipalities as a key driver of development approval delays, and that these delays were increasing housing costs.

This is why we believe staff plans that appear to be seeking to maintain (as closely as possible) the existing development approval process within the context of the new provincial legislation should be cause for more questions by council.



Q2 2023

This quarter also saw the return of 2022 report cards from various committees, including Housing and Homelessness and Rural Advisory. These documents identified some areas of growing concern, such as the growing number of identified individuals experiencing homelessness, which will bear further attention this fall.

ABOUT YOUR CHAMBER

The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce is the oldest chamber in Ontario and boasts a membership base of 650 businesses representing over 18,000 employees.

We are the trusted advocate and tireless champion for local business. We are committed to stimulating the growth and prosperity of the local business community. Our mission is to influence public policy, be the catalyst for connectivity, and provide unique competitive advantages for our members.

We invite prospective new member organizations to visit kingstonchamber.ca and complete a membership application.

2ND QUARTER VOTING RECORDS ON BUSINESS ISSUES

CONFERENCE CENTRE RFI

GAS DISCONNECTION

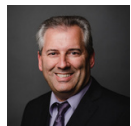
BARBARA DEVELOPMENT



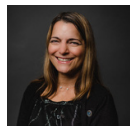
MAYOR BRYAN PATERSON
Mayor



COUNCILLOR GARY OOSTERHOF
District 1, Countryside



COUNCILLOR PAUL CHAVES
District 2, Loyalist-Cataraqui



COUNCILLOR LISA OSANIC
District 3, Collins-Bayridge



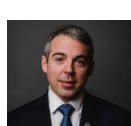
COUNCILLOR WENDY STEPHEN
District 4, Lakeside



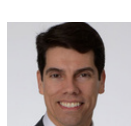
COUNCILLOR DON AMOS
District 5, Portsmouth



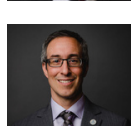
COUNCILLOR JIMMY HASSAN
District 6, Trillium



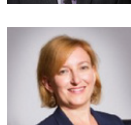
COUNCILLOR BRANDON TOZZO
District 7, Kingscourt-Rideau



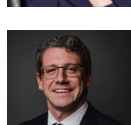
COUNCILLOR JEFF MCLAREN
District 8, Meadowbrook
-Strathcona



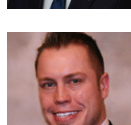
COUNCILLOR VINCENT CINANNI
District 9, Williamsville



COUNCILLOR CONNY GLENN
District 10, Sydenham



COUNCILLOR GREGORY RIDGE
District 11, King's Town



COUNCILLOR RYAN BOEHME
District 12, Pittsburgh

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2ND QUARTER VOTING RECORDS ON BUSINESS ISSUES

DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

STRATEGIC PLAN



MAYOR BRYAN PATERSON
Mayor



COUNCILLOR GARY OOSTERHOF
District 1, Countryside



COUNCILLOR PAUL CHAVES
District 2, Loyalist-Cataraqui



COUNCILLOR LISA OSANIC
District 3, Collins-Bayridge



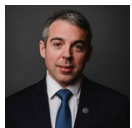
COUNCILLOR WENDY STEPHEN
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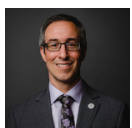
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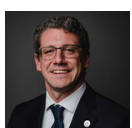
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COUNCILLOR RYAN BOEHME
District 12, Pittsburgh

ABSENT

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2ND QUARTER VOTING RECORDS ON BUSINESS ISSUES

DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW PROCESS

STRONG
MAYOR

LIMESTONE CITY
COOP



MAYOR BRYAN PATERSON
Mayor



COUNCILLOR GARY OOSTERHOF
District 1, Countryside



COUNCILLOR PAUL CHAVES
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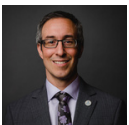
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2ND QUARTER VOTING RECORDS ON BUSINESS ISSUES

COMMUNITY BENEFITS CHARGE

TEXTILE RECYCLING DEFERRAL



MAYOR BRYAN PATERSON
Mayor



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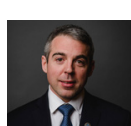
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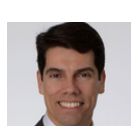
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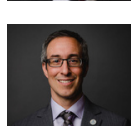
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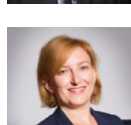
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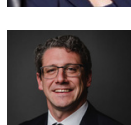
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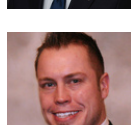
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COUNCILLOR RYAN BOEHME
District 12, Pittsburgh

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