



**Economic and Development Services Department**

**Date:** January 4, 2023

File: 12-04

**To:** Mayor Carter and Members of Council

**From:** Warren Munro, HBA, RPP, Commissioner  
Economic and Development Services Department

**Re: Deferral of Funding of a Heritage Conservation District Study for the  
Community of Columbus to the 2024 Operating Budget**

## **1.0 Purpose**

On June 20, 2022, pursuant to Report DS-22-127 concerning staff's investigation into the process to designate a Heritage Conservation District ("H.C.D.") under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act in the community of Columbus, Oshawa City Council passed the following motion:

"That, pursuant to Report DS-22-127 dated June 1, 2022, funding to retain a consultant to prepare a Heritage Conservation District Study for the community of Columbus, in order to advance the potential designation under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act, be referred to the 2023 Operating Budget."

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide an update with respect to the advancement of potential funding to undertake a Heritage Conservation District Study ("H.C.D. Study") for the community of Columbus in relation to the anticipated timing of completion of the Integrated Columbus Part II Planning Act and Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Act Study (the "Columbus Part II Plan Study"). Owing to the potential Budget implications and the above noted Council direction, this Memorandum is being forwarded to Council as part of its 2023 Budget deliberations.

Pursuant to staff's review and compilation of the 2023 Operating Budget package, it was determined that the timeline for the funding of the completion of an H.C.D. Study for the community of Columbus is intrinsically tied to the timeline for the completion of the Columbus Part II Plan Study.

The Columbus Part II Plan Study continues to be advanced by staff and will not conclude until mid to late 2023, at the earliest. Undertaking an H.C.D. Study for the community of Columbus in advance of the completion of the Columbus Part II Plan Study would be premature, given that the policy context to guide future growth in the community will influence the structure and context of any potential Heritage Conservation District Plan ("H.C.D. Plan"). Accordingly, it would be appropriate that funding to retain a consultant to prepare an H.C.D. Study be deferred to the 2024 Operating Budget.

Attachment 1 to this Memorandum is a copy of Report DS-22-127 dated June 1, 2022. Owing to its length, this Report is not attached but is available at the following link: <https://pub-oshawa.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8258>.

## **2.0 Input From Other Sources**

The following have been consulted in the preparation of this Memo:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Commissioner, Corporate and Finance Services

## **3.0 Analysis**

### **3.1 Background**

In 2019, A.S.I., a heritage consulting firm, completed a Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment for the Columbus Part II Plan Study. The purpose of this assessment was to describe the existing conditions, present an inventory of potential cultural heritage resources, and propose appropriate mitigation measures and recommendations for minimizing and avoiding possible negative impacts on identified potential cultural heritage resources.

Based on the results of the assessment, A.S.I. identified a total of 62 recognized and potential cultural heritage resources within the Study Area for the Columbus Part II Plan Study, and recommended that:

- The Part II Plan incorporate policies that promote the conservation of any properties that have been determined to merit heritage recognition, and,
- Given that many of the properties identified form a contiguous stretch of recognized or potential cultural heritage resources, an investigation into the merits of an H.C.D. is warranted.

On February 22, 2022, Oshawa City Council adopted Resolution DS-22-42 and directed the then Development Services staff to initiate the process to investigate a potential Heritage Conservation District for the community of Columbus with respect to matters generally relating to timing, cost and scope. Resolution DS-22-42 also required staff to obtain input from Heritage Oshawa, the Columbus Community Advisory Committee and property owners in the Columbus Special Policy Area ("Columbus S.P.A.") on whether the City should advance an H.C.D. Study.

Pursuant to Council's direction regarding Resolution DS-22-42, staff mailed notice of the H.C.D. investigation and request for public comments to each property owner within the Columbus S.P.A. on April 6, 2022. The notice provided the deadline for comments as well as a link to a designated webpage. The public consultation process, including the results of the consultation, is further described in Section 5.8 and Attachment 3 of Report DS-22-127.

As noted in Section 1.0 of this Memorandum, on June 20, 2022 Oshawa City Council considered Report DS-22-127 and directed that funding to retain a consultant to prepare an H.C.D. Study for the community of Columbus be referred to the 2023 Operating Budget.

The motion passed by Council on June 20, 2022 represented staff's recommended option. This recommendation was based on a lack of current staff resources, capacity constraints and competing projects, including currently assigned tasks related to other heritage-related items. More importantly, Economic and Development Services staff are not qualified to prepare an

H.C.D. Study or H.C.D. Plan of this magnitude. The size and complexity of the required study is dramatically different from that undertaken for the South Field H.C.D. at the Oshawa Executive Airport, which was prepared by City staff but involved property owned entirely by the City of Oshawa with related studies already prepared.

The Commissioner of Corporate and Finance Services has advised that there are no reserves dedicated to the preparation of heritage studies. Accordingly, it was recommended that the funding for the completion of the Columbus H.C.D. Study be referred to the 2023 Operating Budget.

### **3.2 2023 Operating Budget Review**

The process to designate an H.C.D. is separate and distinct from the process currently being undertaken to advance the Columbus Part II Plan Study. H.C.D. plans can recommend changes to existing Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law provisions. These changes could then be implemented once the H.C.D. is in place. However, one of the specific objectives of the Columbus Part II Planning Study is to implement new policies for the community of Columbus in the Oshawa Official Plan, including new policies to advance development that is sensitive to the community of Columbus.

The Columbus Part II Plan Study continues to be advanced by staff. It is anticipated that this work will not conclude until mid to late 2023, at the earliest. Consequently, staff advise that undertaking an H.C.D. Study for the community of Columbus in 2023 would be premature in the absence of first establishing the overarching policy framework intended to guide future growth and development in Columbus. On this basis, it would be appropriate to defer funding to retain a consultant to prepare an H.C.D. Study to the 2024 Operating Budget.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

The cost associated with the completion of an H.C.D. Study by an external consultant is unknown at this time. It is also important to note that if, based on the results of the H.C.D. Study, Council chooses to proceed with designation of an H.C.D., an H.C.D. Plan will be required. The cost associated with the preparation of an H.C.D. Plan by an external consultant is also unknown at this time.

Based on consultation with other municipalities, staff have concluded that an approximate cost to perform such studies could range between \$37,000 and \$140,000 or more (see Section 4.0 of Report DS-22-127).



Warren Munro, HBA, RPP, Commissioner,  
Economic and Development Services Department