

**GENERAL COMMITTEE**  
**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER**

**REPORT CM 2007-8**  
**October 23, 2007**

**SUBJECT: WELLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION –  
GOVERNANCE REVIEW AND PROCESS  
IMPROVEMENTS.**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

THAT THE WELLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (WDC) approve the recommended structural and business process improvements to the Commission, and further;

THAT the Welland Development Commission forward the recommendations to Welland City Council for comment and endorsement; and further

THAT the Welland City Council approved changes to the Welland Development Commission derived from Report CM 2007-8 be in place for the duration of the 2007-2010 Council term.

**ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND:**

Earlier in 2007 Council directed through the City Manager a review of the WDC with sights on assessing the governance of the current Commission, and the overall effectiveness of the Commission in that regard. Given the strategic intentions of the City and Commission it appeared such a review was prudent and timely, and should include a review of the structure and the relationships that existed, and may flourish from the current, and potential future, model assuming improvements may be made.

Various alternative governance models were reviewed with the WDC on September 4, 2007. The material reviewed was intended to provide the Commission with an indication of structures and governance models of economic development organizations around Ontario as a means to prompt discussion and debate about potential and future effectiveness as it relates to the current governance of the WDC.

The review and discussion resulted in a hybrid of the alternatives reviewed. The preferred model is one the Commission supports.

**COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS:**

The terms of reference and materials reviewed by the Commission are attached as Appendix A and B.<sup>1</sup> As indicated in the material documents there are a number of economic development models in Ontario the majority of which are structured to suit the preferences of the local or regional council that oversees it, and contributes to its funding and strategy. The various models were reviewed by the WDC, and a series of alternatives to the existing WDC model were proposed. Based on the Commission's knowledge of the industry, existing relationships, capacity of the Commission and strategic direction, the Commission produced an enhanced WDC structure and set of business processes. The following is a summary of the recommendations and improvements to the WDC as developed, and agreed, by the Commission.

- The existing Commission composition (3 City Council appointees plus the Mayor, and 4 community appointees (2 of whom are assigned from the Chamber of Commerce) is to remain. Future community appointments to the Commission will be considered by Council in accordance with past practice, and committee appointment protocol.
- The Commission will strike specific task forces to assist in the delivery of programs and pursuit of initiatives. At least one of the tasks forces will have a project specific focus and mandate, and the selection criteria for membership will be developed, as needed, to ensure affected business sectors are represented.
- The composition of the task forces will include an existing Commission Council appointee, and existing Commission community appointee who will be co-chairs of the task force. Staff from the Economic Development Office assigned to the task force will take direction from the joint chairs. Task forces may draw on resources from other task forces as needed, and agreed, by the Commission.
- The task forces and project teams will be further populated by community or industry members as required. Recruiting for the task forces will be the responsibility of all commission members. Note: task force members should include representatives from various sectors and larger employers such as Canadian Tire Financial Services, Niagara College, GDX, John Deere, Welland Hospital, and Convergys)
- On a semi-annual basis the Commission will host a forum for input and comment concerning the strategic intent and objectives of the WDC. The forum is intended to solicit input from the business community with particular reference to larger industries and employers.
- The WDC will meet quarterly as a board at which strategic alignment, and general overall progress is reviewed and discussed. Task force progress will also be reviewed.
- The Commission will convene two (2) 'priorities and planning' meetings which will include reports from the 'Captains of Industry' forums, the four (4) quarterly

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<sup>1</sup> Only selected pages from the reference materials (other models) are appended due to the size of the entire document. The entire collection is available from the City Manager.

Commission meetings, and the industry input forums. The intent of the planning and priority meetings is to ensure emerging initiatives are being considered and responded to in a timely manner, and appropriate resource allocation is discussed and planned.

The Commission recognizes the value in establishing opportunities for broader community and business input, and the integration and alignment of external initiatives. The revised, augmented and improved structure is recommended for the duration of the term of council towards the end of which it will be assessed for effectiveness by Commission members and City Council. See Appendix B.

The frequency and timing of meetings will impose challenges on information distribution and exchange. The Commission acknowledges staffing limitations in that regard, and that the updating of Commission members and flow of information from staff may be informal and not limited to meetings to ensure timely turnaround and feedback.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:**

The enhanced board structure and governance model is not expected to result in additional costs or expenditures with the possible exception of additional meetings and the hosted semi-annual input sessions. The additional assemblies are likely to be absorbed within the budget while other costs will be dealt with on an annual basis during budget discussions and deliberations.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY:**

The improvements and revisions to the governance of the WDC will help to ensure the ongoing pursuit of the following strategic priorities established by Council :

**Providing economic opportunities** – *foster and create a climate for economic prosperity.*

- Support local industry and work towards bringing manufacturing to the City
- Seek new and international business investment, and continue cooperation with Region and southern tier municipalities to realize 406 and mid-Pen corridor
- Aggressively market brownfield opportunities to developers
- Develop recreation and sports tourism opportunities and facilities for youth

**Canal Lands** – ensure responsible preservation, development, and evolution of the City's canal property and assets.

- Promote and attract business to available canal lands
- Investigate disposing of some lands and development opportunities

**Managing Growth** – develop policies and plans to provide for sensible growth and the ongoing enhancement to quality of life

- Increase urban density, revitalize the downtown, pursue condominium projects
- Develop sports and recreation opportunities to enhance quality of life
- Promote brownfield opportunities with emphasis on Atlas Lands
- Develop employment lands and market opportunities

**Environment** – ensure policies and plans and projects embrace the protection and end enhancement of the environment.

- Commit to conserving energy through LEED and alternative energy sources
- Develop and promote 'green' possibilities and policies
- Ensure city services limit greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality
- Implement City brownfield program

**Healthy Communities** – provide for a healthy, safe and enjoyable community

- Develop the downtown and bring vibrancy back to the core.

#### **OTHER DEPARTMENT IMPLICATIONS:**

Other departments are not expected to be impacted by the changes. However, depending on the project, the task forces may be required to draw on expertise within the Corporation from time to time to pursue projects and goals. These assignments will be requested and co-ordinated through the City Manager's Office.

#### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

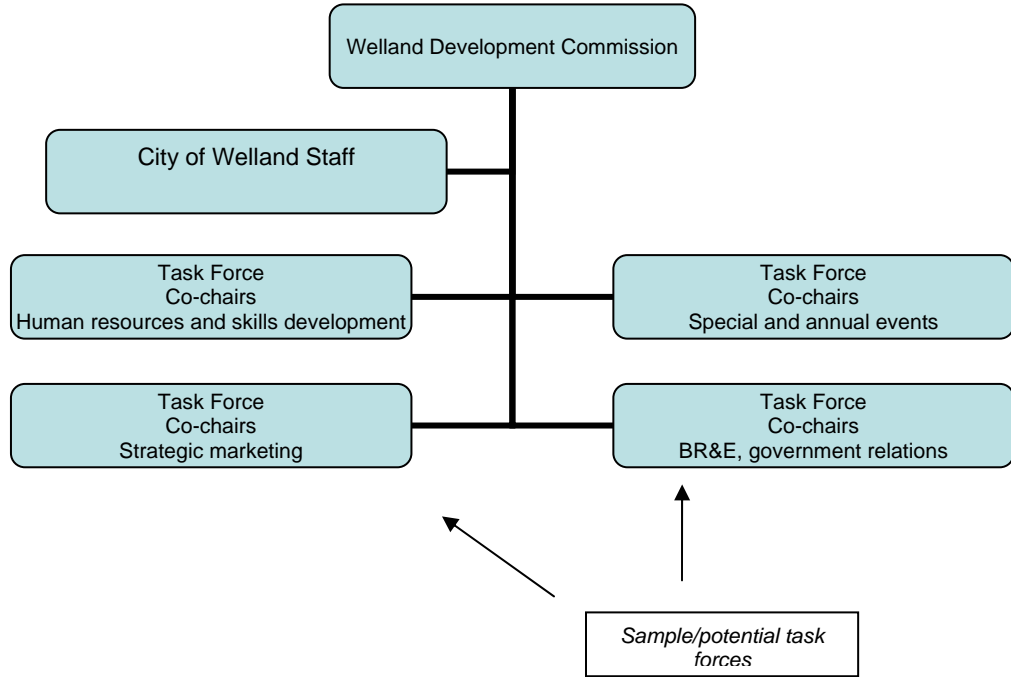
The task force structure for the WDC resulted from a review of other development Commission models. The enhanced structure allows for the determined and strategic pursuit of various initiatives and projects while drawing on the available community and business resources and expertise.

The expanded involvement of the business community through semi-annual meetings is expected to yield significant input to the business planning of the Commission, and its part in realizing the economic goals and objectives of the City's strategic plan.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A - Original terms of reference for review

Appendix B – Sample Development commission models



Welland Development Commission – Task Force Structure

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