



Scugog Council decides not to proceed with the Lake Scugog Enhancement Project due to ballooning costs and risks.

December 05, 2024

Council remains committed to improving the water quality of Lake Scugog in a fiscally responsible manner and directed staff to explore an alternative solution.

Scugog — During a special Council meeting held on Monday, December 3, Scugog Council considered a confidential staff report regarding options for the future of the Lake Scugog Enhancement Project.

Following the closed session portion of the meeting, Council unanimously adopted a motion to not proceed with the Lake Scugog Enhancement Project. Instead, Council directed staff to investigate an alternative solution to improve the water quality and health of Lake Scugog. The primary concerns from Council regarding the Lake Scugog Enhancement Project were the increasing costs to the Township and the community, and the unpredictable financial and engineering risks associated with the project, and its long-term outcome.

Ahead of the vote, Mayor Wotten highlighted these concerns and the volatility of the current economic situation impacting the Township, noting that “This project has been under consideration for more than eight years, and the costs have increased from (an estimated) \$2.0 million to \$8.21 million, with no final cost certainty in sight.”

Mayor Wotten also noted, “The lack of clarity on the risks associated with building on the lakebed, the lack of appropriate permits with no clear timeline for securing them, and the need to secure access to additional lands substantially heightens the risk and likelihood of further cost escalation. As a result, it is time for the Township to consider other options.”

Council remains committed to implementing solutions that support Lake Scugog. According to the approved resolution, staff will bring back a report to Council on the “cost and feasibility of an expanded Baagwating Park Stormwater Management Facility with integrated water quality and aesthetic improvements within the existing Township-owned property boundary.”

Reflecting the importance of fiscal responsibility for the now-cancelled project and any alternative solution to improve Lake Scugog, staff were further directed to “engage with funding partners and stakeholders in order to reconcile and/or renegotiate funding agreements and outstanding financial obligations or commitments.”

Mayor Wotten recognizes the contributions and achievements of the organizations and community members who have worked on this project for many years. The project has already realized significant accomplishments towards water quality improvements, including installing oil grit separators at the Baagwating outfall and Casimir St./Fowler Park outfall, greatly increasing public awareness about the challenges facing Lake Scugog, and potential solutions.

The Township appreciates the partnership with the Kawartha Conservation Authority, as well as the advocacy and fundraising work of the Healthy Lake Scugog Steering Committee and The Lake Stewards. A healthy Lake Scugog remains a shared goal and ranks high in importance within the community. The Township is committed to finding fiscally responsible and sustainable solutions that address the lake's needs.

Questions on future Lake Scugog initiatives may be directed to Township of Scugog staff by emailing mail@scugog.ca