

July 5, 2022

Mayor Steele and Members of Council
City of Port Colborne
66 Charlotte Street
Port Colborne, Ontario
L3K 3C8

Dear Mayor Steele and Members of Council:

We are writing today to express our concern with a motion and related comments that were made at Council's meeting on June 28th with respect to a moratorium on future aggregate approvals in Ontario.

The Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association represents 280 aggregate producers and suppliers in Ontario who collectively represent the majority of the 164 million tonnes of aggregate consumed annually in the province to build and maintain Ontario's infrastructure needs. OSSGA works in partnership with government and the public to promote a safe and competitive aggregate industry contributing to the creation of strong communities in the province.

An important part of our mandate is to correct misinformation about the industry. 'NIMBY' groups present themselves as watchdogs of industry, but all too often offer observations and recommendations which meet their own agendas – and most important, do not reflect the broader community and business interests.

As an example, the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition campaign calling for a moratorium on all new aggregate sites is based on mistruth, exaggeration and information designed to alarm your constituents, and you as Mayors and Councillors and senior municipal officials. Even though the motion was defeated, we'd like to put the record straight.

Stone, sand and gravel is what our modern world is made from. Calling for a moratorium is like saying no to future generations. It's turning off the tap to economic prosperity, affordable housing, immigration and infrastructure.

There were literally too many untruths presented at the meeting to address here – so we have chosen just a few to illustrate how statistics and incomplete information can be used to propagate mistruths:

We all need aggregate. If you support affordable housing (as Mr. Wells did in his comments), then you must support sand and gravel. If you support new schools, hospitals and roads, then you need to support sand and gravel. In the next 20 years 4 million more people will be calling Ontario home. To support that growth we need an estimated 4 billion tonnes of aggregate. It is estimated that the industry has current licences to supply approximately 10 years of that need. That's a good thing – because it takes 10 years on average to licence a new site. Applications being submitted today will serve the needs of future generations of Ontarians.

The industry does NOT consume 5,000 new acres of land per year. The Reform Gravel Mining Coalition has misrepresented statistics it gleaned from The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation (TOARC) production statistic reports. Since 1998 the areas of the province subject to the ARA has increased by more than a third. As the jurisdiction of the ARA grew the existing sites in those areas were issued licences, and these new higher numbers were reported by TOARC. The vast majority of these new licences were existing sites that became subject to the *Aggregate Resources Act*. The Coalition erroneously took an average from 1998 not understanding that these were not new sites. This is just one example of how the Coalition has misrepresented statistics.

In the past 5 years, 77 new sites have been approved, and 300 sites have been closed and fully rehabilitated. The reality is we are not replacing our close-to-market supply of aggregate sites.

The aggregate industry is governed by a robust legislative framework. In addition to the *Aggregate Resources Act*, the industry is governed by and goes above and beyond to comply with more than 24 other pieces of legislation and volumes of regulation. Extensive consultation is already built into the approval process for aggregate production.

Today in Niagara County the 13 surrendered former gravel sites reported by [TOARC](#) have been returned to a variety of land uses: more than 18% to residential, nearly 12% to agriculture and yes, 44% to the beautiful golf courses in the region that attract both local and international tourists each year.

A call for a moratorium is short-term thinking. Imagine 25 years ago the Province had subscribed to “no more aggregate production, not in my back yard” thinking. Imagine the additional stress that would have put on today’s housing crisis or how much more crowded our schools, roads and hospitals would be?

For more than 100 years the existing aggregate market has provided Ontario with a steady supply of low-cost aggregate that has built the Province. No government that supports economic growth, affordable housing or immigration in this Province should support a moratorium on the bedrock of our economy.

We trust these comments are helpful. We understand that you and your constituents may have questions or concerns about the aggregate industry. We’re here to help. More information about the aggregate industry can be found at [GravelFacts.ca](#) or you may reach out to us at any time to answer any questions you may have.

Regards,



Norm Cheesman
Executive Director

c.c. Scott Luey, Chief Administrative Officer
Amber LaPointe, City of Port Colborne

Encl. Please also find attached a municipal newsletter that was distributed in May, 2022.