



PORT COLBORNE

Mayor's Report

NOVEMBER 8, 2022

WE'RE PART OF ONTARIO'S MARINE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

It was an honour and a pleasure to be at a round table of marine industry stakeholders yesterday afternoon with Ontario's Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, and her Parliamentary Assistant, Hardeep Singh Grewal.

Ontario's Marine Transportation Strategy works with the public sector (governments), and private interests (business), to invest in economic development, infrastructure improvements, labour, employment and training opportunities, and green technologies, all from the perspective of marine commerce, transportation, and tourism.

We had a productive afternoon, my counterparts from cities along the canal including Mayor Sendzik's representative from St. Catharines, Mayor Ugolini from Thorold, Mayor Champion from Welland. A year ago, the province didn't even have a marine strategy or related finding. Because of work done by marine industry leaders, and planners and special projects teams and mayors of our Niagara canal cities, and other marine cities around the Great Lakes, we are now partners at the table to developing this important work. It just goes to show you, ideas, and relationships, matter. We make a difference by working together.

LOCAL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENTS

I represented city council Saturday at a grand opening and business expansion at Rick's Auto Sales and his new NAPA AutoPro store across the road on the newly paved Main Street East. I have another coming up this weekend.

Whenever I am asked to deliver greetings and congratulations to new businesses and new business owners, it is always on behalf of council, staff, and all the people of Port Colborne.

Running a business is a lot of hard work, self-sacrifice, and financial risk. We all need to be mindful of the importance of small business in our city, and across our country.

This afternoon, I met with federal Minister Tassi at the Lucky Thai Restaurant on Main Street, just down the block from the "Niagara Sold by Kate Lumsden" real estate team.

Minister Tassi is responsible for Canada's federal Economic Development Agency.

She was in Port Colborne to meet with Lucky Thai owner Prawat Laosomboom and talk about the \$10,000 business improvement grant. Prawat is one of seven recipients of the grant in Port Colborne. After two, almost three years of business struggle during the pandemic, we are working with federal and provincial counterparts to get our economy back on track.

“My Main Street” funding provides eligible small businesses with a \$10,000 non-repayable contribution that can be used to start or grow a business. The program is funded by FedDev Ontario and is a collaboration between the Economic Developers Council of Ontario and the Canadian Urban Institute.

City staff in our Economic Development & Tourism Services Division run the My Main Street program through our Main Street Ambassador, Olga Loeffen. Great work, Olga.

Seven businesses in Port Colborne have received My Main Street funding. That’s \$70,000 investment in our business communities. We are thrilled with this injection of funds, and proud of our local business owners.

We also have enjoyed benefits from the “Digital Main Street” funding program, in which eligible small businesses get \$2,500 for digital marketing, website redesign, software and hardware upgrades, and training courses.

Digital Main Street is a partnership between the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario.

Tianna Thomas of our Port Colborne economic development staff has helped 16 local business owners secure a \$2,500 grant – that’s another injection of \$40,000 to our local economy.

Thank you Tianna and Olga for helping Port Colborne small businesses work with our federal and provincial partners.

CHRISTMAS CARD ART

Port Colborne elementary school children answered the PORTicipation call for Christmas art.

We asked all children in Port Colborne, up to Grade 8, to design art for the Mayor’s 2022 Christmas card.

We received more than 200 pages of Christmas creativity!

More than 200 children from six schools took to paper with markers, paint, crayons, coloured pencils and designed the most creative array of art I’ve ever seen. You can imagine how difficult it was to choose.

We thank them all, and their teachers and education workers, for contributing to the PORTicipation project. I am so grateful, and proud of you all.

The creators of the top designs – I chose nine this year -- will be notified this week, and their work will be on the assortment of Christmas cards I write this year. The children will be invited to join me on the float in the Santa Claus parade the evening of December 3.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Thank you to museum curator Michelle Mason and assistant curator Tami Nail for this solemn and fitting display to mark Remembrance Day, featuring faces and names of Port Colborne people from the First and Second World War, including my great grandfather Charles and great uncle Louis Steele. The engraved bronze plaque, to my right, is a sample of what was presented to families whose son or husband or brother was killed overseas, signed by then-mayor H H Knoll. Imagine being presented one of those, because your loved one didn't come home.

The Poppies were presented to our museum by the Niagara Falls History Museum and the Stick 'n Needles Guild. In 2020, they reached out to the public to crochet and knit poppies for a large-scale installation. The Poppies Project received more than 11,000 poppies from every province in Canada, 25 US states, as well as Denmark and New Zealand. You can see poppies, just like these ones, in installations in Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Thorold, and at our museum.

All of Port Colborne is invited by Legion Branch 56 to gather at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day, Friday.

We will gather at 10:30 in the morning, to be prepared to stand on guard for two minutes of silence at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, marking the moment the Armistice signed to end First World War.

It is a day we remember our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents and the sacrifices they made for freedom, for us.

If this incredible weather doesn't hold out until Friday, the ceremony will be moved from the park to the Legion, Clarence Street at Catharine. The Legion makes that call.

FAREWELL TO COUNCILLORS DESMARAIS, KALAILIEFF, WELLS AND REGIONAL COUNCILLOR BUTTERS

Working on a team, as we do around this horseshoe, four years at a time, there comes a time we have to say goodbye to outgoing colleagues, as we say hello to welcome new colleagues.

We thank Councillors Angie Desmarais in Ward 2, Councillor Kalailieff in Ward 1, and Councillor Wells in Ward 4 for their years of service, for their commitment to their community. Public service is not a nine-to-five gig. Calls and emails, daily, weekly, monthly meetings: they all add up. These councillors were never unprepared. They took their council work, and their constituents seriously. They have been insightful and inspirational.

Angie leaves us after three terms, and countless hours of work for her ward, and for the city. She led the charge for a dozen civic committees over the past 12 years, and we are grateful for her insight, and her measured, thoughtful, steadfast service to Port Colborne.

Councillor Kalailieff and Councillor Wells did their diligence for Wards 1 and 4 respectively. We will miss their input, and their passion for Port Colborne.

Councillor Butters, after six terms on city council, and a term at Region, you have been an amazing force for Port Colborne. We thank you.