

January 25, 2024

To: The Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy - Minister of Finance  
Rick Byers - Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance  
c/o Budget Secretariat  
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Cc: The Hon. Sylvia Jones - Minister of Health/Deputy Premiere  
Dawn Gallagher Murphy - Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health

Cc: Andrew Dowie - MPP Windsor-Tecumseh  
Lisa Gretzky - MPP Windsor West  
Trevor Jones - MPP Chatham-Kent-Leamington  
Anthony Leardi - MPP Essex

From: Karl Straky Sr.  
Citizens for Healthcare - Windsor-Essex

Re: **January 25th, 2024 MOF Budget Deliberation Submission Document**  
**Ontario Pre-Budget Consultations Windsor - Essex**

**Windsor - Essex Acute Care Hospital Plan project.**  
**Stage 3 Funding Request**  
**Written Presentation Submission Documents**

Dear Hon. Bethlenfalvy:

We thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Ontario MOF 2024 Budget Consultation process and to share our ideas on “how our government can address shortcomings within our region to build a stronger future environment for our existing and future families, workers, and businesses”.

Our areas most critical and immediate needs are to ensure modern healthcare facilities and services are in place to support the building of such a stronger environment. We need your continued commitment to make this happen!

***“Without modern Regional Healthcare facilities in place, it goes without saying that building a stronger future environment for our Region would be challenging”***

Our community-based organization has been involved in the new Windsor-Essex Hospitals System planning process since 2016 supporting the development and construction for the new healthcare facilities and have participated in the last four budget deliberation cycles, with both the new W/E Acute Care Hospital Planners and Ontario Government officials,

Our initial focus was on Stage 2 funding for the 5 Stage planning process which had stalled for some time.

In the March 24th, 2021 Ontario Budget, \$9.8M funding was approved in support of ongoing planning for the new Windsor Essex Acute Care Hospital and on October 18, 2021 the funds were released to restart Stage 2 planning work.

In our written submission letter for the 2023 Ontario MOF Budget Submission Document, dated February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, we requested the need for this government to commit and include the **\$25M identified for the Stage 3 work in the March 2023 budget announcement**, to allow our project to move forward in a timely manner. No announcement regarding our project was mentioned or listed in the 2023 Spring budget.

The timing for this funding announcement was critical, because on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, the Windsor Regional Hospital’s Planning Team completed and submitted their results for Stage 2 work to the Ministry of Health, for Stage 3 work to begin with the planned completion date on this May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

And where in our February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 submission letter, we asked that the Ministry begin reviewing the functional program documents with the goal to approving it in May 2023, whereby the MOHLTC planning and design teams could effectively move right to Stage 3 planning with the opportunity to further the design work into indicative design plans and the preparation of procurement documents, thereby saving a potential 6-9 months in the overall project timelines for these Stages.

We also suggested if a similar handoff approach was applied to Stages 4 & 5 planning, including specific pre construction scheduling and planning, we could further reduce the overall timelines to get the new W/E Acute Care Hospital built and opened in 2030 or sooner.

Based on the above review, and with some 8 months now passed and still no clear information on where our project stands, we are asking for confirmation on the actual timelines for the completion of the various steps including Stage 3 work (of the original 5 Stage planning process) now known as Stage 2 of the (new 3 Stage planning process).

And more specifically in reference to the January 2024 Windsor/Essex Acute Care Hospital Project Timeline Report as shown below, where as listed under STAGE 2 – Detailed Planning, the term (Pending review of Stage 1.3 submission), which is in effect the actual (Stage 2) report that Windsor Regional Hospital team submitted on May 1, 2023, for the Ministry of Health, to start working on and to complete Stage 3 work by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

## January 2024 Windsor/Essex Acute Care Hospital Project Timeline Report



Based on this information there is now a level of confusion, regarding the actual status for the new Windsor Essex Acute Care Hospital project that we would like to address with the following comments and questions:

Our *Citizens for Healthcare* organization is supported by over 1000 Windsor-Essex Community followers, all of whom would appreciate it very much if you could provide us with some clarity confirming the above plan with the shovel in the ground by mid 2026 and with the new hospital opening in 2030.

### Questions for the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health:

- Could the Minister's please provide the current status and receipt of the Stage 2 Planning Report as submitted by the Windsor-Essex Acute Care Hospital Planning Team on May 1, 2023 to the MOHLTC to proceed with Stage 3 work, as listed in the Citizens for Healthcare 2023 Ontario Pre-Budget Deliberation Submission letters dated February 7<sup>th</sup> 2023 and February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- Could the Minister of Health please provide the current status for Stage 2 work as identified in the January 2024 Windsor/Essex Acute Care Hospital Project Timeline Report (above) , with clarification to the reference to (Pending review of Stage 2 submission).
- Could the Minister's please provide the current status for the \$25M funding request for Stage 3 work that was to begin on May 1, 2023, as listed in the Citizens for Healthcare 2023 Ontario Pre-Budget Deliberation Submission letters to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health dated February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 & February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023?
- Could the Minister's please provide the current status, regarding the infrastructure Ontario – March 2023 Market Update Report for the Windsor Regional Hospital – New Windsor Essex Regional Hospital timelines for:
  - Issuing & Completion of the RFQ during Jan-Mar 2025.
  - Issuing & Completion of the RFP during Jul-Sep 2025.
  - Contract Execution during Jul-September 2026.

- Construction Time: Based on a 2030 opening date, the estimated construction cycle time, would be 4 years.
- Based on the above, what is the realistic time for when our new Windsor-Essex Acute Care hospital will be opened?

### The Windsor Essex Region's continue to see growth with emerging new industries

Much continues to change in our area since this process started in 2013 which is why we must move forward now, as we have just suggested, in a timely fashion and with utmost diligence.

### The greater Windsor Essex Chatham Regional Population Growth

The Windsor-Essex Region has experienced a 5.7 per cent increase in population since 2016. It is expected that this positive trend will continue over the next several years and through 2027, including Windsor, Lakeshore, Tecumseh, LaSalle, & Amherst burg.

- A 2023 study by the Conference Board of Canada is forecasting a population growth of 1.1 per cent in each of this years and 1.5 per cent between 2025 and 2027 in our Region.
- Windsor Star Sept 11, 2023 article - Windsor area's population is now 316,000, an increase of 17,000 since July 2020 and continues to surge.  
<https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/windsor-areas-population-surge-continues>.
- The Municipality of Leamington is a community, home of 28,000 permanent and 7,000 temporary residents
- The Municipality of Chatham – Kent has a 2021 population is 104,316.

The Windsor Star recently reported that 1800 refugees and asylum seekers arrived in Windsor in 2022. That number will only increase with all that is going on the world stage. The 2021 census indicated that there are 96,940 immigrants throughout the County of Essex, showing a 30% growth rate. As this trend continues, this indication of the diversity of the area makes us a likely candidate for continued growth, followed by a growing need to provide sufficient and quality healthcare services.

- A new Amazon Distribution & Delivery Centre – 300,000 Sq. Ft. – to employ 300 (Windsor Star)
- A \$35 million investment by Bobaek America Inc., a Korean electric vehicle (EV) parts manufacturer, to build a new manufacturing facility in Windsor creating 144 new jobs in the region. (Published by Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade December 2023)
- Convoy Technologies Inc. opening a new 18,000-square-foot Canadian manufacturing facility which will be located in the Town of Tecumseh in Essex County.
- Manufacturing \$4.7 Billion in GDP
- Construction Sector GDP is forecast to grow by 6.8 per cent in 2024\*\*\*

- Agriculture and Agra-tech (greenhouse technology, automation and cannabis, food & beverage)
  - \$3 billion in annual GDP
  - 100 food and beverage processing companies and 1,500 growing operations with 15,000 employees and growing
- A \$76-million project by ADM, an expansion of their expansion of grain storage, equipment and processes to be completed the by mid-2025. (\*\*Windsor Star January 2024)

**To make all this happen,** we need this government to announce and **include the \$25M identified for the Stage 3 work in this 2024 Spring budget,** to maintain the scheduling process as forecasted above, to keep the process moving forward in a timely manner and for the new hospital to be opened during 2030.

**Our community goal is to have this new Windsor Essex Acute Care Hospital opened by 2030 or sooner. Doing so will bridge the gap and facilitate an appropriate transition to our growing needs.**

We thank you again for the opportunity to participate in these 2024 Pre-Budget Deliberation process and trust you will find our listed concerns and recommendations to be of valid interest for our government to act on in support of our Windsor-Essex Acute Care hospital project.

Regards, On behalf of *Citizens for Healthcare Windsor Essex*



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