City of Waterloo, Bill 23 Motion

Approved by Council, Monday November 14, 2022

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario’s Bill 23 – “More Homes Built Faster” Act recently passed Second Reading and is now open for comment; and

WHEREAS Bill 23 is a significant piece of legislation that would, if passed, be highly consequential to land use planning at both the City and Regional level, significantly altering municipal responsibilities, restricting appeals, decreasing review timelines and eliminating public consultation for plans of subdivision; and

WHEREAS Bill 23 would have highly consequential financial implications to the City of Waterloo with respect to funding infrastructure and growth, as well as creating staffing pressures related to shifting Regional planning responsibilities, leading to an increased tax burden on ratepayers in the City; and

WHEREAS Bill 23 has far reaching impacts related to environmental protections, ranging from challenges in meeting Regional planning objectives such as the Countryside Line, to limiting of the City’s ability to implement Green Development Standards, to restrictions of Conservation Authorities and reduced protections for wetlands; and

WHEREAS the City of Waterloo acknowledges the affordable housing crisis and is in the process of creating the City’s first ever Affordable Housing Strategy; and

WHEREAS City of Waterloo staff are preparing comments on Bill 23 that will be submitted to the Province prior to the November 24th deadline, however the timing of introduction of Bill 23 does not permit ample opportunity for newly elected City of Waterloo Council to appropriately assess the significant changes proposed and provide their commentary, given their inaugural meeting is November 21st and their first regular meeting is December 5th; and

WHEREAS the Ontario Big City Mayors have requested that the Government of Ontario extend the comment period on Bill 23, to allow for full municipal participation, in recognition of twelve newly-elected Mayors in Ontario, including in the City of Waterloo;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Waterloo requests the Government of Ontario to defer clause-by-clause review of Bill 23 at committee stage until such time as further evaluation and analysis by the incoming City of Waterloo Council has occurred; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to local and area MPP’s, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Big City Mayors, and to the Region of Waterloo and local area municipalities.