



## Region of Waterloo

February 26, 2025

### Making Decisions That Matter - February 26, 2025

With input from the community, Regional Council sets the direction for the Region as an organization and makes decisions that help improve the lives of Waterloo Region residents every day. Please refer to the minutes for an official record of the meeting.

#### E-scooters and e-bikes extended to give people travel options

Regional Council has extended its partnership with Neuron Mobility until 2029 to provide access to e-bikes and e-scooters for residents. This spring will mark the third year of a program that helps give people low-cost, environmentally friendly travel options. Last year was a success with almost 173,700 rides and 22 tonnes of CO2 reduced. In 2025, Neuron will add new adaptive vehicles so more people can benefit from the program. This is a joint program between the Region of Waterloo and the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo.

[Read the full report](#)

#### YMCA to run high-quality children's programs at EarlyON centres

The Region of Waterloo has selected the YMCA of Three Rivers (Mid-Western Ontario) to lead the EarlyON Child and Family Centres that serve local parents and children. The YMCA has operated these centres since 2018. Their contract ends December 2025. After an open process, the non-profit agency will continue for eight more years. EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free, high-quality programs for families and children from birth to six years old. The YMCA of Three Rivers will receive \$4.3 million in 2026 to operate these programs, funded entirely by Ontario's Ministry of Education.

[Read the full report](#)

#### Cost savings finalized for 2025 Plan and Budget

Regional Council has approved final changes to the 2025 budget that save money for residents while still maintaining important services. When the [2025 Plan and Budget was approved December 20](#), Council directed staff to find \$6.9 million in savings to help reduce the tax rate. Staff

have now identified these reductions, which include spending less on maintenance work, road salt and travel, plus cancelling some contracts and slightly delaying paramedic hiring. These savings are already reflected in the 2025 property tax levy approved in December.

[Read the full report](#)

## Preparing for new cart-based garbage and organics collection

The Region of Waterloo is preparing for a new waste collection system that will start in March 2026. Regional Council has approved funds and resources to support the transition. These resources will help roll out the cart-based system for garbage and organics to over 165,000 residential properties and 1,500 locations in Downtown Business Improvement Areas. Work begins in the first half of 2025 with communication and outreach to raise awareness across Waterloo Region.

[Read the full report](#)

## Keeping transit affordable for residents with low incomes

The Region of Waterloo is adjusting fare prices to create a 55% discount across the board for people who have been approved for [the Affordable Transit Program](#). Under the price changes taking effect July 1, a monthly pass will cost \$47, a strip of five MobilityPLUS tickets will be \$6.75, and a fair paid with an EasyGO fare card is \$1.50. This program is open to anyone in Waterloo Region living with low income as defined by the program.

[Read the full report](#)

## The following decision was made at a February 11 Special Council Meeting:

### Region prepares local response to U.S. tariffs

Regional Council has directed staff to review how the Regions purchases goods and services, to find ways to increase made-in-Canada options. Staff will also look at ways to limit the impact on Regional services from potential United States tariffs. Finally, Council is requesting an action plan from the Waterloo Economic Development Corporation, through BEST Waterloo Region, that will support Waterloo Region businesses and the local economy. The proposed tariffs would have negative impacts on many businesses, including local manufacturing, that rely on cross-border trade.

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