



February 28, 2022

Jason Reynar
Chief Administrative Officer
The City of Windsor
350 City Hall Square, Suite 520
Windsor, ON
N9A 6S1

Dear Jason,

Re: Agri Isolation and Recovery Centre

The County of Essex has received your email dated Tuesday, February 15, 2022, about City Council's decision to withdraw from the operation of the Isolation and Recovery Centre and looks forward to resolving this issue for the good of the region and the agricultural operations on which we all rely for a safe and secure food supply.

The success of the IRC over the course of the pandemic, and, indeed, our collective efforts over the past two years to protect the residents of Windsor-Essex, illustrate how the city and county, each with their own fields of expertise and areas of service delivery, can work together to deliver effective programs and services.

The City of Windsor, with the support of Essex-Windsor EMS and Erie Shores Health Care, provided accommodation and support to more than 1,000 agricultural workers over the past 19 months. This allowed them to recover safely in isolation while limiting the spread of COVID-19 in the community and allowing food production to continue. This was a historic undertaking that no doubt saved lives.

It made sense for the city to take on this responsibility as the regional provider of housing and social services. The city had the personnel, the infrastructure, the knowledge and the processes in place to best handle this undertaking. This hasn't changed. The city received substantial funding from the federal government to operate the IRC and remains best suited to coordinate the delivery of this vital service to the region. County municipalities have neither the trained staff nor the infrastructure.

While the bulk of the greenhouses that employ temporary foreign workers may indeed be in the county, the food that is produced, and the jobs that are created in the processing and distribution industry along with spin-off jobs, are enjoyed by the entire

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region. And COVID-19, of course, is a highly transmissible virus that observes no municipal boundaries.

While the pandemic situation is much improved locally, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit believes an isolation facility is still required for our region. While county municipalities cannot shoulder this burden alone, we stand ready to assist as the city works to transition the delivery of this vital program to another body.

City of Windsor Report C 27/2022 highlights other organizations that have either provided support or have a vested interest in the continuance of an IRC. The county supports a collaborative model being developed prior to July 1, 2022, and is amenable to working with the city and others to develop a sustainable program.

It would be beneficial to have the leadership of the following organizations provide their knowledge, expertise and resources to support the continuance of an IRC model. We suggest the following entities as participants:

- City of Windsor
- County of Essex
- Municipality of Leamington
- Town of Kingsville
- WECHU
- OGVG
- OMAFRA
- Erie Shores Health Care

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it has taught us we can achieve great things when we work together for the good of the region. The County of Essex thanks the City of Windsor for its ongoing efforts and looks forward to assisting the city as you decide how to best transition the IRC so a mutually beneficial arrangement can be sought that protects our food supply, the residents of Windsor-Essex, temporary foreign workers and the regional economy.

Your truly,

Mike Galloway

Mike Galloway, *MBA, CMO*
Chief Administrative Officer
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Cc: Peter Neufeld, CAO, Municipality of Leamington pneufeld@leamington.ca
John Norton, CAO, Town of Kingsville jnorton@kingsville.ca
Nicole Dupuis, CEO, Windsor-Essex County Health Unit ndupuis@wechu.org
Kristin Kennedy, President and CEO, Erie Shores Health Care
kristin.kennedy@eshc.org
Bruce Krauter, Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS BKrauter@countyofessex.ca

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