

## **Concerns Regarding Harbour Dredging and Contaminated Sediments**

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Dear Mayor and Councillors

In advance of your March 14th budget meeting, I'm writing to support the position taken by Richard Pope and Margaret Bain in their recent letter to Council. Our concerns echo their comments related to dredging. If \$20,000 is being proposed to study the engineering of a lift, then funds must also be allocated to assess the impact of additional dredging on the marine environment and health of Cobourg residents.

The [US Environmental Protection Agency](#) has reported that contaminated sediments are a significant problem in the Great Lakes basin. The bottom sediment of rivers and harbours is well known to pose risks to aquatic organisms, wildlife and humans.

Yet the City of Cobourg has been pumping dredged sand and sediment from the harbour onto Cobourg's public beach for several years now. Our children and grandchildren then play in this untreated dredged sand throughout the summer months.

Presumably expansion of the harbour area to facilitate more marine traffic will require more dredging. Has any consideration been given to the impact this will have?

Many municipalities are rethinking the entire practice and concept of dredging lake bottoms for marina access. Not only does the dredged material pose problems to human health but dredging modifies the lake bottom and disrupts or destroys fish spawning habitat. Dredging is also an ongoing cost that increases over time.

Will the dredging issues also be taken into consideration from a budget perspective? I'm also interested in learning what precautions if any, the City of Cobourg has taken to assess and mitigate the impact existing dredging is having on aquatic life, wildlife and humans in Cobourg.

For example, are results of the tests of the dredged material available to the public?

I urge the City Council to examine this fully before approval of any additional funding for expansion of the marina is considered.

Thank you

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