

New Tiny Township Administrative Centre Building 2025

Risks, Alternatives & Options Opportunities for Substantial Savings



Scheduled Deputation by Drew Ironstone to Township of Tiny Council – February 19, 2025

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Risks, Alternatives & Options: Opportunities for Substantial Savings

Introduction

Good evening, Mayor Evans and Council,

My name is Drew Ironstone. I am here today to present a **cost-effective alternative** for constructing a new Administrative Office Building.

As a recently retired **Manager of Facilities & Maintenance for the County of Simcoe**, I bring 24 years of **extensive management experience** in municipal building construction, building maintenance, capital asset management and building commissioning.

I urge Council to **compromise with the citizens of Tiny Township** and explore a **more fiscally responsible path forward**—one that meets the **long-term needs of staff, Council, and taxpayers** while ensuring responsible financial stewardship and risk aversion.

By adopting this alternative approach, for the Township of Tiny and its taxpayers—including **those in this chamber today, those watching from home, and our seasonal cottage owners who are not available to participate**—this alternative could save an estimated **\$35 million** compared to the current proposed expenditure. This would significantly **reduce the tax burden on residents for the next 30 years** while still addressing our **current and future administrative needs** and free up substantial funds for our short and long term pressing infrastructure priorities.

However, achieving this **“win-win” solution** requires **Council to respect the voices of the community** and reconsider its current course before irreversible financial commitments are made.

Background

When Council first pursued a new Township Office, it engaged the architectural firm now known as Unity Design, to create design concepts based on the direction of staff and Council.

This was an exciting and ambitious project for both Council and staff undoubtedly. Understandably, enthusiasm and your various visions shaped the discussions, leading to a **growing project scope, increased square footage, and more complicated design requirements which influenced rising construction costs.**

Following this, a **Class D estimate** was conducted to provide a **high-level cost projection**. However, the **current budget now stands at \$28 million**—and that does **not** include:

- **Borrowing costs** (an estimated **\$20 million** in interest and debt servicing)
- **Escalating construction costs** due to U.S. tariffs and material shortages (mechanical systems, electronic controls, heat pumps, fire systems, etc.) See the list provided.
- **Unforeseen cost overruns** (change orders, excavation issues, archaeological concerns, design errors, and inflationary pressures)

Given **global economic uncertainties and rising financial risks**, this project has reached a **“red alert” level** of financial exposure.

Moreover, **public opposition to the current plan** is plainly evident, as Council has heard repeatedly from residents through petitions, protests, community meetings and numerous prior deputations .

A Cost-Effective Alternative

The signs around Tiny reading **“Stop the Build”** might be more accurately reworded as **“Stop THIS Build.”** The community isn’t rejecting the need for a new or improved facility—they’re rejecting **the excessive cost, scale, and enormous financial risk** of the current proposal.

Instead of a **33,000-square-foot, \$50 million** project on the **9th Concession**, I propose a **more efficient, cost-effective approach:**

The “Campus” Building Option

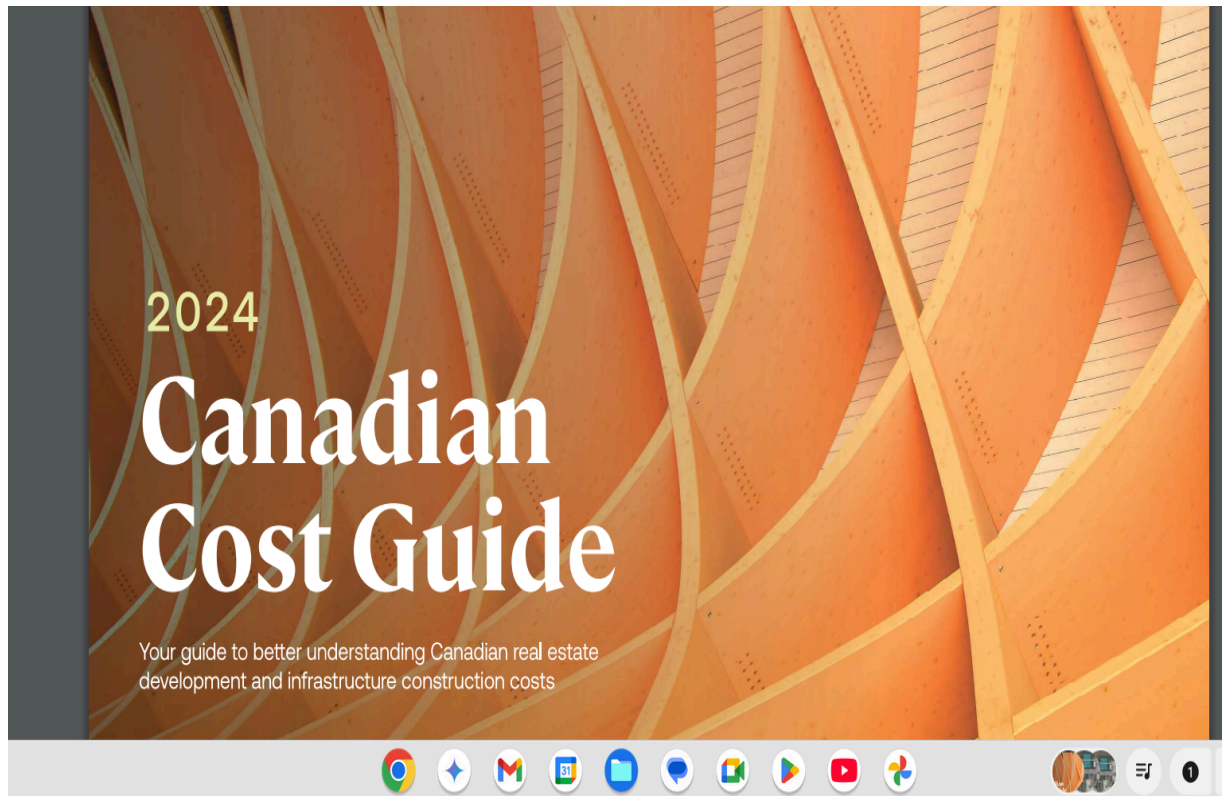
I recently submitted an **Alternate Options Brief** to all Council members, the CAO, and the Director of Public Works. Unfortunately, I received **no response**.

So I will highlight and review my correspondence and proposal on a high level due to time restraints

This alternative is straightforward and significantly more affordable:

- **Construct a modest 6,000–8,000 square-foot “Campus” building** adjacent to the existing Township Office.
- The **current office remains in use**, ensuring operational continuity during construction.
- The Township owns **5 acres of land** at the current site, with ample room for a **second, detached building**.
- Potential locations include **west along Balm Beach Road or north behind the existing building**.
- The new structure would:
 - **Meet 2025 Ontario Building Code** standards
 - **Incorporate energy-efficient systems**
 - **Ensure full AODA accessibility**
 - Provide a **new Council Chamber** with a potential **walk-out lower level**

This plan would provide **functional administrative space** at **less than half the cost per square foot** of the proposed 9th Concession project.



Financial Considerations & Cost Savings

The proposed 9th Concession Administrative Office is budgeted at approximately **\$760 per square foot**, whereas the **2024 Canadian Cost Guide** suggests that municipal buildings in our area should cost **no more than \$400 per square foot**.

Why is this project nearly double the average cost?

- The **architectural design** includes unnecessary **curved walls, oversized chambers, and extravagant customer service areas**.
- The **site preparation** is extensive, requiring:
 - **Significant excavation**
 - **Long utility service runs**
 - **Expensive road paving, lamp standards, parking lots, and walkways**

By **pivoting to a smaller, more practical build on the current Balm Beach Administration site**, the Township can achieve its growth needs for addition space for staff and programs, accessibility measures, and efficiencies with improved and appropriate functionality.

This would ,

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✓ **Reduce costs by approximately \$35 million**

- ✓ **Avoid excessive borrowing and long-term debt**
 - ✓ **Deliver a functional and sustainable administrative facility**
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Recommendations & Next Steps

To **immediately reduce financial risk** to the Township and taxpayers, I urge Council to:

1. **Pass a motion to temporarily defer the 9th Concession project.**
 2. **Pause the CMAR (Construction Manager At Risk) award process.**
 3. **Suspend further architectural design work and meet with Unity Design to revisit location, scope and scale of proposed new TTAC**
 4. **Conduct a risk analysis of potential tariff impacts on material costs etc.**
 5. **Suspend the loan application until a thorough cost-benefit analysis is complete.**
 6. **Fully evaluate the Campus Building alternative with fresh eyes and open minds.**
 7. **Compare Township capital budget needs between the two options.**
 8. **Direct the TTAC (Tiny Township Administrative Centre) Committee to urgently review and reconsider the project scope.**
 9. **Inform residents of Council's commitment to responsible fiscal management.**
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Conclusion

This is a **pivotal moment** for Council. The decision made today will impact **Tiny Township's taxpayers for the next 30 years** and our financial well-being. You have an opportunity and obligation to consider more financially prudent solutions considering the economic realities that we now all face considering what I have outlined.

Council must now ask:

- **Does this project reflect responsible financial planning?**
- **Can we achieve our goals at a significantly lower cost?**
- **Have we fully explored all viable alternatives?**

By **choosing a more affordable, efficient solution**, we can:

- ✓ **Provide staff and Council with the necessary space**
- ✓ **Respect taxpayer concerns and financial realities**
- ✓ **Demonstrate leadership in responsible municipal spending**

I urge Council to **pause, reassess, and take the prudent path forward**—one that protects both the Township's financial stability and the trust of its residents.

Thank you and I am pleased to answer all your questions and work with you on further solutions.