

February 20, 2016

Dear Mayor Eisenberger & Members of Council,

The Board of Directors of the Hamilton Farmers' Market Corporation would ask you to please consider a comprehensive review of municipal parking availability and rates before making any decisions to increase parking rates.

The elements that we believe are critical for such a review would include but are not limited to:

- Create a distinction between Monday to Friday daytime parking (primarily worker driven) and evening and weekend parking (primarily consumer driven) and not a blanket approach to increases;
- Consider making all City parking (street meters, parking lots, parking buildings) free on weekends across the City up to 4 pm to strengthen small local businesses in all of the city's downtowns. (similar to Burlington and Oakville);
- Consider a City wide review of when free parking is offered in the City's parking lots and buildings and develop a City wide policy that is clear and transparent to citizens and equitable to all small business owners;
- Consider that the increase to Municipal parking lots and buildings Monday to Friday could subsidize the free parking on weekends

Over the past 22 months the Market has offered 1 hour free validate parking to shoppers. We have witnessed a steady and substantial increase of our Saturday Market visitors. We reason that free parking in all of our downtowns on weekends (until 4 pm) could greatly strengthen and fortify the small business community. This could be launched as a pilot project with measurable outcomes to facilitate the development of the longer term strategy

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marisa Di Censo
Chair, Board of Directors