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May 25, 2017

Brian McMullen
Director, Financial Planning, Administration and Policy
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 4Y5

Sent via email to budgets@hamilton.ca

Dear Mr. McMullen:

Re: Review of Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program and Discounts for Vacant Land

We just now learned that the City of Hamilton is undertaking a review of its Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program, and question why we were not notified of this review back in April when the City apparently notified other business owners. Regardless, we wish to submit the following comments for your consideration prior to the June 7th General Issues Committee, and request that these comments be distributed to the Committee members.

As a business owner with many industrial and commercial rental buildings within Hamilton, Penta Properties Inc. has serious concerns with any attempt to do away with this program. Finding suitable tenants for rental space can often be a challenging pursuit. Sometimes buildings must unfortunately remain vacant for some time until the right tenant is secured. Having this program in place provides support to business owners actively searching for new businesses to come to Hamilton and support the local economy.

Removal of this program would make matters even more challenging. Without this tax rebate, business owners may become faced with having to decide whether to keep the vacant building, or if the carrying costs become too draining, demolish it. Taxes on vacant properties are less than taxes on vacant buildings. Forcing the unnecessary demolition of structurally sound buildings will greatly reduce the supply of available rental space, leaving businesses looking to locate to Hamilton with less opportunity.

This tax rebate program serves a vital purpose and must be maintained.

Yours truly,
PENTA PROPERTIES INC.


Dave Pitblado
Director, Real Estate Development

Cc: Clerks Department – For distribution to General Issues Committee Members