

March 21, 2019

Dear Councillor Wilson,

We are writing to you today about some changes that have been suggested in the Development Charges Stakeholder subcommittee that have recently come to our attention. Currently academic institutions enjoy 100% exemptions for academic spaces (except for the transit component) and 50% exemptions for student residences, but unfortunately, city staff have recommended academic exemptions, as well as student housing exemptions be removed. This would be challenging for Redeemer as a not-for profit, publicly chartered but privately funded institution, and severely hinder our ability to grow our campus in the near future.

Taking away the exemption in development charges will put Hamilton post-secondary institutions at a competitive disadvantage. Other universities across the provinces have remained exempt from all municipal development charges, including the University of Guelph, York University, University of Windsor, Ryerson University, Brock University, University of Toronto, and University of Ottawa. Without this exemption, our funding will not stretch as far, and our facilities will not be able to compete with other Ontario universities, leaving Hamilton to fall behind in this important sector of post-secondary education and research.

Earlier this year, officials from the University of Guelph made the case to Council that they should continue to be fully exempt in the interest of providing equal treatment with Conestoga College which has a small campus in Guelph, and would continue to be exempt from DCs as a Crown agent. As a result, the University of Guelph continues to be exempt from all development charges. Hamilton is in a similar situation, as both Mohawk and Brock would be exempt, while Redeemer and McMaster would have to pay full development charges. This then becomes an equity issue for our local post-secondary institutions.

With a recent 42% cut to Redeemer's tuition, we anticipate doubling enrolment in the next 5 years, which would require new student residences and academic space in the near future. This would be a large burden to an institution that relies heavily on donations for any new development as a not-for-profit university.

For all of the reasons listed above, we ask that you keep the exemption in place for post-secondary institutions. Both McMaster and Redeemer significantly add to Hamilton's economic growth in a variety of ways, including bringing students to Hamilton from all across the globe, research endeavors, and job creation. We are confident that with this exemption in place, all post-secondary institutions in Hamilton will be able to thrive and positively impact the city of Hamilton.

Thank you for your consideration,



David Zietsma
Vice President, External Relations and Enrolment