

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

General Issues Committee: December 9, 2020

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. WILSON.....

SECONDED BY MAYOR / COUNCILLOR

Major Construction Project Disruptions Impacting the Eligibility for Affected Businesses under the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy Program

WHEREAS, on October 9, 2020, the Government of Canada proposed the new Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS) to provide direct relief to businesses, non-profits and charities that continue to be economically impacted but the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy mirrors the calculation of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), providing benefits directly to qualifying renters and property owners, without requiring the participation of landlords;

WHEREAS, the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy provides a subsidy on eligible expenses for qualifying organizations that have experienced a revenue decline due to the impacts of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy provides a subsidy on eligible expenses for qualifying organizations that have experienced a revenue decline due to the impacts of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the eligibility will generally be determined by the reduction in an eligible entity's monthly revenues, year-over-year, for the applicable calendar month;

WHEREAS, major construction and capital projects, such as the Locke Street Business Improvement Area road reconstructions located between Main Street West and Herkimer Street (Hamilton), caused considerable disruption to vehicular and pedestrian traffic resulting in significant declines in business levels and revenues for impacted businesses;

WHEREAS, using the 2019 base to calculate the percentage revenue decline for the current qualifying period of 2020 in determining the subsidy rate will not reflect an accurate representation of year over year lost revenue decline due to the lowered revenues in 2019 due to road reconstruction;

WHEREAS, small businesses and commercial districts are the lifeline of not only Hamilton's, but also to the Canadian economy, and they have been devastated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Mayor correspond with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Middle-Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance and, the local MPs to request that:

- (i) The reference periods for the drop-in-revenues, used for calculating the eligible payment amount under the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy and Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, be expanded to support businesses who were disproportionately affected by major construction and capital projects, such as the Locke Street Business Improvement Area road reconstruction, located between Main Street West and Herkimer Street (Hamilton), caused considerable disruption to vehicular and pedestrian traffic resulting in significant declines in business levels and revenues for impacted businesses; and,
- (ii) The rate of revenue drop used in the calculation of the subsidy drop in both the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy and the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy be more flexible to allow a base year to include a year that is most representative of a normal year's revenue, especially in situations where 2019 is not representative of a normal year's revenue.