

**Bates, Tamara**

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**Subject:** FW: Development Charges

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**From:** Robert Wakulat <[robert@designwithcourage.com](mailto:robert@designwithcourage.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 20, 2024 12:47 PM

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**Subject:** Development Charges

Hey folks,

I understand all of you are part of the AF&A Committee that is currently reviewing and debating development charges.

I suppose before even sharing my perspective as a local Hamiltonian, I'm curious about the following questions:

- Is there (or are there) municipal and/or provincial databases that inventory the ecosystem productivity of undeveloped lands? Do we understand what happens/changes when we allow for development on natural lands? How does that impact our clean water, clean air and ecosystem resilience?
- Who do we model ourselves after? What are the benchmark municipalities across the world that we aspire to learn from and follow? I think of Freiburg, Germany as an example in the renewable energy space and wonder who is doing great work in the sustainable development space. Sustainable as in financially (for residents/city budget), economically, and environmentally. Furthering this thought, it seems to me many European cities stick to their existing urban footprints and maintain the current integrity of their surrounding natural and agricultural environments. Mainz is a bit smaller than Hamilton but it comes to mind as a city that builds within and not without.

Having wondered about all of that, it seems to me that we shouldn't allow capitalist industries to suck out value for shareholders from us as residents. They should have to pay the full freight of their development and if they won't, then we shouldn't want them here because they will continue to attempt to extract value from their relationship to the city rather than putting value back into it. Our taxes shouldn't buttress the bottom line(s) of for-profit companies. If that's their key rationale for choosing a place to set up business then they'll pull out the moment it's in their financial interests leaving us with less wetland and ecosystem capacity and having extracted value from taxpayers.

That's my 2 cents.

Thanks  
Robert

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