

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Changes to Development Charges

From: Lyn Folkes

Sent: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 3:00 PM

To: Bates, Tamara <Tamara.Bates@hamilton.ca>; Wilson, Maureen <Maureen.Wilson@hamilton.ca>; Kroetsch, Cameron <Cameron.Kroetsch@hamilton.ca>; Hwang, Tammy <Tammy.Hwang@hamilton.ca>; Clark, Brad <Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>; Beattie, Jeff <Jeff.Beattie@hamilton.ca>; Tadeson, Mark <Mark.Tadeson@hamilton.ca>; Wilson, Alex <Alex.Wilson@hamilton.ca>; Spadafora, Mike <Mike.Spadafora@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Changes to Development Charges

Dear members of Council,

I'm writing concerning changes to development charges that will be discussed at the City of Hamilton's Audit, Finance and Administration Committee meeting, Thursday Feb 22, 2024.

I'm happy to see more being done to stop the thoughtless provincial sprawl development schemes of our current provincial government, and I have been impressed by your progressive Council decisions in recent years. I hope you will continue encouraging actions that help our future during this climate emergency, which worsens more rapidly than predicted with each passing year.

Any developer who gains permission to develop lands outside of Hamilton's existing Urban Boundary is in conflict with the municipality and our tax-paying residents who voted strongly against such irresponsible development. And as such, those companies should be forced to pay the complete cost of their projects. Why should we help them ruin our home town? I hope you will know how to work within the system to continue preventing this 'development abuse' which continues being inflicted upon us by profit-minded bullies.

I fully support any effort that makes it much more difficult for developers to destroy wetlands and other natural areas (what you call greenfields perhaps) that are vital to sustain human life. Amazon warehouses are bad for us in so many ways, promoting the consumerism that is damaging our planet and accelerating the climate emergency.

I support a strong tax on wealthy corporations operating in our municipality who generate most of the pollution that contributes to worsening the climate emergency here too, while taxpayers are left struggling to pay for cleaning up their messes. It is an unfair burden. We, the taxpayers, need to be consulted before the final vote on development charges in April because any discounts for industries will be downloaded onto us while we're still recovering from the global pandemic.

Rich polluting industries should not be getting discounts at all anymore really, and they should certainly pay the full cost of servicing their new subdivisions on any undeveloped land. They can afford it -- we can't any longer. They profit so immensely from selling homes and properties now that taxpayers don't need to subsidize them. Urban sprawl is bad for us today because it exacerbates our already unmanageable and increasingly costly climate problems. We need all of those tax dollars to be spent on climate initiatives that can help us rather than on developments that only harm us today.

These are stressful times for the average taxpayer as the province continues downloading major costs on municipalities while hoarding our tax dollars instead of spending it to support us. It's highly aggravating when so many are in need of so much help currently. Stopping developers from destroying what we depend on for our health and well-being in Hamilton would go a long way to help taxpayers today as well as long into the future.

Take NEO Industries for example, who operated in the past in Hamilton for many years while dumping toxic chemicals straight into the sewer, polluting Lake Ontario and their property without any respect for taxpayers. When the property went up for sale, witnesses reported seeing spontaneous combustion on the chemical dumping ground at the back of the property and the government eventually forced a clean-up after concerned citizens alerted them. That chrome-plating industry was right next door to a Tim Horton's and near residential homes but their polluting went unnoticed for years. I don't believe that wealthy company ever paid enough to compensate Hamilton for their many years of serious pollution. I was a first hand witness to this disaster. Industry should be monitored and made to pay for their own development and pollution.

Corporations can't be left to control our societies just because they have more money than our governments. Their common goal of increasing profit is a conflict of interest to the protection of taxpayers' well being - hence we need our politicians to protect our communities more strongly today. We need governments to lead us in making progressive changes that allow us to resolve our serious climate emergency - the most pressing issue of our time. The only way we can address that effectively is if the rich, the biggest polluters, pay their share. My educational background leads me to believe that this is necessary and that if we don't make significant changes to the status quo then we are headed towards a painful and expensive future of climate extremes.

We haven't kept any international GHG emission-reductions promises in Canada to date, so it will take a concerted effort of new initiatives to gain climate security again. I think Hamilton Council has demonstrated an excellent model for other municipalities to follow, including raising greenfield development charges. I am impressed by these efforts.

Please increase development charges to help save vital natural resources and protect our most fundamental needs in Hamilton as well as very responsibly, aid the world in our effort to control climate chaos. I agree with the proposed rate of \$41.48 per sq. ft. for industrial development on greenfields -- the higher the better.

Thank you for helping us and for being a leader in common sense for the times.

Sincerely,
Lyn Folkes & family
Ward 8 Hamilton