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Mr. Brian McMullen
Director, Financial Planning, Administration and Policy
Corporate Services Department
City of Hamilton

RE: UPDATE – 2024 Development Charges Background Study (DC” Update”)

Dear Mr. McMullen,

We are counsel to Waterfront Shores Corporation and are providing this submission with regards to the update of the City’s 2024 DC Update on behalf of our client.

Our client is a partner with the City in the redevelopment of Pier 8, which as the City is aware Pier 8 is part of the City’s long-term strategic vision for the redevelopment of its waterfront. The City describes Pier 8 as a future vibrant urban community designed to be enjoyed by all residents of Hamilton and visitors.

Pier 8 encompasses City owned lands that have long been identified as a priority for redevelopment and as a key component of the revitalization of this part of the City. The vitality of Hamilton’s urban waterfront will be supported by a mix of residential, commercial, community and cultural uses in what will be a unique urban context for the City. The area’s redevelopment is an incredible opportunity for the City to provide continuous public spaces along the West Harbour and to expand the existing Pier 8 events and activities which has been identified as a key benefit to the larger community. The redevelopment in addition to residential and employment uses, will support year-round activities for all ages and a continuous trail and street network, framed by well scaled, well-designed development. The shared vision of Pier 8 is for this area to become a vibrant urban waterfront neighbourhood to be enjoyed by all residents of the City. Our client is currently actively working with the City in delivering the City’s vision for Pier 8 and in a manner that ensures the viability of such an advanced redevelopment.

As the City has noted, one of the key objectives of the redevelopment of the Pier 8 lands is that this community will provide significant enhancements that are planned to be enjoyed by the entire City and not just the residents of Pier 8. The area will provide community benefits for the entire City not just in terms of amenities such as parks and waterfront trails but also by providing for a range of housing forms and types that will help the City as an owner of these lands directly achieve many of its key objective of assisting current and future residents with housing options in what will be a hallmark for future City redevelopment projects.

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In addition to bringing forward this highly anticipated planned vision for a new urban area that will enhance the City, Pier 8 will also help address the urgent need for housing within the City, including affordable. As the Development Charge Background Study dated December 20th, 2023 prepared by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. ("DC Background Study") identifies, high development charges can represent a barrier to increased economic activity. We would note that high development charges can also act as an impediment to the delivery of the vision outlined for Pier 8. While our client supports the City's efforts to ensure that the services related to growth are available to accommodate the growth planned for the City, they believe that the Background Study does not appropriately reflect the importance of Pier 8 to the City's future direction.

Previously the City has identified and incorporated the use of area specific development charges as well as exemptions in order to promote the advancement of key strategic objectives that will benefit and enhance the City. In the past such measures have most recently included specific reduction for the Downtown Hamilton Community Improvement Plan in the City's current DC By-law 19-142. These measures have in the past been successful in helping to advance redevelopment by reducing costs of that redevelopment and we believe would similarly help to achieve these goals for Pier 8.

In the DC Background Study, Sections 4.10 and 7.4.4 provides a brief analysis and overview of the use of Municipal Wide versus Area Specific development charges. While the DC Background Study focuses on the services required and concludes that the calculation should be based on a municipal wide approach as this is how services are planned, in our view this analysis fails to recognize the importance of Pier 8 and the City's direct involvement in the redevelopment of these lands as an owner.

Given the importance of Pier 8 and the City's past use of area specific development charges and other incentives to promote other areas, we would ask that Council consider a similar approach to Pier 8 and direct that staff report back on the use of reduced development charges and other exemptions to help foster this redevelopment. Such reductions and exemptions will help advance this key area and assist in doing so in a manner that helps to ensure that once redeveloped the area continues to provide for a range of affordable housing options and enhanced community benefits for the City as a whole. Our client would be happy to work with the City and its consultants to prepare a community improvement plan and/or area specific development charge for the Pier 8 that could form part of the final recommendations to City Council to be considered prior to adoption. As noted, our client's intention with this request is to ensure that the vision for this area come to life and how that can be advanced within the context of the development charge system.

We look forward to hearing from you and to hopefully advancing such an approach to Pier 8.

KAGAN SHASTRI DeMELO WINER PARK LLP



Paul M. DeMelo
cc. Client