

Wednesday, August 14, 2024

Matthew Trennum
City Clerk, Office of the City Clerk
The Corporation of the City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
L8P 4Y5

Attn: Mayor and City Council

Re: Ongoing Service Issues and Lack of Transparency with the City of Hamilton

I wanted to write to you as a general member of the public to continue to let council know of my experience connecting with City Hall. Staff and Members of the leadership continue to let me down accessing city services and ensuring that customer service, transparency and accountability is at the forefront of an open and transparent government.

What is the value of money as taxpayers when this Council passes an operating budget, asked for an increase, and taxpayers don't know where their tax dollars are going. This Municipality continues to waste taxpayer's dollars and when us as taxpayers ask for data and transparency on how departments work, and whether fraud and waste is at the forefront of the department performance measures, we get ghosted. In fact, I have provided numerous examples of how other Municipalities such as Mississauga, Toronto, Peel Region, Oakville and Halton Region provides more transparency and responds to our questions in a professional and timely matter.

This council and the City of Hamilton continues to fail in this category and staff continue to not report to the community and council on transparency and accountability.

I am letting council know that there are departments continue to be difficult to work with and access information that should be readily available in council meetings are being hidden from the public to access. I've sent numerous questions to the leadership of the Community Services division on service level performance measures and the service agreement as the City acting as the "Service Manager" for the Ontario Works program and have not received answers to any of our questions.

I am notifying this council that there are serious concerns with your Community Services department that needs to be addressed by either the Office of the Auditor through a value for money audit or a forensic investigation by the Province or the Police. Many residents have provided proof and reported fraud and waste when it comes to resources supporting community services programs including Ontario Works, Canada-Ontario housing benefit, as well as a other programs/grants that support the needs of our community. The department head

and leadership have not reported to this council key performance metrics as well as provided to council or any of its committee ways it administers provincial/federal community grants as well as administers the Ontario Work programs as “service manager.”

The Community Services department doesn’t take fraud and waste seriously and is not being transparent to the community on key performance measurements, how processes and procedures work, and what the value of money when it comes to our property tax dollars supporting the administration of the City being “service manager”.

Why does our property tax dollars support fraud and waste? This is a question that I have for this council and hoping that with the upcoming session Council can ask leadership of the Community Services department these questions.

I wanted to take this time to thank Marnie Cluckie as your City Manager showing compassion, leadership and her commitment to transparency and making City Hall a welcoming place for all. I just wished that we got this with other City Seniors leadership and staff put transparency and accountability at the forefront of continuing to ensure us taxpayers that we are getting our best value for money when it comes to City services and the property tax roll operating budget, and that Fraud and Waste is removed from the Community Services department.

When will transparency and accountability be restored within the Community Services department and when will the department take Fraud and Waste seriously? Why do I have to continue to go to other Municipalities to fact check a response that City of Hamilton staff have provided to ensure it is correct? This is a question that I would like a response from this council from this correspondence.

We all want to make the City of Hamilton a great place to live, work and play, however it will remain behind other Municipalities in the GTHA if it not transparent, not accountable, and shows value for money to taxpayers.

Sincerely

Hafeez Hussain