

Friday June 6, 2025

Public Works Committee
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

Item 7.1 PW25039

Process Used to Inform the City's Planning, Execution and Communication of Major Infrastructure Works

On behalf of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce I would like to express our appreciation to Councillor Maureen Wilson and the Public Works Committee for your efforts to examine how the City can better mitigate the impacts of large-scale infrastructure projects on local businesses. We are encouraged by the focus on understanding current processes related to the planning, execution, and communication of major infrastructure works. Our thanks to staff for preparing Information Report PW25039, which provides an important starting point for this discussion.

We would like to offer a few initial comments to help inform today's deliberations.

Of particular note is Appendix A – Communication Requirements for Public Works. The word *business* does not appear anywhere in the seven-page document. While the communication of potential community risks is identified as a priority, all subsequent references focus exclusively on *residents*.

Though this may seem like a minor omission, in practice it has contributed to a noticeable gap in engagement with the business community when compared to the level of engagement received by residents. Businesses are not always explicitly included in stakeholder engagement plans resulting in businesses needs such as deliveries, customer access, being overlooked in construction planning.

We note that while the table titled Key Communications for Planned City-Delivered Infrastructure Projects does acknowledge businesses as recipients of notices and updates. These notices and updates are often written with residents in mind and not operational business concerns.

We strongly encourage the committee to continue exploring and to formalize best practices in construction mitigation and business continuity planning when major projects affect commercial districts.

As the City moves forward in modernizing and improving how it supports businesses affected by construction, we respectfully offer the following recommendations:

- **Develop tailored project mitigation plans** in consultation with local business operators. These should identify supports necessary to ensure the viability of commercial districts during prolonged disruption.
- **Appoint a dedicated Business Construction Liaison** for each major infrastructure project. This role would provide a clear point of contact for businesses and help ensure real-time issues are addressed quickly and effectively.
- **Incorporate a Business Impact Analysis** as part of pre-construction planning. This analysis—would assess potential impacts and provide for proactive mitigation measures.
- **Conduct post-project evaluations** that include direct feedback from affected businesses. These insights should be used to update and refine city policies, ensuring continuous improvement in how business needs are addressed.

We are confident that taking these steps will help protect the vitality of our neighbourhood main streets while maintaining public trust and project momentum.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GD', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Greg Dunnett
President & CEO
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce