

Bates, Tamara

Subject: FW: Question for Development charges meeting June 12th

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To: clerk@hamilton.ca

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Good Morning,

As part of the discussion regarding changes to Development charges which will result in a tax increase, we are submitting the following question/inquiry:

Included in the 2024 5.79% property tax increase was 2.55%, as per the City of Hamilton website: (average \$125 per household) to offset the impacts of new provincial legislation, that shifts infrastructure costs for new development from the developer to City tax payer. The 2.55% was 44% of the total 2024 tax increase. The legislation, Bill 23, never passed however the City did not remove the increase from our property taxes and under false pretences, now in perpetuity will continue to collect and increase every year. In September 2024, Donna Skelly challenged this increase, suggesting a rebate be given to tax payers, Coun Wilson implied the monies would offset other short falls from the province, based on not meeting housing starts, (reported in the Flamborough Today Sept 10, 2024), the explanation was different from the initial reason given for the increase. These tax dollars, already being collected, should be used to pay for any new changes to development fees the City wants to make, this is what these tax dollars were originally ear marked for.

In addition, should the City not wait until the new provincial Bill 17 and federal bills reducing development fees (up to half for multi unit dwellings), increasing municipal funding availability to see how these may impact the City's development fees before implementing a tax increase?

The City has raised property taxes substantially over the past 3 years, additional tax increases and fees (stormwater) are not sustainable. People will be unable to pay their property taxes, forced to sell or even lose their homes, home buyers will avoid Hamilton and look in areas where taxes are lower. It is time that the City stopped putting the burden on tax payers and looked within for cost cuts (ie: mandate a 5 - 10% reduction across all departments), generate a larger commercial/industrial tax base, better negotiations on contracts and purchases taking this burden upon themselves. With the high cost of living, it is not the time to tax the property owner again.

Sue and Jamie Feere