

Memo

Date: June 5, 2020

To: Sanya Khan, Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives – Region of Peel

From: Ben Roberts, Manager of Business Development, Tourism & Culture – Strategic Initiatives

Subject: **Region of Peel – Development Services Fees Review – Consultation Comment from Town of Caledon Economic Development & Tourism Office**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Region of Peel, Development Services Fees Review.

In addition to the comment provided in the Consultation meeting on May 19, 2020, I have provided additional detail with reference to our Economic Development Strategy and actions related to having business charges and fees that are competitive with competing jurisdictions.

A Common Goal – Investment Attraction and Assessment Growth

Good economic development planning seeks to enhance competitiveness. The ability of a city or region to compete with other cities or regions for investment, talent, and market share.

Economic development competitiveness in a globally oriented economy however is less about the individual community and more about the combined economic strength of regions or metropolitan areas, and the clusters of organizations and businesses that support that growth. Central to this are themes of collaboration and partnership. It is in this lens that we look to the Region of Peel to assist in our goals of being competitive with other jurisdictions.

Caledon Economic Development Strategy – Advocating for Competitive Fees

On April 28, 2020 Caledon Council adopted *Caledon 2020-2030: An Economic Development Strategy for the Town of Caledon*.

Within Caledon's Economic Development Strategy, it directs Economic Development staff to advocate for an attractive business environment.

In Priority IV: Enhance Investment Readiness, our objective is to:



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- **Provide the structure and policies to effectively target investment attraction and diversification of the local economy**

Further under that objective, Action 4.5 states:

- **Ensure that business taxes, development charges, imposed fees and related costs of expansion remain competitive and are marketed effectively.**

Provided the objective and action approved by Caledon Council, Town of Caledon Economic Development strongly request that fees remain competitive within the within the Greater Toronto Area.

It is recognized the need for cost recovery and for the Region to be accountable to the taxpayer however the analysis must also recognize the cost and impact on lost investment. If municipal government does not provide a business environment that supports investment, that investment goes elsewhere. This experience is then communicated to other businesses and developers and it erodes the reputation for the Region as a place to do business. Region of Peel, City of Mississauga, City of Brampton and Town of Caledon need to be known in the development community as a place that understands business and provides a supportive environment for investment.

Cost of Doing Business

From the information we have received there was no analysis on the impact that increased fees would have on business owners or developers. The Municipal and Regional governments require development charges, cash in lieu of parkland, site plan fees, servicing fees, water and sanitary infrastructure, road widening, building permit fees and the costs associated with the list of studies and plans for approval of their planning applications. The costs have grown exponentially and recently have led to extreme financial strain on several Caledon businesses. At this time support is needed to help business grow and not add to their burden.

Creating an Environment for Business Growth

In relation to the large office study that Region of Peel has been working on, this is an example of how the Region must be competitive. Industrial development activity has been increasing in recent years across the GTA, with an increased focus along the Highway 401 corridor in Mississauga, Brampton and Milton, and in the Highway 400/407 area of Vaughan. Similar trends have been seen in office development as well. The emergence of new office nodes such as Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Downtown Markham, and Midtown Oakville, place increased competitive pressure on office attraction. It is essential that Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon can be viewed as an attractive location to do business. Our fees and services for businesses must demonstrate that we are the best location for investment, development and growth.



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