

April 20, 2020

Mayor Rob Burton and Members of Council  
Town of Oakville  
1225 Trafalgar Road  
Oakville, ON  
L6H 0H3

Dear Rob Burton and Members of Council,

RE: Report CORS-013-20 Indexing of the Town's Development Charges By-law

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*With more than 1,500 member-companies, BILD is the voice of the land development, home building and professional renovation industry in the Greater Toronto Area. Our industry is essential to Halton Region's long-term economic strength and prosperity. In 2018 alone, the residential construction industry in Halton Region generated over 26,000 on-site and off-site jobs in new home building, renovation and repair – one of the Region's largest employers. As a simple rule of thumb, one crane in the sky represents 500 jobs. These jobs paid \$1.6 billion in wages and contributed \$3.3 billion in investment value to the local economy.*

The far-reaching effects of COVID-19 has left our industry, like many others, facing unprecedented times. The situation continues to rapidly evolve, and as it does, members of BILD have expressed growing concerns and challenges with current business plans, the viability of future projects, and the overall health of our industry and local economy. Given the state of the economy and uncertainty of the situation, we have instigated conversations with a number of our municipal partners on ways we can support each other during this difficult period.

BILD and its members want to be part of the solution during this difficult time. In the interest of the local economy and housing affordability, we collectively need to keep business moving by ensuring that Town Hall stays operational – remotely – for processing applications, building inspections and permitting services.

It is our understanding that Town staff are working from home where feasible, and that there has been a drastic reduction in services related to building and permit applications, development engineering and planning. In the view of BILD and its Chapter members, the Town is effectively and, very concerningly, no longer accepting new applications for these services and are only focusing on what is existing in the system. In the case of planning, only time sensitive applications are being reviewed at this time. It's not clear to BILD and its members what 'time sensitive' means and require further clarity from staff.

We stress that planning, engineering, building and the associated legal services should be able to work from home and continue processing new and current applications. Failing to do so will ultimately create a backlog in the system, delay closings/occupancies and further challenge the affordability of new homeownership. It will also exacerbate the damaging effects that COVID-19 has already made and continues to make on the economy, locally, nationally and globally.

**BILD requests that the Town of Oakville align itself with the Region of Halton and its partner, local municipalities and ensure that Building, Engineering and Planning services re-open and that all new and existing applications are processed according to COVID-19 safety measures.**

**Furthermore, given the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has made on the Town's services and associated delays in our members' ability to receive their building permits, BILD also requests Town Council not impose the scheduled April 1<sup>st</sup> indexing to development charges rates until the situation has stabilized.**

Thank you for taking the time to thoughtfully consider our comments and request. We must all do our part to assist in flattening the curve and restore our economy from the pandemic, which we hope will subside soon. BILD and our Chapter members are your partners in prosperity. If there is anything we can do that can be of service to you – we welcome that discussion.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Carmina Tupe, MCIP RPP  
Manager, Policy & Advocacy, BILD

CC: Jane Clohecy, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
Jim Barry, Acting Community Development Commissioner  
Mark Simeoni, Director of Planning Services  
Jason Sheldon, BILD Halton Chapter Chair  
BILD Halton Chapter Members