



BUILDING A GREATER GTA
Building Industry and Land
Development Association

March 23, 2020

Mayor John Tory
Office of the Mayor
City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Tory,

RE: March 18th Business Continuity Roundtable Meeting

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your March 18th Business Continuity Roundtable meeting. Our industry appreciates the strong leadership that you have shown throughout this difficult time. We respect and support your efforts to keep Torontonians safe, and this is our industry's first priority too.

We support your efforts to stabilize the local economy. Our industry is facing unprecedented times and many of our members are concerned about the viability of existing and future projects, as well as the overall health of our industry. As discussed on our call, as of the date of our call, the majority of our members had closed their head offices, sales offices were operating by appointment only and some construction sites were operating with new protocols respecting social distancing. As the situation rapidly evolved throughout last week we heard that many project launches were paused and more construction sites were closing.

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 need to keep business moving by ensuring that City Hall stays operational - remotely, for processing applications, building's inspection and permitting services (i.e. occupancy, construction permits, foundational). We recognize that the City has sent non-essential staff home. We reiterate that planning, building and the associated legal services should be able to work from home. Failing to do so will delay closings/occupancies and further challenge the affordability of new homeownership.

We would like to take this opportunity to offer some immediate actions that you could implement to assist our industry:

- Pause punitive development policy reviews;
- Triage/redeploy staff to assist, where possible, on critical development applications application or permitting end;
- Allow Committee of Adjustment and TLAB to operate via Skype or another virtual service;
- Allow our members to do self inspections with certified engineers signing off;
- Allow staff to work from home or implement a skeletal staff for building permits issuance (for larger projects) and essential planning functions, where social distancing practices can be abided by.

We hope that this situation will subside soon and that we have all done our part to flatten the curve.



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When this is all behind us, hopefully soon, we will need to focus on our recovery efforts and the following are some suggestions to maintain the level of development activity to support the local economy.

- A temporary pause on development related fees i.e. lane occupancy fees;
- A temporary freeze of development charges and delay any new development charge increases;
- Provide financial relief on carrying costs associated to delays i.e. waive property taxes for the period of disruption (the City should ask the Federal and Provincial Government for these funds);
- Provide grants to offset net costs for businesses during this period;
- When speaking to other governments, support a moratorium on interest rates.

Again, thank you for your leadership during these trying times, we are your partners in prosperity. With this turmoil, if there is anything we can do at BILD or with our members that can be of service to you – we welcome that discussion. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to speaking with you again.

Stay safe and healthy,

Dave Wilkes
President & CEO, BILD