



POLICY RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE: Development and Infrastructure Policy Committee

SUBJECT: Development Charges

RECOMMENDATION: That the Burlington Chamber of Commerce support public policies that promote business development and in particular encourage the Regional Municipality of Halton and City of Burlington to examine and implement development charges strategies to stimulate investment in the employment-rich commercial and industrial sector.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Regional Municipality of Halton and the City of Burlington are currently reviewing development charges and proposals are under consideration that would see a sharp increase.

While the Chamber understands the need for local governments to recover costs associated with the expanding capital infrastructure needed to service new development, we also see the consequences of increasing development charges. Higher development charges would hamper Burlington's competitiveness for new business to settle here and for existing businesses to expand.

The Burlington Chamber of Commerce is conscious of the increasing mobility of business development. Burlington and Halton face competition to host new, moving or growing business. This competition not only comes from adjacent communities – as has historically been the case – but also from communities around the world. With that in mind, local governments should be proactive and plan for long term growth in order to ensure that public policies do not put our community at a competitive disadvantage when it comes to enjoying the benefits arising from new development.

At the current pace, the City of Burlington will have absorbed all residentially zoned land within seven to ten years, whereas there is a 40-year supply of employment land. Therefore, not only should the currently proposed development charges be examined closely to ensure that the changes do not discourage development, but the City and Region should look to any and all strategies (including discounts and incentives) to encourage employment-rich business development in the industrial and office sectors in Burlington and Halton and to achieve the overall balance between residential, retail, commercial and industrial development that has been set out as the city's long term planning objectives.

Dissemination:

Letter to:

Chair, Halton Region Development Charges Advisory Committee

Chair, City of Burlington Development Charges Consultation Committee

Copies to:

Councillors, Halton Region

Chair, Halton Region

Councillors, City of Burlington

Mayor, City of Burlington

Passed by Board of Directors on May 26, 2004