



Submission to Halton Region on Development Charges

From:

Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville Chambers of Commerce

Recommendations for 2007-2008 Development Charges Review

Consistent with Halton's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, we recommend:

1. The Region of Halton **maintain the status quo** for the Development Charges Bylaw.
2. The Region of Halton should **continue to employ Development Charge Discounts** in Industrial and Commercial categories and continue to use DCs as a tool within an overall Economic Development Strategy to encourage industrial and non-retail commercial businesses to locate and remain in Halton.
3. The **HUSP and NON-HUSP designations should be continued.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

We support the:

Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Official Plan 2007-2010

Our recommendations are consistent with the themes outline in the Halton Region Strategic Plan, 2007 – 2010 which specifically states the following:

Vision, Themes and Goals

Theme 4: Promote and Strengthen Economic Growth and Prosperity

Goal 1 – Promote economic prosperity in Halton Region by implementing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (see below)

Goal 2 – Create opportunities for local new employment to allow residents to live and work in Halton

Goal 3 – Create an environment to retain businesses and attract strategic businesses to Halton

Goal 4 – Encourage the establishment of post-secondary opportunities/institutions in Halton, including apprenticeship training

Strategic Themes:

2. Competitive Business Environment

Ensure that the cost to develop and operate a business in Halton remains competitive within the Greater Golden Horseshoe area (GGH)

- Undertake periodic reviews and benchmarking of fees and business costs
- **Maintain the Region's deferral and discount policies** for non-residential development charge (DC) payments
- **Investigate** the impacts of **additional Regional DC discounts for expansions** of industrial (manufacturing) and concentrated office uses to spur reinvestment and encourage intensification
- **Investigate** the possibility and the impacts of **providing increased Regional DC discounts for office park concentrations in future Development Charges By-law** updates to stimulate office development in Halton
- Review the industrial tax rates on an annual basis with a view to **consider lowering the industrial tax rate towards the commercial tax rate**

Planning for Economic Growth and Prosperity

- **Maintain an adequate supply of serviced industrial/ commercial land to support economic growth**
- **Implement programs and strategies to support economic growth in key corridors and sectors for Halton**
- **Provide incentives for economic growth** which meet the objectives of the Province's Places to Grow Plan and the Halton Region Official Plan
- Ensure that the transportation infrastructure in Halton supports economic growth

Background

- Development Charge **Discounts were adopted in 1991 to stimulate ICI building**
- There is a need to attract and retain enough businesses to balance the tax base and the needs of residents for local employment opportunities
- There is ever increasing competition from other municipalities to attract desirable businesses to their communities
- Businesses pay significantly higher taxes and use fewer services than residents. This, along with the economic, environmental and social benefits of having businesses located locally, more than offsets the cost of development
- Development Charges are a factor in a business's decision whether to locate in or remain in Halton
- Halton has the highest Development Charges of any municipality in the Greater Toronto Area
- Development Charges are one of the few financial tools available to regional and local governments, to attract and retain business
- Commercial annualized costs are in the upper middle position
- We understand that some municipalities have raised DCs, since the charts were distributed
- DCs apply to expansion on existing ICI buildings – discouraging expansion and making re-location more viable