



Friday, March 27, 2020

Good afternoon Mayor and Members of Council,

The Peterborough Chamber of Commerce is reaching out on behalf of the Peterborough business community.

As you get set to meet virtually on Monday, March 30th, 2020, we wanted to bring your attention to some of the concerns of the business community. During the week of March 16th -March 22nd, we partnered with several other business organizations under the banner of #TeamPtbo (Peterborough & the Kawartha Economic Development, the Peterborough DBIA, the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures Peterborough and Innovation Cluster – Peterborough and the Kawartha) to issue a survey. The survey realized about 330 responses with businesses looking for help from their municipal government with:

- Financial continuity
- Staffing continuity

Here are some considerations for you as you discuss the way forward:

1. Put in place the province's suggestion of property tax deferrals to residents and businesses

The province's announcement of Ontario Action Plan: Response to COVID-19 on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 included the following commitment:

"Over \$1.8 billion by deferring the upcoming June 30 quarterly municipal remittance of education property tax to school boards by 90 days, which will provide municipalities the flexibility to, in turn, provide property tax deferrals to residents and businesses, while ensuring school boards continue to receive their funding."

Other municipalities that have already done this include:

- Windsor-Essex
- Guelph
- Barrie
- Brampton
- Cambridge

2. Waiving of Parking Permit and Transit fees

Looking at the City of Peterborough COVID-19 website there is a commitment that has already been made to Transit including new measures that will start in the coming weeks as well as measures for on-street parking including:

- Meters will still accept payment and any monies will go to Kawartha Food Share – same as Holiday program.
- The City of Peterborough asks that residents and business owners continue to respect the two-hour parking limit for on-street parking spaces. Enforcement of the two-hour limit for on-street parking will continue where and when necessary to ensure equitable access to on-street parking spaces.

Which is appreciated, however, some municipalities have decided to also waive parking permit fees for businesses and we ask that council consider this as well. These communities are:

- Windsor-Essex
- Guelph
- Barrie
- Brampton
- Cambridge

3. **Cancellation of development service department fees (building, planning, zoning) to stimulate construction activities.**

This is something that has not been suggested by the province, but could be something considered by council. According to the City of Peterborough COVID-19 website, the City is not accepting new planning applications so this might be a measure to introduce for a period of time once the situation moves into a recovery phase.

4. **Temporary waiving of noise bylaws to permit deliveries and allow essential services to stock up.**

This will allow healthcare institutions, grocery stores, and others deemed essential businesses to stock up when needed and allow for greater flexibility during this time. The province passed the *Municipal Emergency Act, 2020* on March 19th, 2020 which would allow for such adaptation of the noise by-law at this time.

Businesses are looking for stability in a time of instability and each level of government has ways in which they are able to provide this. The business community, many of which are small businesses, thanks council for consideration of the measures proposed above.

Sincerely,

Stuart Harrison, Peterborough Chamber of Commerce
Rhonda Keenan, Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development
Terry Guiel, Peterborough Downtown Business Improvement Area
Michael Skinner, Innovation Cluster, Peterborough and the Kawarthas
Gail Moorhouse, Community Futures Peterborough