

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Warden Jones and County Council

**RE: Considerations on Measures of Economic Relief because of COVID-19**

As we move through the COVID-19 pandemic, we would like to emphasize the importance of a plan that recognizes the role of businesses in economic recovery.

A Task Force consisting of a group of business owners and organizations encourages councillors to consider several principles:

1. Immediate Business Relief Measures
2. Addressing Budgetary Issues
3. Applying an Economic Lens

**Immediate Business Relief Measures**

Property tax measures will provide some relief in conjunction with measures in place and anticipated from the provincial and federal governments.

Noise by-law relaxation, in accordance with the provincial order, are also appreciated.

There are a few more areas where the city could provide some immediate relief.

1. Waiving parking permits – many employees are not using their permits for county or township-owned lots and waiving of this fee would help
2. Waiving any costs associated with the licensing, development or building permits would encourage developers to work on projects for the future even while their cash flow may be limited right now
3. Continue to accept and process development and planning applications in accordance with provincial orders so that when the recovery is given the green light, construction on projects can begin immediately. This would also help staff manage a potential backlog in the future when developers will want to be building.

**Addressing Budgetary Issues**

The Task Force openly recognizes that budgets will be challenging, but there will also be an opportunity for expenditures to focus on a strong comeback.

As long-term plans are developed, we encourage staff and councillors to understand that the burden is one that is born by all in recovery.

1. Peterborough County requires a strong social, environmental, cultural and economic response. If recovery expectations are not balanced and equal, the County will struggle.
2. If Townships haven't done so already, consider implementing a policy to waive late fees on property taxes. We ask that when it comes time to repay these amounts that they be interest-free and applied over a 24-month time frame and that the County support such measures.
3. Consider a program for rent required on county and/or township-owned properties that is reflective of the situation of the tenant. For example: Stagger back the payments as not everyone will be back in business at the same time

### **Applying an Economic Lens**

We are aware that there is a great partnership and reliance between the public and private sectors.

1. When considering projects and priorities consult with the business community through PKED, Chambers of Commerce, DBIA groups and others to assess the impact of decisions on business before they are implemented
2. Ask where the private sector, not-for-profit can help and be a partner in building the road of recovery
3. Approve the creation of the Mayor and Warden's Task Force for Economic Recovery and the PKED Economic Recovery Plan so that this plan to support economic recovery can be implemented.

The business community operates in all townships and throughout the County of Peterborough. Building the road of recovery will take all hands-on deck approach as businesses search for stability in a time of instability. During this time, we've seen a lot of collaboration between businesses and with government to get the word out about programs and assistance. The Task Force appreciates the posting of the several resources for businesses on the County of Peterborough's website.

The business community, many of which are small businesses, thanks council for consideration of the measures proposed above.

Thank you.

Please note these recommendations were developed and are being submitted by:

Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce

Peterborough DBIA

Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development

Community Futures Peterborough

Innovation Cluster Peterborough and Kawarthas

Sam McKnight, McKnight's Flowers on behalf of a number of business owners who have been meeting regularly