



July 22, 2021

Mr. Mark Medeiros
Director of Finance/Treasurer (Acting)
City of Brampton
2 Wellington Street
Brampton, ON
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Mark.Medeiros@brampton.ca

Re: 2022 City of Brampton Budget Process

Dear Mark:

Members of the Board of Trade are keenly interested in the process that establishes the City of Brampton's 2022 annual budget. Interest includes not only the near-term implications regarding the cost of doing business in our city, but also the longer-term vision that helps inform their hiring and investment decision-making.

With its members employing more than 45,000 in our city, the Brampton Board of Trade advocates on behalf of our local business community and provides a variety of resources to help businesses connect and navigate their path to success in our city. As we prepare to exit the 2020-21 operating restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, our members have identified a wide range of operational concerns, including continued revenue uncertainty, increasing material costs, wage inflation and utility costs.

For the 2022 budget process, members have asked us to share ideas, feedback and priorities with you. Today, we are writing to share preliminary comment on key areas of interest:

- (1) **Consultation:** Thank you for your commitment to consult closely with members of Council on the 2022 budget. The Brampton Board of Trade hopes there will be timely consultations with the broader public, and more specifically the business community. We would be pleased to have city staff engage with our Policy & Government Relations Committee, or to facilitate a more detailed focus group. We will ask staff member Kevin Draper to determine with you the best dates for this to occur.
- (2) **Reserve Funds:** Maintaining healthy reserve funds will be of critical importance for the period after the COVID-19 pandemic, when higher orders of government may be less generous as they reign in their own spending. A transparent and easily traceable account of reserve fund balances will also be a readiness asset for the next unforeseen

crisis, with governments and taxpayers likely to face a long recovery from this current one. Additionally, a healthy and traceable reserve fund helps to foster the business community's confidence and willingness to make further investments in Brampton. Kevin will want to review with you current balances and reserve fund recommendations planned for 2022.

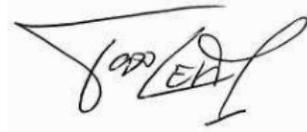
- (3) **Capital Projects:** The City of Brampton competes for senior level of government funding with other municipalities. Being able to offer realistic contributions to major capital projects is an important component of securing funding from higher orders of government. Budgeting to make these contributions and attracting the investment needed to build critical infrastructure is a core priority of our members. In the past we have suggested an Economic Development Reserve Fund. We would like to discuss this in further detail for the upcoming budget.
- (4) **State of Local Infrastructure (SOLI):** The most recent SOLI report was completed in 2019. The 2021 budget identified that this report will be updated in 2021, returning to annual updates. The Brampton Board of Trade looks forward to reviewing this report prior to the 2022 budget process so its observations and recommendations can be incorporated into the budget process.
- (5) **Capital Asset Management Plan (CAMP):** As identified in the 2021 Budget, the CAMP is scheduled to be updated in 2021 and we look forward to reviewing this document prior to the budget process. The SOLI and CAMP reports are crucial to understanding the requirements of any tax changes. Integral to these reports is the level of unfunded capital projects (previously estimated at over \$200 million) and the level of unspent capital projects (at times in past history, totalling over \$750 million).
- (6) **Property Taxes:** Businesses need certainty with respect to property taxes. What are the implications of the numerous largescale projects planned for the city? How long can 0% or very low increases be sustained, and what should taxpayers be prepared for in future years? The Brampton Board of Trade will want to explore how the staff recommendation is consistent with the City's Long Term Financial Master Plan and the Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP).

The Brampton Board of Trade eagerly awaits the upcoming budget process and better understanding the city's decisions and projections on the subjects above. We are committed to being a constructive stakeholder, facilitating a two-way flow of information between our membership and city staff.

We look forward to further engagement over the coming weeks and months.
Sincerely,



Michelle McCollum
Chair, Brampton Board of Trade



Todd Letts
CEO, Brampton Board of Trade

cc:

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