

Email Received from Himansu Shah dated September 16, 2024

Good afternoon, Sonya,

We thank you for inviting us to the Stake holders meeting for the proposed Development Charges at the Community center on 5th September 2024. Upon presentation by Lisa from B. M. Ross various stakeholders raised questions and made some useful suggestions. We also made some suggestions regarding the proposed DC in the meeting. Upon your request, we are summarizing the same below:

1. Demand for the smaller communities like Walkerton and liking for small town living became a newly found idea for people in bigger cities and larger urban areas during Covid-19 and with Work from home concept which brought home buyers and new residents to this town and many other in last few years.
2. Now that most companies and government at various level has started mandating their employees back to work from office which has started slowing down the demand for new homes in the smaller communities which are away from larger cities.
3. Since 2022 the BOC raised the rates of interest historically which caused huge slump in home sales which lead home buyers to turn away from the market due to affordability and eligibility.
4. Due to high inflation in past few years which got entrenched , builders/developer's cost has gone through the roof including but not limited to high cost of finance as well as materials and labour and delayed approvals due to Covid situation, which stalled numerous New build projects and slowed the pace of construction substantially.
5. Even though BOC has started reducing the rates of interest off-late, t it has not helped much improving the affordability for most wanting to buy new homes.
6. People who are planning to move here are looking for bigger yards or Homes at a far lower price point in this communities than the larger cities. DC are huge addition to the cost to new projects and that could adversely affect price advantage to the New Builds. It hits hard to the Builder/Developer and the Buyer in same breath.
7. At the time while the construction industry is hit hard and affordability for home buyer is the number one issue the Nation is facing , Incentives to build should be the discussion on the table and certainly not the DC
8. Presently Walkerton is having competitive edge over its near by towns/municipalities by not having any DC while others have it. It is a common misperception that it is a good idea to have it while everyone else is having it.
9. By leveraging the competitive edge, the town should rather promote faster and cost-effective development and attract builders/Developers and new home buyers. This in turn can start generating tax revenue from the new builds several years sooner to fund the needs instead of the DC altogether.
10. Alternatively, Walkerton should persist diligently and efficiently to receive the grants from provincial and Federal programs to meet the financial requirement and resist introducing

the Development Charges on New Homes/Development projects in the Town and maintain its unique appeal.

Hope this will be considered by the administration and the council in the process of achieving the financial goals while keeping the idea of taxing by DC at bay for now and become the leader of the development.

Thanks,

HIMANSU SHAH

Walker Hill Development Inc.