

From: David Laing [<mailto:david@daylelaing.com>]

Sent: June-29-14 11:09 AM

To: Corbett, John (John.Corbett@brampton.ca)

Cc: john.hutton@brampton.ca

Subject: Brampton Downtown Development Corporation -- Transition Plan

Dear Mr. Corbett,

I'm writing today to express support for a post transition continuation of a Brampton Downtown Development Corporation (BDDC), in so far as it relates to the future direction of Brampton's central core, which could be described as encompassing the City's high density: transit, residential, retail, historic properties and associated natural capital. I speak both for myself and on behalf of the members of the Brampton Bicycle Advisory Committee whose members believe as I do that Brampton's economic and cultural sustainability is significantly tied to the strength and vibrancy of its core, a core that creates a sense of space while at the same time defines Brampton and its peoples as a community.

We believe that businesses within that central core must be more than merely economic engines but exhibit a personality which aligns with the community identity and supports the community values. Doing that requires that Brampton's downtown businesses align themselves around a common theme, one that can and will be supported by the larger Brampton community. In other words, Brampton's central core must be perceived by a large number of Brampton residents as an attractive destination and not merely as a commuter thoroughfare or transit transfer point.

In our opinion the BDDC has begun demonstrating its effectiveness in defining that common theme, in attracting and retaining businesses with different yet complimentary personalities, in unifying the disparate needs of those businesses and then in fostering community engagement to bridge business needs with the broader needs of the community to create and maintain that community identity.

Case in point, by bringing Gil Penalosa to a presentation at the Rose Theatre this past April and by engaging 8-80 Cities to implement Doable Neighbourhood projects within Brampton's core, the BDDC is engaging both businesses and citizens together in a dialogue, one that explores the options of how we can grow and urbanize gracefully while capitalizing on the strengths and uniqueness of our current community. It would be a shame if that dialogue were to be cut-off before it had an opportunity to jell into firm actions.

The BDDC has been largely successful in creating a critical mass of civic minded individuals from a wide cross section of affluence and influence, the kind of body that the City and the City's businesses needs to listen to if a culturally and economically successful common theme is to emerge and be sustained. Gaining this critical mass would be difficult to do thorough any other means. And dismantling the BDDC would effectively mean that some other organization would have to re-establish the credibility that the BDDC has taken time to develop.

We don't dispute that it is the mandate of City Council to be ultimately responsible for defining the city's vision and for creating the strategy that supports the implementation of that vision. We feel, however, it is crucial to have a voice at arm's length from the political climate of the day to consolidate the voices of businesses and citizens together and to maintain a long-term vision of what's possible for the future of Brampton's central core. From our perspective, the BDDC is demonstrating that it can fulfill that role and that its dissolution in that regard would create a significant vacuum. Can you give us any assurance that won't happen as the BDDC transition plan is implemented?

David

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