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## **THE CHAMBER RECOMMENDS PHASE-IN PERIOD FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT CHARGES**

The City of Windsor increased the rate of development charges for the next five-year period. This increase is a part of a wider review undertaken by all Ontario municipalities every five years under the Development Charges Act. The City has been reluctant to raise the rates in the past. As a result, the rates were not raised significantly for a number of years and are currently among the lowest of Ontario municipalities.

The Windsor & District Chamber of Commerce is not opposed to the increase in development charges but recommended a phase-in period to lessen any potential impact on the local housing industry. The Chamber addressed City Council on the issue and it stressed the need for greater accountability and the use of lower development charges as an incentive for new growth among its recommendations.

The Chamber put forward the following Development Charges recommendations:

1. As development charges have not been adjusted for the City of Windsor in a number of years the Chamber is not opposed to the increase in development rates, as growth should be paying for growth related expenses.
2. Acknowledging the possible hardship in the development industry from these increases the Chamber understands the need for a more seamless transition. We are asking City Council to phase in the sought increases over 3 years, and give the industry the time it needs to adjust to the new development costs.
3. The funds acquired by the City from development charges should be used exclusively toward providing the infrastructure and services needed for the new developments. The City should set a high standard for its services, providing leadership and a positive example to all municipalities in this respect.
4. The Chamber calls upon the City Council to provide a system of accountability for any development charges revenue. The City Council must assure its stakeholders that these funds will NOT be used for purposes other than new development.
5. The municipality should provide incentives in the form of reduced development charges for locations in the City in which growth is desired but hard to attract. Lower development charges should serve as incentives for developing the City Centre or other parts of the City. They should be used as an instrument for planned urban development for various parts of the City.