



HALTON REGION

NOTICE OF MOTION

DATE: December 16, 2020

ITEM: Inequities for Businesses in Areas in Stage 1 under Ontario Regulation 82/20

DATE OF MEETING
NOTICE OF MOTION
TO BE CONSIDERED: Council Meeting – December 16, 2020

MOVED BY:
SECONDED BY:

WHEREAS we must do everything possible to protect our economy, while at the same time balancing the interests of public health and safety;

WHEREAS while Halton Region continues to support the Province's COVID-19 response framework, it is critical to recognize that some of the public health measures have created an uneven playing field in affected jurisdictions, placing small businesses and local retailers at a significant competitive disadvantage when lockdowns or the red control level are implemented, such as larger retail outlets being permitted to remain open in lockdown and sell more than just essentials in direct competition with small retailers, which are limited to online sales and curbside pick-up or delivery; and

WHEREAS the survival of small businesses is essential to the Province's recovery efforts, and as such, the current inequity in lockdown zones between small businesses required to limit their sales to online or curbside pickup and those businesses permitted to remain open and continue in-person sales must be addressed to avoid unfair competitive advantage between businesses and to provide consistency with continued effective health risk management in consultation with Public Health; and

WHEREAS as we move through the pandemic, Halton Region will continue to seek opportunities to work with the Province to help its residents and businesses to innovate and provide localized solutions, recognizing that public health measures and restrictions on business are not one size fits all and need to be varied based on local public health conditions, demographics and geographic scale; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has been responsive in rolling out and adapting public health measures on a provincial scale; and

WHEREAS as we move into the second year of managing the pandemic response it must be acknowledged that what is appropriate in the Province's largest cities may not be appropriate in smaller municipalities that are facing different issues in managing public health while balancing supporting local businesses and economic growth;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the provincial government be requested to revise the Rules for Areas in Stage 1 under Ontario Regulation 82/20 ("lockdown") to address the inequity created between small businesses required to close and businesses permitted to open and continue sales; to avoid unfair competitive advantage between businesses; and to provide consistency with continued effective health risk management in consultation with Public Health;

AND THAT the provincial government be requested to revise the physical distancing with capacity limits determined on a per square metre basis for persons admitted to all businesses, including restaurants, which are currently under the red control level of the COVID-19 response framework in Halton Region subject to a hard-capped occupancy limit of 10 regardless of business size or capacity based on the current provincial re-opening framework subject to consultation on Public Health best practices;

AND THAT Halton Region calls on the Province to partner with municipalities to pilot unique/additional parameters and programs with our local business community that may be key to offering a safe consumer and employee experience so that businesses can remain open and viable while recognizing the unique makeup of local communities; and

AND THAT a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction, the Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance, Halton's MPPs', AMO, the Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM) and Halton's Local Municipalities.