Together We Build Manitoba

WCA Support for Resourcing and Permit Reserve Fund Review Report

The Winnipeg Construction Association

The Winnipeg Construction Association, established in 1904, represents the commercial construction industry in Manitoba. Our member firms include manufacturers, suppliers, financial institutions, lawyers, insurance and bonding companies and brokers. These members deliver the $2 billion worth of high quality, cutting edge industrial, commercial and institutional buildings for Manitoba annually.

Support for Planning Property and Development Department Resources

In a presentation to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Development in March 2023, WCA provided detailed information on the need for increased resources in the P, P and D Department.[i] It is evident that the department is operating under strain due to limited staff and inadequate technology infrastructure. These constraints significantly hamper their ability to meet self-imposed deadlines and provide efficient services to citizens and businesses.

The permit approval process has become a matter of grave concern, leading to substantial delays and escalating costs for builders and building owners alike. Numerous reports have reached my attention, highlighting the frustration and financial burden imposed on stakeholders due to the delayed nature of permit approvals. Addressing this issue is crucial to foster a conducive environment for construction projects and to support economic growth in our city.

The recent separation of the development permit and building permit processes has inadvertently caused further complications. Projects are now encountering obstacles at the development stage, even before a building permit application can be submitted.

The functioning of the Permit Department is not just an internal matter; it directly impacts Winnipeg's economic development. Swift permit approvals attract investment, stimulate construction activities, and ultimately contribute to increased government revenue. However, it is essential to recognize that while the City of Winnipeg maintains authority over permits and inspections within the city, it does not possess a monopoly on building permits in the Winnipeg Metro Region. Delays and inefficiencies could potentially drive investors out of Winnipeg, hindering economic growth.

It is alarming to note that the P, P and D Department has collected $80 million more in fees than what has been utilized for service delivery since 2011. The industry and investors within our city pay a premium price for permits, and it is imperative that they receive a commensurate level of service in return.

Given the significance of this matter, I implore you to support these recommendations for the budget process. By doing so, we can alleviate administrative burdens, expedite permit approvals, and provide better service to citizens and businesses. Furthermore, this investment will serve as a catalyst for economic development, attracting investments, spurring construction activities, and positioning Winnipeg as an attractive destination for businesses and entrepreneurs.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I sincerely hope that you will consider the aforementioned points and endorse the report recommendations for the budget approval process.

Should you require any further information or wish to discuss this matter in detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Darryl Harrison
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Winnipeg Construction Association

[i] This submission is attached as Appendix 1