

Requesting Review of Minor Variance Application Fee Increase by 1666%

Dear Council Members,

My name is Dhamotharan Deiveegan and I have been a resident of the Flower City since moving to Canada in 2019. Brampton helped making our dream come true—owning a home in the expensive GTA, even as an average income family. That’s how I began to love Brampton.

We recently learned about the City’s initiative to build or convert existing garage into ADUs. To manage the rising cost of living and mortgage rates, we decided to turn our garage into a garden suite. In December 2024, we were told the Minor Variance application fee was about \$700. But when we returned with a formal design in March 2025, the fee had increased to \$11,949—about 17 times higher.

Thus, I am here to formally express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the recent and dramatic increase in the Minor Variance application fee by the City of Brampton—from **\$720** to **\$11,949**, an increase of over **1666%**. This represents an unprecedented and disproportionate hike that imposes a significant financial burden on average homeowners.

A “*minor variance*” by definition refers to small and often technical deviations from zoning by-laws—typically applied for cases such as minor encroachments, setback adjustments, or height clearances. These are issues that homeowners frequently encounter when undertaking modest home improvement or construction projects. However, the new fee now exceeds the cost of actual ADU building permit, which typically range around **\$2,000**. This recent increased fee structure appears unbelievable and counterintuitive.

The current fee of \$11,949.00:

- Discourages compliance with legal planning processes by making it financially inaccessible.
- Disproportionately affects middle-income families and long-term residents who simply want to make improvements or adjustments to their primary residences.
- Undermines public trust in the city’s approach to transparent, accessible, and equitable governance.

My idea to convert existing garage unit into a Garden Suite was part of a modest plan to create additional living space and contribute to Brampton’s growing need for housing options. However, upon learning of the steep fee increase, I was forced to abandon my plan entirely, as the new application cost is not financially feasible for an average homeowner, like me.

This fee increase raises several pressing concerns:

1. **Affordability and Accessibility:** This exorbitant increase makes it virtually impossible for many residents to move forward with small-scale, lawful home improvements that

align with the city's goals of sustainable growth and housing diversification. Garden Suites, in particular, are being promoted province-wide as a way to address the housing crisis. Such fees are completely counterproductive to those efforts.

2. **Unreasonable and Disproportionate:** Increasing the fee to more than sixteen times its original amount does not seem reasonable in any way. When I reached out to the Clerk Office requesting for the reason, no justification was provided. When neighboring municipalities such as Mississauga and Caledon continue to maintain Minor Variance fees at \$1,322 and \$1,560 respectively, the stark contrast raises serious questions about how Brampton arrived at such a figure.
3. **Impact on Housing Costs:** With rising construction costs already making development projects financially burdensome, additional municipal costs of this magnitude will inevitably drive up housing and rental prices. This not only hurts homeowners but renters and future residents as well.

Thus, I respectfully request City of Brampton to:

- Re-examine this fee increase and Explore alternative fee structures that are more reasonable, transparent, and equitable.
- Consider suspending or reducing the fee while conducting a thorough review;
- Consult with residents and regional comparators to determine a fair and accessible fee structure;
- Align city planning policies with broader provincial goals to support housing supply and affordability.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and giving me this opportunity to bring my concern as a responsible Brampton resident & Homeowner to the Council. Hope City of Brampton will work toward a more equitable and accessible planning process for its residents.

Sincerely,

Dhamotharan Deiveegan

Resident/Homeowner of Brampton