

OFFICE OF
CITY
ENGINEER



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

October 31, 2017

The Honorable Chairwoman Michele Hoitenga, and
Members of the House Communications & Technology Committee
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Re: HB 5098

Dear Representative Hoitenga,

The City of Grand Rapids opposes HB 5098 as introduced which would require notice at least one year in advance of the City requesting a telecommunication provider or video service provider to temporarily or permanently relocate their facility. Additionally, the city would not be permitted to charge a permit or inspection fee associated with this relocation. While the City would agree that notice, communication, and transparency with regard to project planning is a desired outcome, one year advance notice is simply not feasible in every project.

In Grand Rapids, the City plans and schedules projects based on the various infrastructure needs (Stormwater Management Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, etc.), in accordance with the City's Master Plan, the Sustainability Plan and other land use policies in collaboration with the economic development community. It is a complex system that requires communication and strategic planning. An arbitrary mandate that the City provide at least one year advance notice is unreasonable for every project. While every attempt is made to provide adequate and appropriate notice, this one year requirement could significantly impair the City's ability to effectively and strategically plan and execute critical infrastructure needs and projects. This mandate could significantly impact grants, planning and construction schedules and possibly even private development.

Additionally, the City of Grand Rapids charges reasonable permit and inspection fees to defray the expense of issuing permits, making site inspections and other necessary tasks. This includes ensuring work is performed safely and according to state and federal requirements, does not interfere or damage our infrastructure and meets engineering standards. These fees are not considered a revenue stream.

The City of Grand Rapids welcomes the opportunity for conversation in the broader context of this bill. The complexities surrounding this is more associated with the process rather than just time limitations. The City respectfully requests your careful consideration of HB 5098 and the desired outcomes that you are seeking.

Sincerely,

Mark A. De Clercq

Mark A. De Clercq, PE
City Engineer

C: Members of the House Communications & Technology Committee