



Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge St.
Newmarket, ON
L3Y 6Z1

September 9, 2013

Re: Application for Exemption under the Retail Business Holidays Act (Upper Canada Mall – Newmarket, Ontario)

Dear Chair Fisch and Regional Councillors,

Upper Canada Mall is a major community, cultural and economic driver for the Town of Newmarket. They have nearly 1 Million square feet of retail space and provide upwards of 3,000 local jobs.

Upper Canada Mall attracts an estimated 6.5 million visitors annually. Assuming that a mere 5% of these visitors are non-shoppers, the centre attracts a total of approximately 325,000 individuals outside its typical retail customer base each year. This represents more than triple the attendance of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection; a prominent tourist attraction in Kleinburg. More than half of these visitors are from outside Newmarket-Aurora.

However, when it comes to holiday shopping, they are operating at an unfair disadvantage. There are currently 19 tourist exemption areas in York Region, including both Vaughan Mills and Pacific Mall. Other malls in the GTA that open include Eaton Centre, Square One and Bramalea City Centre. Recently, the Town of Bradford's stores were open on the labour day holiday and some residents drove outside of York Region to shop.

Shopping is an integral component of the overall tourist visitor experience in Ontario. Tourism research prepared by the Province of Ontario has shown that shopping is one of the single most important motivators leading to a decision to travel to a destination.

It is our opinion that the centre is – in and of itself – a tourist destination and appropriately addresses the criteria for an exemption under the Retail Business Holidays Act.

The system is broken and it simply hurts the mall and Newmarket's economy. We support Upper Canada Mall's application and hope you will also.

Yours sincerely,

Debra Scott
President & CEO