

Working with the OCC to create change

Spring is the perfect time to celebrate the natural beauty of Halton Hills. There are more than 30 kilometres of hiking trails, 46 parks and open spaces, and five conservation areas for you to explore as our area turns lush and green. Our magnificent rolling hills and our small town feel is why so many choose to live in Halton Hills. We have a very safe community and there is no better place to live and to raise a family.

This spring has also brought us both a Federal and Provincial budget where we look

for positive impact to our local businesses because the health of our community is integral to the strength of our commercial sector.

Chair Elect, Glen McDonald, President Sue Walker and I will be attending the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) Annual General Meeting in St. Catharines. For 100 years, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce has remained a strong advocate for Ontario businesses. Their lobbying efforts, particularly at the provincial level, are informed by local Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade and businesses of every size, in every sector who collectively make the most relevant and influential network in the province – 60,000 strong. This year, 32 policies will be put forth at the AGM and voted on. Examples of just some of the issues being presented from chambers big and small all across the province are: Accessible Adult Post-Secondary Education – An Important Step to Restoring Sustainable Economic Prosperity in Ontario, Employer Health Tax (EHT) Exemption Floor, Supporting MetroLink

From the Boardroom

Kathleen Dills
Chairman



Regional Transportation Plan, Replacing the Retail Business Holiday Act to Drive Economic Competitiveness, Expansion of Highway 7 Between Kitchener and Guelph, Fixing the WSIB, Utilizing Private and Not-for-profit Sector Expertise in the Delivery of Public Services. The Halton Hills Chamber will be presenting the following policy to the membership:

The Ontario Government pledged to reduce the Corporate Income Tax (CIT) rate to 10 per cent by 2013. A reduced CIT rate is an integral part of the government's comprehensive tax reform package and would increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to the province while creating new jobs.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce urges the Government of Ontario to: Immediately implement the comprehensive tax package as promised in its 2009 budget - including scheduled corporate income tax reductions.

The issues and policies that we vote on at the AGM will have an impact on your businesses and the Halton Hills Chamber of

Commerce and the OCC is there to advocate on your behalf. If you have an issue that is impacting your business please let us know, as we have the mandate as the voice of business in Halton Hills to support you.

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce has a diverse schedule of events offered at all times of the day to accommodate your schedule that will provide you with inspiration, ideas and connections to help you grow your business. They include the very popular Business After Hours each month at the premises of one of our members as well as networking breakfasts and luncheons with guest speakers educating you on a wide range of issues and trends. Don't miss the famous Chamber Golf Tournament on June 7.

Register now as it tends to sell out! And look for details soon about the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce 100th Anniversary Celebration in September.

Come out and let's talk. Check our website for all the details of upcoming events: www.haltonhillschamber.on.ca.

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Georgetown Market Place

By Andrea Lefebvre, *The Independent & Free Press*

The times, they are a-changin' at the Georgetown Market Place. "The mall," as the locals call it, is about to undergo a major renovation that will add more retail space and new stores to the 324,000 square-foot facility.

Renovations are scheduled to start this summer after Zellers closes in June. A 24,000 square-foot expansion will be added to the current store to make room for a big new Walmart. Once Walmart has moved, its current location will be transformed into space for 20 to 30 stores. The food court will also be getting a facelift.

This renovation project is just the latest

chapter in the Georgetown Market Place's long history. The mall's story begins in 1959 when it was an outdoor shopping plaza that was, at the time, located in the middle of nowhere. As the town expanded and grew around it, so too did the plaza. In 1991, the former strip mall was renovated and enclosed.

Today, under the leadership of property manager Herminia Henderson and her staff, the Market Place is home to more than 60 businesses and has become a very important part of the community. Each year, the Market Place hosts dozens of special events, guest speakers, shows and educational displays, and more than 200 community groups set up

displays to raise awareness, collect for charity and encourage citizens to get involved. In addition to providing a location for community groups to gather, Georgetown Market Place donates to local causes like the Georgetown Hospital and Light Up The Hills.

A strong commitment to the community is just one of the reasons why Georgetown Market Place was named the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce's 2011 Business of the Year. The Market Place and other award winners were fêted at the Chamber's Business Achievement Awards banquet on March 7th, at Acton's BLUE SPRINGS Golf Club. Congratulations, Georgetown Market Place!



Georgetown Marketplace in 1992 on the left and the Marketplace in 2012.

Photo: The Independent & Free Press