

General Manager's Report

Now that the holidays are behind us your Chamber staff is working hard to create networking opportunities for you and your business. Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce will be hosting the first Business of the Month on January 23. This BoM's is called "A Taste of the Chamber" and we will be featuring food from our many Chamber members.

Know an exceptional business in town that deserves to be recognized? There is still time to send in your nominations for the 2007 Business of the Year, Entrepreneur of the Year, Employee of the Year and Civic Pride Awards. Deadline for nominations is January 25. Please take a moment and let us know who you feel deserves this special recognition.

Don't forget to take a copy of BusinessLink with you if you are heading south or to the slopes. We'd love to feature you on the cover of our April issue reading our newsletter on your holiday.

Work has begun on the 2008 Chamber directory. Our phone book is delivered to all residents in Halton Hills through the Independent Free Press and is also available year round through the Chamber office. Only Chamber members are featured in the yellow pages. How good is our book? Call our office and we'll deliver 10 copies to you, for you to put on display and watch how fast they disappear!

If your business accepts VISA, MasterCard or debit cards as payment, are you receiving the best possible rates from your bank for these transactions? Did you know that members of Halton Hills Chamber receive a preferred rate? For many of our members, that savings will more than pay for their annual membership fee.

General Manager's Desk

Sue Walker



If you require more details, please call Mary at our office.

While it's tempting to take advantage of a great deal, I encourage everyone to think twice when making your purchases of goods and services. I have spoken with many members, who are becoming frustrated with people that come in from out of town, set up a temporary business, and then as quickly as they arrived, are gone. Often they are leaving behind unhappy customers with substandard products or services and no recourse. It can't be said often enough – **SHOP LOCAL!** Local businesses are here year round. Dollars spent with Halton Hills owned and operated businesses stay in the local economy. These businesses support your children's sports teams, donate items to local school/church fundraisers and add to the quality of life you enjoy in Halton Hills. Local businesses employ your friends and neighbours. They pay local taxes to support the community. If you are a local business, please introduce yourself to the Chamber. We receive many inquiries from local residents looking for referrals. Often they have a specific business they are seeking information on. If we haven't heard about your business, they don't feel confident using your services.

What makes Halton Hills attractive to non-residential, non-retail development

By Grant Lee, MCIP, RPP, MCInst.M., RPM
Director, Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce

Most of the Chamber's non-retail members are small to medium-sized businesses that employ up to 20 people located in employment lands in Acton and Georgetown that were developed decades ago. The lots were subdivided through a traditional process of plan of subdivision and sold to industrialists looking for space to build their own facilities. Some builders purchased serviced lots from the developer and constructed "industrial malls" that were designed for multiple tenants with predetermined space for each unit. It was the cookie-cutter approach to attracting manufacturers to an "industrial basin." As the town grew to accommodate its planned growth in population, the availability of serviced office and industrial land for business expansion or relocation within the Town faded significantly. Today, as the Region and Town embarks on a land use planning and financial planning process that will predetermine the character of Halton Hills for the next 50 years, the Town's manufacturers and service industries have a small window of opportunity to shape the nature of manufacturing for regional, provincial, national and global competition. The Region is going to grow. The opportunity at hand is the composition of its growth.

Several studies and provincial policy statements are moving rapidly to a convergence that will impact conducting business in Halton Hills. To name only a few factors, any expansion or relocation plans will be affected by availability of water, sanitary sewers and sewage treatment, storm water management, environmental considerations, energy efficiency, property and

business taxes and development charges. The Town recently released a study it commissioned on the financial impact on future operating and capital budgets resulting from various growth scenarios that could happen under the Region's Sustainable Halton Plan. The Town's staff and elected representatives must deal with the information contained in the study to work with the Region to embark on a scenario for growth that will benefit both the Town's existing and future residents, as well as its business community. The Town and Region are in the midst of pressures for growth from forces outside and within the fifth largest megalopolis (Golden Horseshoe) in North America.

Another Regional study currently underway is the "Competitiveness of Halton Region for Non-Residential, Non-Retail Development," by the consultant, Metropolitan Knowledge International. As part of the Region's review of its development charges policy (the 2008 Development Charge update process), the study focuses on the competitive position of Halton within the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area with respect to the attraction of non-retail development. The consultant will study each of Halton's four municipalities within the context of the Region's competitiveness. The final report will be presented to Halton's Development Charges Advisory Committee January 21, 2008.

On November 2, the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce participated in an information exchange hosted by the Business Development Centre of Halton Region, and facilitated by Metropolitan Knowledge International.

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