

The Flamborough Chamber of Commerce

BOTTOM LINE

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AUGUST, 2015

Ontario Chamber of Commerce ORPP CHANGES 'A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION'

On August 11, the Government of Ontario announced that it will expand the comparability rules under the proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP). *However, employers remain wary of the introduction of a new pension plan at a time when the cost of doing business in Ontario continues to rise.*

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is encouraged by the government's decision to expand the definition of comparability under the ORPP to include some Defined Contribution (DC) plans. This means that employers who already provide certain DC pension plans for their employees will be exempt from contributing to the new ORPP. The OCC is also encouraged by a longer phase-in period, which will help many Ontario businesses transition into the plan.

"The announcement is a step in the right direction," said President & CEO of the OCC Allan O'Dette. "Broadly speaking, the Government of Ontario has responded to our advocacy efforts. *Despite the announcement, we remain concerned that the ORPP in its current form will have a negative impact on business competitiveness.*"

In June, the OCC and a coalition of over 150 businesses, sector associations, chambers of commerce and boards of trade – *including the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC)* – came together to urge the government to expand its definition of pension plan comparability to include capital accumulation plans, including, but not limited to, DC plans.

Despite the announcement, the OCC warns that in its current form, the ORPP will raise costs for the majority of businesses who operate in the province, including those employers that offer non-comparable plans like Group RRSPs. *Recent OCC survey data indicates that if faced with mandatory increased contributions under the ORPP, 44 percent of businesses would reduce their current payroll or hire fewer employees in the future.*

"We remain deeply concerned about the cumulative burden facing Ontario employers," said O'Dette. *"Rising electricity prices, the introduction of a cap and trade system, and the ORPP will further add to the cost of doing business in Ontario.* This is why we have asked the government to conduct and publicly release the results of an economic impact analysis of their proposed pension plan."

Following considerable advocacy efforts by the OCC earlier in 2015, the government committed to releasing a cost-benefit analysis of the ORPP before the end of the year.

"We will continue to work with government in order to ensure they have a full appreciation of the potential impacts of the ORPP," said O'Dette.



OBA WESTJET WINNER KEEPS IT IN THE FAMILY

For the past number of years – thanks to its wonderful corporate partners at WestJet – the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) has been able to present two complimentary WestJet tickets for any destination in Canada or the USA at its annual *Outstanding Business Achievement (OBA)* awards gala. Which brings us to Dylan McDonnell of the Pita Pit at Clappison's Corners, who was awarded the *Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award* at this year's OBA gala. When it came time to pick the WestJet winner via a 'reverse draw (last person picked wins)', the WestJet tickets went to Dylan's grandmother Marie McDonnell. Marie will use the tickets to fly to Vancouver where she will stay at the River Rock Casino Resort courtesy of the Great Canadian Gaming Company – the owners of Flamboro Downs. ABOVE: Marie is pictured at the OBA gala at the African Lion Safari with her husband George (left), Dylan (right) and Dylan's Pita Pit business partner Mike Valchuk (second from left). BELOW: Dylan McDonnell with (from left) Teresa and Haley Luckanuck (Spoiled Rotten Pet Services), Dragica Lebo (Hamilton's Small Business Centre) and CHCH reporter Nicole Martin, who was the emcee for the gala. Teresa is a member of the FCC Board of Directors while Haley and Nicole are past recipients of the *Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award*. Westjet will once again provide two system-wide airline tickets for the 2016 OBA gala.



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Arend Kersten

Executive Director, Flamborough Chamber of Commerce

BUSINESS ICON RON FOXCROFT MENTORS YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR

Instant credibility!

When Olivia Starks told business icon Ron Foxcroft that she had joined the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) as a 'Young Entrepreneur' it immediately got his attention. Foxcroft – the inventor of the famous Fox 40 whistle and the founder of Fluke Transport – is a past president of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce (HCC).

And then, of course, there was their common connections to both Waterdown District High School (WDHS) and Mohawk College.

Over 50 years ago, Foxcroft – then living in Aldershot – attended WDHS. By his own admission, he attended WDHS with just a single goal – winning a football scholarship to Michigan State University as both a quarterback and punter. Academics were simply not a priority.



OLIVIA STARKS OF THE VENTURE GARDENER

The dream became a nightmare after a debilitating injury. He had a chat with the principal and they came to the mutual decision that it was time for Foxcroft to leave WDHS. He never did graduate.

Several years ago, WDHS asked Foxcroft to address the students. He was introduced as a "graduate" of WDHS. Foxcroft quickly set the record straight, saying that he had "attended" WDHS but had never graduated. In 2013 – 50 years after leaving WDHS – Foxcroft was awarded his high school diploma. It was the same year that Olivia – then 17 – also graduated from WDHS.

After taking a year off before choosing a career path, Olivia enrolled at Mohawk College. At Olivia's graduation a year later, Foxcroft was awarded an honorary diploma from Mohawk College. Foxcroft has a long history at Mohawk College, serving for many years on its Entrepreneurial Committee.



OLIVIA STARKS WITH RON FOXCROFT

After the graduation ceremony, Olivia's mother – Dr. Gwendolyn Starks – told Foxcroft that he and Olivia had twice graduated together – first at WDHS and then at Mohawk. That got his attention ... and the rest is history.

A graduate of Mohawk College's Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (Hons.) program, Olivia is also an accredited consultant with the Association of Accredited Small Business Consultants (AASBC). She has launched The Venture Gardener – committed to "preparing high quality business plans to help businesses achieve their goals" and "to assist small business owners in increasing their efficiency and maximizing their profit."

And she's got Ron Foxcroft in her corner.

"Starting a business is the hardest thing to do," he says. "Nobody does it alone. You need a mentor. Olivia will do well. She has the dedication, passion and commitment necessary to succeed. And she's willing to sacrifice."

Olivia can be reached at 289-527-3969.

MEMO TO RURAL LANDSCAPERS: 'SPEAK NOW ... OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE'

The city is offering one **FINAL** opportunity for existing rural landscapers located in Wards 14 and 15 (Flamborough) and 12 (Ancaster) who are impacted by the new Rural Zoning Bylaw to apply for a site specific exemption. The **ABSOLUTE** deadline for applying is August 30, 2015.

Those who do not apply on or before August 30 and who are subsequently found to be in contravention of the Rural Zoning Bylaw will be required to go through a formal rezoning application – usually a lengthy and expensive proposition with no guarantees on the outcome.

To be considered for an exemption, rural landscapers had to be in business before March 31, 2015. The informa-

tion the city requires is: contact name; business name; business address; when the business was established; contact information; and a business card.

To apply for the site specific exemption, please contact Diana Yakhni (diana.yakhni@hamilton.ca) in Hamilton's Planning Department.

The requests for an exemption will be considered by the Planning Committee at its meeting on October 6, 2015. Any decision the Planning Committee makes will subsequently need to be ratified by the entire Council.

As the saying goes ... **'SPEAK NOW ... OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE.'**

Ontario Chamber of Commerce:

FEDERAL ELECTION AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST BIZ CLIMATE

With the 2015 federal election now underway, Ontario's most prominent and diverse business network is calling on all federal political parties to make bold commitments that will improve Ontario's business climate and drive economic growth.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) will work with chambers of commerce and boards of trade from across Ontario – including the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) – and its broad business network to produce a thorough evaluation of federal party platforms.

"The federal election comes at a critical time for Ontario businesses," said OCC President & CEO Allan O'Dette. *"It is essential that all parties commit to policies that will improve the business climate and spur economic growth in Ontario."* By publicly evaluating the commitment of each federal party to this end, we are putting pressure on our federal politicians to demonstrate leadership and help our business community succeed."

ELECTION DEBATE

Wednesday, October 7, 2015

Waterdown District High School • 7 p.m.

Hosted by the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce
in partnership with COGECO Community
Television and the Flamborough Review

The major parties' platforms will be evaluated based on their ability to create a better business climate in Ontario by committing to the following:

- Investing in critical infrastructure, including transit and transportation infrastructure and all-season transportation infrastructure in the Ring of Fire;
- Reforming Canada's broken Employment Insurance system so that Ontario businesses are treated fairly;
- Distributing economic development funds on a principled basis to ensure that businesses and communities in every province receive comparable federal supports;
- Continuing to expand trade relationships by implementing bilateral agreements in Europe and Asia, while pushing forward regional and multilateral trade talks;
- Providing fiscally responsible management of Canada's finances.

In addition, the OCC has extended invitations to each of the major federal parties to facilitate conversations between its membership and the leaders in the lead up to the October 19 election. These conversations, which are being scheduled, will add additional pressure to put the economy and job creation in the spotlight.

"A healthy Ontario economy is good for Canada," said O'Dette. "All parties must be prepared to take the bold actions necessary to solidify a bright future for Ontario and further the economic success of our great country."



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CCC ELECTION PLATFORM: A CANADA THAT WINS

BY PERRIN BEATTY

President & CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce

When Canadians go to the polls on October 19, they will chart the course for Canada moving forward.

We all want to ensure Canada remains strong and competitive in this fast-changing world. We want to see our economy grow and we want more jobs for Canadians. The outcome of this election will be central to ensuring we have a rising and sustainable standard of living and a strong economy that is able to generate the wealth we need to provide for our aging population and the social programs we cherish.

The challenge, today, is that we are racing against the greatest competitors in the world's toughest marathon – the global economy – and are losing ground to the frontrunners. Ten years ago, we were the world's 10th largest exporter. Today, we rank 13th. In 2014, the World Economic Forum ranked Canada 15th in global economic competitiveness; down five spots from 2009.

The question we are faced with is: how do we stop this decline and turn things around to bring Canada back to the front of the pack?

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) is calling on political parties to engage with businesses and commit to practical solutions and actions in the four areas that are critical to the competitiveness of the Canadian economy:

1. Access to a powerful workforce
2. Access to capital
3. Access to technology and innovation
4. Access to markets

1. ACCESS TO A POWERFUL WORKPLACE

Canada's competitiveness will depend, in large part, on its ability to find and foster workers with the skills businesses need to succeed. The shortage of skilled workers is making it impossible to meet the rising needs of many sectors. We need to better align skills development with immigration policy goals. We must also fix the increasingly complex and costly immigration system currently in place, allowing employers to find workers with the skill sets needed for them to compete in the new global marketplace.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) calls on all parties to commit to:

- Investing in more and better labour market information
- Ensuring immigration changes stop unduly limiting employers' access to the international talent they need
- Addressing the serious processing issues and inflexible features of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program that are negatively affecting employers' access to workers in a range of sectors
- Providing incentives for employers to offer more post-secondary co-op placements and internships
- Creating a financial incentive for employers to retain employees through to the completion of their apprenticeship training

2. ACCESS TO CAPITAL

Capital is the oxygen that enables businesses to grow, create more jobs and export to new markets. For start-up companies, access to capital is the difference between

life and death as they move from the early stages of innovation to the commercialization of products and services. Canadian start-up companies often depend upon venture capital (VC) as the lifeblood needed to take an idea to the market. Yet Canada's VC industry is still small and punching below its weight, particularly when compared to the U.S.

In fact, many top Canadian companies and entrepreneurs look to investors and early adopters outside of Canada for funding. In addition to building up our VC industry, we must do more to attract international capital and foreign VCs. More incentives, a more supportive regulatory environment and a streamlined tax system are essential to our international competitiveness. Canadian and global companies must be encouraged to conduct leading-edge R&D in Canada.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) calls on all parties to commit to:

- Introducing better tax incentives for venture capital and angel investors
- Changing regulations to encourage insurance companies and pension plans to invest a modest part of their funds in venture capital
- Forming an impartial panel of experts to review the tax system and recommend measures to simplify Canada's tax system
- Increasing the income threshold for the (11%) small business tax rate to \$1,000,000 from \$500,000 to encourage small companies to continue growing
- Simplifying the Capital Cost Allowance rules from 52 separate asset classes to a few broad categories

3. ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

In an era of big data and Internet-driven machines and objects, speed and bandwidth are paramount, and digital infrastructure is a key factor for global companies when making investment decisions.

Although Canada has enjoyed world-leading connectivity and tools, it is essential that even greater investment be made in this area as our rivals deploy new technologies that enable their domestic firms to innovate and compete.

Canadian firms are struggling to adopt the advanced technologies that can vastly improve their productivity. For example, just 6% of firms in Canada are harnessing technologies to allow them to better monitor their production and distribution processes, and in a recent poll, just 22% of executives said they are using the key metrics in data analytics as a tool to better understand product cycles and the real value of their own innovations.

Federal policy support for innovation in Canada is largely focused on primary research led by post-secondary institutions. The support provided to innovative academic research also needs to focus on marketplace needs and ensure the intellectual property that results from these efforts can lead to commercialization.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) calls on all parties to commit to:

- Providing incentives to move ideas from mind to market, such as an "innovation box" regime in Canada that would see any sales/revenues earned on a patent or a new technology developed here in Canada taxed at a much lower rate
- Investing in digital infrastructure (networks and switching required to handle the volumes of next generation data transfer) and rewarding private sector investment driven by profit motives
- Providing incentives that encourage collaboration through technology clusters or centres of excellence

4. ACCESS TO MARKETS

As part of a small, open economy, most of Canada's businesses depend on international trade. Exports, imports and foreign investment create and sustain jobs in our communities, stimulate competition and innovation and give families affordable choices in the marketplace.

Canada is also privileged to possess rich natural resources that support millions of jobs in fisheries and in the mining, petroleum, forest products and electricity sectors. Demand for our resources contributes substantially to our national economy and

is the underpinning of our trade relationships, especially with the fast-developing economies of Asia.

Despite new trade agreements and a renewed commitment to trade promotion, Canadian companies continue to face more trade barriers than their foreign competitors – both within and outside Canada. Last year, Stephen Poloz, Governor of the Bank of Canada, pointed out that Canada has fewer international companies than it did before the 2008 financial crisis.

While the U.S. and Australia have more or less doubled their exports of goods and services over the past 10 years, Canada's have grown by only 40%. Canadian companies that are globally active still tend to be focused in mature markets with low rates of economic growth. The tourism industry is similarly losing ground to more aggressive nations, costing communities in every part of the country.

Finally, our ability to develop our resource advantage is being undermined by limited and aging export infrastructure, shortages in the skilled workforce and an inefficient regulatory environment in areas such as the duty to consult Aboriginal peoples and environmental assessment requirements.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) calls on all parties to commit to:

- Continuing an ambitious free trade agenda by concluding and implementing bilateral agreements in Europe and Asia, while pushing forward regional and multi-lateral trade talks
- Launching a national regulatory co-operation strategy that will mobilize resources and political attention to tackle internal trade barriers and enhance alignment with Canada's trading partners
- Strengthening export and tourism promotion services by improving coordination between the private and public sectors, expanding marketing campaigns and diplomatic presence abroad and establishing a national development finance institution
- Investing in transportation infrastructure and improving Canada's border services and visa administration to make it easier for businesses to get their products in and out of Canada
- Ensuring stringent but streamlined regulatory processes for the extraction and transportation of natural resources
- Supporting policies that will stimulate innovations in environmental sustainability and ensure a supply of skilled workers to help Canada meet the demands for its natural resource industries

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AND THE SURVEY SAYS:

IT'S GOOD FOR BUSINESS TO JOIN THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Advocates of chambers of commerce have long believed that when a company is active in its local chamber, it is doing the right thing not only for the community but for its own success as well. While there is plenty of evidence to show the impact of chambers of commerce on their communities, it is much harder to find data that quantify the impact of belonging to a chamber.

A recent study, commissioned by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, is designed to do just that: determine the real value to companies in terms of consumer outcomes of joining and being active in their local chamber of commerce. Do consumers really support businesses because they are chamber members?

Data for the study comes from a scientific web-based survey of 2,000 adults nationwide. What makes the study unlike most, however, is that almost every ques-

tion on it is part of one of several imbedded experiments.

This means that respondents were randomly assigned to different groups at several points during the survey. Each group reads something slightly different – like a

When consumers know that a small business is a member of the chamber of commerce, they are 44% more likely to think favorably of it and 63% more likely to purchase goods or services from the company in the future.

description of a company that changes only a little for each group – but then everyone is asked the same questions thereafter, regardless of which company description they just read. Therefore, when there are statistically significant differences in how different

groups answered the same questions, we know exactly why it happened.

This approach yields powerful results because it bypasses the subjectivity of most opinion polls. A sampling of some of these results proves this to be the case.

- Most consumers (59%) think that being active in the local chamber of commerce is an effective business strategy overall. It is 29% more effective, however, for communicating to consumers that a company uses good business practices and 26%

more effective for communicating that a business is reputable.

- If a company shows that it is highly involved in its local chamber (e.g., sits on the chamber board), consumers are 12% more likely to think that its products stack up better against its competition.

- When a consumer thinks that a company's products stack up better against the competition because the company is highly involved in its local chamber of commerce, it is because he or she infers that the company is trustworthy, involved in the community, and is an industry leader.

- When consumers know that a restaurant franchise is a member of the chamber of commerce, they are 40% more likely to eat at the franchise in the next few months.

- When consumers know that an insurance company is a member of the chamber of commerce, they are 43% more likely to consider buying insurance from it.

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Extension 4000****2015 FLAMBOROUGH OPEN A HUGE SUCCESS**

Co-hosted by the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) and the Rotary Club of Waterdown (RCW), the *Flamborough Open* has evolved into the premier annual golf tournament in Flamborough. The 2015 tournament was held at the prestigious Carlisle Golf & Country Club, a member of Kaneff Golf. Proceeds are divided between the two organizations, with the FCC ('The Voice of Business in Flamborough') portion forming an essential part of its annual budget while the RCW ('Service Above Self') portion is provided to a wide variety of worthy local, national and international causes. ABOVE: Participating again this year (after winning the tournament a number of times in the past) were (from left) Blake Anthony, Rod Anthony, Brian Faul and Dr. Richard Kitchen. BELOW: Nate Brown (left - Brown Financial Security) was joined at the 2015 *Flamborough Open* by (from left) Mark Bowler, Mike Peters and Scott Beaumont.

*Photos courtesy of Wilf Arndt***2015 FLAMBOROUGH OPEN
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MISSION STATEMENT

*The Flamborough Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to
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OCC: DEAR PREMIER WYNNE

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and its network of 160 local chambers of commerce and boards of trade represent 60,000 businesses throughout the province.

On July 8, the OCC released the most widely consulted report in the history of the organization and our membership, *Empowering Ontario: Constraining Costs and Staying Competitive in the Electricity Market*. This report presents five recommendations that, when combined, will make Ontario's electricity system more competitive.

One issue that the report does not directly address is the upcoming sale of a portion of Hydro One. The OCC and its members recognize this bold step will allow Ontario to pay down a portion of its stranded debt and make much needed investments in transportation infrastructure. Unlocking the value of government assets, such as Hydro One, could be a significant financial resource for the province.

While we are very concerned about the sale as there are details that have yet to be determined. The Government of Ontario must ensure that any steps taken to pay down the debt do not adversely affect the cost of doing business in the province, including adding to the rising price of electricity. The price of electricity in Ontario is set to rise over the next two decades. In the short time since the release of the 2013 Long Term Energy Plan (LTEP), *industrial electricity rates have increased by 16 percent, and will increase a further 13 percent over the next five years*. Rising electricity rates have been cited by our membership as a consistent problem that hinders businesses' ability to compete on a level playing field with our North American counterparts. *According to OCC survey results, one in twenty businesses will either shut their doors or move to another jurisdiction in the coming years due to these rising rates.*

One of the first recommendations in *Empowering Ontario* is to increase the transparency of electricity prices and system cost drivers. The cost of many elements of the electricity system are not disclosed to the public.

This lack of transparency has resulted in reduced customer engagement and reduced confidence in the electricity market and its actors. We are concerned that similar issues will be prevalent throughout the partial sale of Hydro One.

As such, we are seeking clarity on how the sale will impact electricity prices moving forward. The Government of Ontario should provide concrete evidence that electricity prices will not rise as a result of the sale. Additional transparency and communication around the timelines of the initial public offering (IPO) and what it means for customers in communities across the province are also needed.

Increasing transparency is consistent with the values expressed in your government's 2014 Throne Speech. We commend the government for its commitment to making information easier to find, understand, and use, so that services and policies can be designed to better meet the needs of Ontarians.

As your government moves ahead with the sale, we strongly encourage you to engage with the business community. We are committed to being an active participant in any discussions about the future of Ontario's electricity system.

ALLAN O'DETTE

President & CEO, Ontario Chamber of Commerce



TVCOGECO HONOURS THE VERY BEST

FCC Executive Director Arend Kersten was a guest at the recent annual COGECO gala celebrating the finest in community television programming throughout all of Ontario. ABOVE: Arend Kersten (right) with (from left) Tim Caddington (Senior Director Programming and Community Relations), Glenda Lloyd (Manager, Communications & Community Relations for Ontario) and Cogeco President and CEO Louise St-Pierre. BELOW: At the gala - held at the Holiday Inn in Oakville - Ben Lyman of TV Cogeco in Burlington (centre) was the recipient of *Community Impact Award* (large Cogeco systems) for coverage of the Burlington flood disaster. Ben was pictured with FCC Executive Director Arend Kersten (right) and President and CEO John Sawyer of the Oakville Chamber of Commerce. Both Arend and John were judges in the annual competition.



FCC INVITED TO GREENBELT BOUNDARY REVIEW MEETING

Flamborough Chamber of Commerce (FCC) Executive Director Arend Kersten was one of just a handful of people invited to a meeting at the Hamilton Convention Centre earlier this month to help establish criteria that will be used in a review of the boundaries of the Greenbelt.

Others invited to participate were single representatives from the Hamilton Halton Home Builders Association (HHHBA), the Grand River Conservation Authority, the Hamilton Conservation Authority, Environment Hamilton and two representatives from the agricultural community.

Also in attendance were Jason Thorne (General Manager of Planning and Economic Development), Steve Robichaud (Manager of Planning Development) and Joanne Hickey-Evans (Director, Policy Planning) as well as Flamborough Councillors Judi Partridge (Ward 15 - East Flamborough) and Robert Pasuta (Ward 14 - West Flamborough).

The Greenbelt was imposed by the provincial government in 2005 and is now under review. The purpose of the meeting was to provide input on setting criteria for a

boundary review (what lands should be added and/or taken out of the Greenbelt). The meeting was NOT convened to consider suggested policy changes to the Greenbelt (including the recent Rural Zoning Bylaw that has brought to much grief to many business owners in rural Flamborough).

GREENBELT REVIEW MEETING

Monday, September 14 • 6-8 p.m.

Harry Howell Arena

The criteria will be used at three public meetings scheduled for September (including one at the Harry Howell Arena on Monday, September 14 from 6-8 p.m.).

The issue is particularly current as there are implications for properties in what is usually called the 'whitebelt' - as it relates to the recently-designated 'employment lands' around Hamilton International Airport and several properties in Winona.

The preservation of the 'rural economy' is one of the

stated goals of the Greenbelt. However, the five criteria suggested by the consultants (1. protection of agriculture; 2. environmental protection; 3. culture, recreation and tourism; 4. settlement areas; and, 5. infrastructure and natural resources) did not include any specific reference to the 'rural economy.'

During the 3-hour meeting, Kersten repeatedly stressed that the preservation of the 'rural economy' should be added as the sixth criteria. That would extend to existing and emerging businesses - including those not directly related to agriculture. With the myriad of challenges facing Canada's agricultural community, many farmers need to supplement their incomes with other activities - both on and off the farm.

Kersten also argued that the protection of all 'productive' farmland (not just that identified as 'prime') must be a priority. Kersten will now prepare a brief for consideration by Hamilton's Planning Department as it prepares for the meetings in September.

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