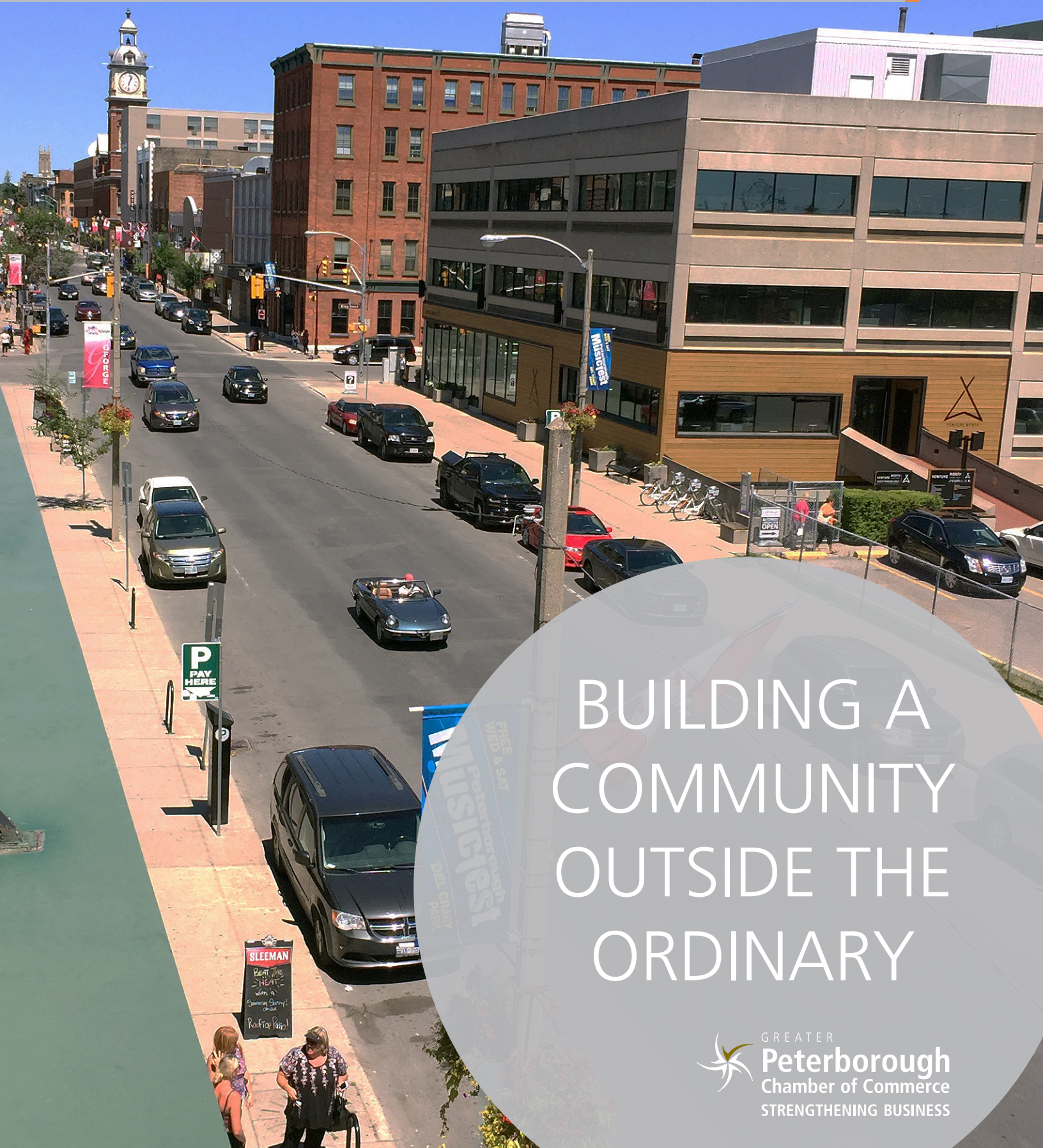


# VOICE OF BUSINESS



## BUILDING A COMMUNITY OUTSIDE THE ORDINARY

 GREATER  
**Peterborough**  
Chamber of Commerce  
STRENGTHENING BUSINESS





# YOUR ADVOCATE IN BUSINESS

## YOUR CONCERNS ARE OUR CONCERNS.

"The Peterborough Chamber of Commerce is actively involved in lobbying and influencing public policy at all levels of government on behalf of its members. By allowing the Chamber to communicate their story, Peterborough businesses are #StrengtheningBusiness and our whole community."

Sandra Dueck, Policy Analyst  
Peterborough Chamber of Commerce

## MISSION STATEMENT

We are recognized as the leading organization providing business advocacy, networking and education for our members and the community at large.

We act as a catalyst to enhance business growth and opportunity, innovation, partnerships, and a diverse business community.

## VISION

Strengthening business



# INTRODUCTION

## BUILDING A COMMUNITY...

The City and County of Peterborough are exceptional places to build a business, raise a family, and enjoy all Mother Nature has to offer. In the past several months Peterborough has been recognized as 2<sup>nd</sup> best for real estate investment and one of the friendliest communities.

The Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce represents approximately 900 businesses in the city and county employing about 25,000 people. Our mission is to be a leader in advocacy, networking and education for our members and community at large. We also act as a catalyst to enhance business growth and opportunity, innovation, partnerships and a diverse business community.

The start of a new term of council is an opportunity for reflection as well as a time to set goals for the next four years. Recently, the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce released its Vote Prosperity platform for the provincial election. That platform has helped us structure the "Building a Community Outside the Ordinary" platform with three foundational pillars:

- Strengthening Peterborough's Competitiveness, Economic Growth and Job Creation
- Building Whole Communities
- Improving Government Accountability

On our horizon there are a number of issues that will shape municipal discourse on a business level. There is a new provincial government for Ontario, a new organizational structure for the City of Peterborough, the 407 completion,

continued investment in the Peterborough Airport and Cleantech Commons, housing developments, potential changes to our public utility, VIA Rail High Frequency Rail project, increasing desire to connect with First Nations, the impact of GE closing, new official plans for both the city and county, the lens of environmental sustainability and an overall transition to a diversified economic base.

With all of these factors in our future line of sight, the Peterborough Chamber is putting forward 10 recommendations for councillors to consider as they make decisions that will have an impact on our business community. These recommendations are the result of ongoing consultation with our members and our policy committee. They are also designed to push Peterborough forward and create pathways for business and the community to thrive.

## ...OUTSIDE THE ORDINARY



# RECOMMENDATIONS



## **Strengthening Peterborough's Competitiveness, Economic Growth and Job Creation**

- Developing Official Plans that encourage innovative and adaptive zoning practices
- Seeing the Tax Ratio Reduction Program through to completion
- Investing in areas of economic growth
- Planning and building measures that are future focused, proactive and bridge city and county geographical lines



## **Building Whole Communities**

- Building resilient infrastructure
- Building a transportation network that works for all
- Increasing housing stock by supporting the building of various types of accommodation
- Working with stakeholder groups to develop long-term strategies for addressing mental illness, addiction, and crime in the same way the 10-year Homelessness Strategy was developed



## **Improving Government Accountability**

- Building the business community into the community engagement process
- Creating advisory or sub-committees when bylaws impact the business community

# STRENGTHENING PETERBOROUGH



In a recent survey of Chamber members we learned that taxes, economic growth, planning, business environment, and a robust workforce were amongst the main priorities for local business. As the City and County of Peterborough move through their Official Plan process they too have been hearing from the business community along with residents about similar areas of opportunity.

## COMPETITIVENESS

**Developing** Official Plans that encourage innovative and adaptive zoning practices. This is our opportunity to be seen as innovative and always willing to consider a new idea. Zoning that is flexible and allows for a nimbleness that could propel the area forward.

In addition, a zoning process that fast tracks simple requests and allows more complex requests to be addressed with some immediacy would set up Peterborough as a leader.

**Seeing** the Tax Ratio Reduction Program through to completion. This program is slated to be completed in 2021 and is making Peterborough far more competitive than it once was. That said, now is not the time to take our foot off the pedal.

As stated in the 2016 Budget Guidelines, "Although Peterborough is below the average, the goal of the program was not to become the average but to get to a tax ratio of 1.5."

Achieving this goal has multiple benefits. It's a piece of the pie that entices new businesses to choose Peterborough and it can also help encourage and bring higher paying jobs.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION

**Investing** in areas such as the airport, Clean Tech Commons, industrial land stock, agriculture, and programs such as BizPal help achieve economic growth and job creation.

Around 93% of members of the Chamber of Commerce are small business owners. Multiple studies have indicated that successful economic growth for our area will come from the creation and expansion of our new and smaller businesses. In order for this to happen investment and continued council commitment to these areas is imperative.

For example, it is without a doubt that the municipal investment in the airport has generated an ROI that will sustain us into the future. It is these types of investments that Peterborough requires for success.

Furthermore, **planning and building** measures that are future focused, proactive and bridge city and county geographical lines will serve to bring us together. All communities are battling for youth and talent; by banding together and creating projects that benefit our whole populations we set the foundation for others to consistently choose Peterborough as a place to put down roots.

# BUILDING WHOLE COMMUNITIES



To become a city and county for everyone, we need our candidates and the next council to support a “culture of forward and full circle thinking”. A recent survey found that housing, mental health, panhandling, the need for transportation networks and infrastructure that works for all citizens is critical to Peterborough’s sustainability.

## RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

For the purpose of this report, resilient infrastructure is defined as infrastructure that is sustainable and future-looking. The way that we can accomplish this is to ensure that new infrastructure is built with environmental and future needs in mind. The goal is to ensure a dig once attitude.

## TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS THAT WORK FOR ALL

When **building** transportation networks consider how people will get to places of employment, whether it be in our commercial or industrial nodes. We need to determine answers to questions such as what are the busy times of day? How can we accommodate a route that goes to major employment areas that operate with different shifts? How can we seamlessly connect the City and County through transportation?

## LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

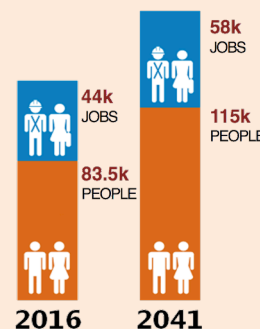
Working with stakeholder groups to develop long-term strategies for addressing mental illness, addiction, and crime. The 10-year Homelessness Strategy could be used as a model.

## VARIOUS TYPES OF HOUSING STOCK

With a low vacancy rate in the City and County of Peterborough all types of housing stock are needed. As we increase the number of jobs and residents under the revised provincial growth plan, we are expected to maintain a close connection between where people work and where they live.

## PROVINCIAL GROWTH PROJECTIONS TO 2041

### City of Peterborough



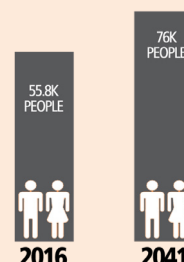
Graph source: City of Peterborough Official Plan Charette Kickoff Nodes June 4, 2018

Change between 2016-2041:

14,000+ jobs

31,500+ residents

### County of Peterborough



Change between 2016-2041:

20,200 residents

# IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY



Government's commitment to the business community is to provide and nurture a climate that encourages and promotes growth. Recognizing when there is an overabundance of redtape and regulation that can hamper business growth is key. It's important to ensure bylaws that protect the values of the community and encourage business expansion.

## BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Building the business community into the community engagement process is crucial.

To be successful in achieving the other goals of this platform using the multitude of tools in our tool box is required.

The Community Well Being Plan the City and County have worked on was an exercise in developing a framework for community engagement. The success of that work shows the benefit of consultation.

As by-laws require updating and review, new methods and ways to communicate will present themselves. One example is the BizPal program.

Continually reaching into the business community to gauge the impact of change will make our region stronger.

Creating advisory or sub-committees when bylaws impact the business community will further open and enhance the relationship between council and the business community.

Our recent Chamber survey on issues significant to the business community in the upcoming municipal election include the amount of red tape, bylaws and regulations, along with the tender process.

It is important to engage and listen to the business community, but in some instances, as was done with regard to electronic signage and bush country signs, an advisory committee is appropriate. These committees can lead to better by-laws that work for the whole community and achieve the common goal of a prosperous region.

## WHAT BUSINESS WANTS TO SEE IN MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

- ✓ Vision
- ✓ Engagement
- ✓ Strategic solutions
- ✓ Awareness of pinchpoints in bylaws and regulation
- ✓ Consistent interpretation of bylaws



# CONCLUSION

We head into the 2018 municipal election with great opportunity at our finger tips.

The 2018-2022 slate of mayors, councillors, and reeves are inheriting a lot of new. New official plans, new provincial government, new growth plans, new arenas, subdivisions and long-term care homes, new legislation around marijuana, and new transportation and infrastructure demands.

In the City, there have been organizational changes at City Hall that were designed to streamline and create a more nimble machine for residents and staff. The business community is keenly interested in the connection of business and planning, as these are the two divisions with the most business interaction.

In the County, there are new opportunities for leadership and vision. From top to bottom we are witnessing a lot of business activity in the town sites, such as Norwood and in our agricultural areas.

Peterborough's connection to nature and the underlying mentality of ensuring environmental sustainability is important and the municipality is moving forward on its Climate Change Action Plan. The business community has been a voice at the table looking for ways to move the yardstick.

This region also enjoys the expertise of two post-secondary institutions. With federal and provincial government focus on increasing experiential learning opportunities the business community is being called on to help meet the need.

## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

- Ask your candidates to support the Chamber's "Building a Community Outside the Ordinary" platform
- Endorse the platform as an individual or organization
- Help us spread the message on social media



All said, there is interconnectedness between the themes and recommendations of this platform and all citizens in our community. Action on these recommendations helps us all.

We are all in this together.

## CONTACT US

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