

What we're hearing: Small Business Too Big to Ignore

By: Sandra Dueck, Policy Analyst, Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce

Policy advocacy on behalf of our members and business in our communities is a core priority of the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce and the Kawartha Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. We want to know the policy issues that are important to you so that we can effectively represent your interests.

To that end, two roundtable events were held on Thursday, June 23, 2016 in Lakefield at the Marshland Centre and in the Station Boardroom at the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce.

Twenty-eight business owners and business advocates attended the two hour sessions discussing issues relevant to small business in our communities. The roundtables were part of the Small Business Too Big To Ignore campaign launched in May 2016 in partnership with these two local chambers, other chambers and boards of trades across the province, and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

Top 3 Obstacles to Small Business Success

This introductory report by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce lays out three obstacles that are common across the province:

1. Lack of Access to the Workers We Need
2. Key Infrastructure Gaps
3. The Rising Cost of Doing Business

The campaign is designed to highlight the importance and contributions of small business in

Ontario. The feedback from our local roundtables and others across the province will inform a final report on the factors critical to the success of small businesses. The final report will be released during Small Business Week in October 2016.

The participants of the roundtables were divided into small groups and talked about the challenges for small business. Both groups identified the following as the top challenges:

- education for employees and the workforce
- compliance with legislation
- procurement
- workplace attitudes
- succession planning
- sustainability

In discussing solutions for the challenges the number one suggestion was:

- removing red tape

followed by:

Over the past 13 years, my business has lost hydro service 17 times. That translates into \$17-20K in lost revenue and \$5-10K in lost product.

Participant, Roundtable

- understanding the government's expectations around enforcement and inter-ministerial awareness
- improved education programs for apprentices and retraining for current employees
- grant programs for small and medium enterprises

Both groups felt the role of the Chamber was to be the voice of business and that there was strength in numbers. There were suggestions for increasing collaboration between the Peterborough and Kawartha Chambers and identifying how a mid-size city region such as Peterborough can bridge the policy gap between rural and urban issues.

Read our roundtable report and add your voice to the Small Business Too Big To Ignore campaign by filling out a short survey, found on our website peterboroughchamber.ca/small-business-too-big-to-ignore.html

We need to convey to the [Ontario] government, and the general public, that the costs of growing a business in any industry are significant.

Participant, Roundtable



Merrett Home Hardware has been part of the Peterborough community since 1996. Since then, they have made it their business to give back to the community that has supported them.

Drew Merrett and his hardware store have donated building supplies to the Lighthouse Community Centre for new cabinets, and new set supplies for 4th Line Theatre. They donate the use of a cube van to transport food once a week to the Lighthouse Community Centre (where Drew serves food each week). They are involved in the Partners in Employment Program, a provincial program to help job seekers gain job experience. And for the past three years, they have sponsored a community run, supporting the Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, Peterborough Family Health Team Foundation and now the Canadian Mental Health Association - Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge. On September 10th, the run will be the Merrett Home Hardware Run for Mental Health with presenting sponsor Bell Let's Talk.

Congratulations to Drew Merrett and his team for their ongoing support!

#TeamPtbo



Do you know or are you a Chamber Member who is going above & beyond for our Peterborough community?

We want to hear your stories! Contact: Shelby Parker 705.748.9771 x0



How do you #lovelocalptbo? Tell us on Twitter @ptbochamber

STRENGTHENING BUSINESS. ONE MEMBER AT A TIME.

JOIN US

FOR FIRMS WITH 1-50 EMPLOYEES

Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan®

Insurance for small business that's anything but small

contact: Brian Bulger at 741-1400

Member Milestones: getting out and about

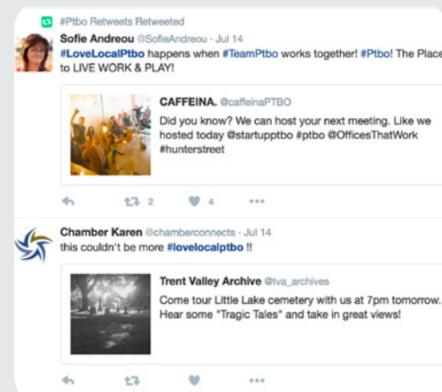
so residents could fill the street and take in the downtown core on foot.

Paint the Town Red a success
The United Way held its fourth annual event, with 25% of lunch

and dinner sales at about 25 local restaurants being donated to the charity. Thanks to all of our members who participated! Your Chamber team went for lunch at the Silver Bean Cafe. #TeamPtbo



More Member Milestones at: peterboroughchamber.ca/member-milestones.html



www.peterboroughchamber.ca



PtboPulse packs downtown

Congratulations to the Downtown Business Improvement Association (DBIA) on the success of the PtboPulse event.

George Street was closed through downtown on Saturday, July 16, 2016 to make way for store owners and other businesses to set up shop



Book your booth for LoveLocal Business Expo 2016
The Region's Largest Business Trade Show
peterboroughchamber.ca

