



April 17, 2008

Municipality of Chatham-Kent
315 King St. W.
Chatham, Ontario
N7M 5K8

Dear Mayor Hope and Council:

This year provides us much celebration as we recognize Chatham-Kent's 10th year as a Municipality. Today we can further the progress as we have the opportunity to reshape the Municipality of the future.

One of the few issues to which the majority can agree is the apparent need for a change in the structure of our Municipal Council. While deprived of this in 1997, we must responsibly discharge our obligation to ensure effectiveness for both immediate and long term benefit of our municipality. The potential to negotiate change in electoral boundaries and representation will provide the first real opportunity for constituents of Chatham-Kent to have input of such.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce, I forward these four recommendations of criteria to consider when contemplating which Council proposal is the best fit - **Identity** - Respecting Wards while progressing toward unified municipal harmony, **Efficiency** - Improving Council, **Strategic Focus** - Ability to increase Municipal goal attention and **Representation** - Reflecting co-efficiency.

We also propose changes are made in the immediate future with the 2010 municipal election implementing any structural and representation changes. We ask Council consider 1) an elected Deputy Mayor or Councillor at Large position and 2) implementing a '311 system' as an investment in efficiencies.

With the suggestion of community or topographical based committees, the Chatham-Kent Chamber supports creating topographical/issue related committees should committees be considered. These committees would have representation from across the municipality offering balance, parity and proper representation for all involved while, additionally, reinforcing a municipal wide thought process. Our concerns with the community based committee system is the severe possibility such committees would continue to disenfranchise the communities of our municipality rather than progressing to 'Chatham-Kent' decisions. We would expect every effort be made to assure the operation and conduction of each committee be as fluid and efficient as possible as it would be counterproductive to add a layer of bureaucracy which may satisfy some look, touch and feel requirements to general Council meetings, yet add complications at the back end. We also propose the committee representatives should be non-elected and non-remunerated positions.

You have been provided the opportunity to make a decision that can mold the future and prosperity of our Municipality. We applaud Council for putting personal gain in jeopardy for the betterment of an improved Chatham-Kent Council and Municipality. You can make a model decision that showcases our Municipal strengths and creativity. While there will be no quick fix any effort made to diminish ethno-geocentric partisan politics and support a global mentality will benefit all. You are to be commended for seriously considering this worthwhile change.

We trust our input will provide a foundation for thought and discussion and will serve as a catalyst in public awareness, input and debate. We look forward to the opportunity to further provide our input through this process.

Yours truly,

Brent DeNure
Chair