

## The Economy and Jobs

Cambridge is a city with a rich heritage that has been built on a strong foundation of community and traditions. It is a city of opportunity, and has been since it was founded. Yet, like all other communities in Ontario, and across Canada, the recession has tested us, while at the same time galvanizing us into action.

Because, our traditional manufacturing industries have not fared so well, this has signaled the need for us to look at new ideas in order to shape and build our future economy. Just as in the past, when Cambridge transitioned from an agricultural background to a textile based economy and then to one centred on manufacturing, we shall shift to a knowledge based economy with strength in advanced manufacturing in the coming years. In order to make this change we need a comprehensive plan and support from everyone - including local government.

The plan needs a fresh, new approach, consulting everyone in the community and it needs commitment from community leaders. I am committed to promoting policies that will enable businesses to attract, create and retain good jobs in Cambridge.

I propose 6 strategies for creating a new economic environment that allows us to compete more productively in the global market. There is no simple approach, so we must work to retain jobs and create new opportunities in any way that we can.

### (1) Investment in Infrastructure:

Infrastructure in its broadest sense is a commitment to our hard services such as roads, sewers, water mains and stormwater retention ponds. This also includes everything from forests and wetlands to creeks and rivers to trails and parks to public transit.

Cambridge has made that commitment and has worked with the Region of Waterloo to make sure that these necessary components are in place. Overall, tens of millions of dollars have been committed to

infrastructure components over the last four years that range from everything such as sewage capacity upgrades, to new roads to new industrial areas. New roads and upgrades that have been achieved such as the Delta road / train bridge and Townline reconstruction are important improvements to our city. These strategic investments in our roads will do away with long waits, smooth and speed traffic flow and make our streets safer for everyone, driver and pedestrian alike, while we continue with the eastern by-pass of our city.

Yet, we must also go beyond that and look the requirements for soft infrastructure of a knowledge-based economy to build for the future. The next form of basic investment must be in high speed broadband internet, both wired and wireless; required to do the business of the knowledge economy. It needs to be viewed as part of a necessary service for the community, not simply a commodity. It must be accessible and affordable, and this is a consideration for attracting knowledge work and knowledge workers in our community. These investments are needed to attract business to Cambridge and retain the businesses that already exist because without the ability to move their goods or have dependable services in place, jobs will be lost.

#### Top Infrastructure Priorities:

- Support GO Train service to Cambridge by presenting the collaborative report done by the city and region to the Minister of Transportation no later than the spring of 2015
- Work with the region to accelerate the by-pass around Cambridge on the east side of the city
- Continue to work with the GRCA on all community “green infrastructure” projects, enhancing the quality of open space, parks and river systems
- Support the continual implementation of the Stormwater Master Plan
- Continue to support the Region’s Source Protection Plan for Water

#### (2) Competitive Business Climate:

One of the most important challenges Cambridge City Council faces is the cost of doing business in our city. We have answered that challenge by making this city even more business-friendly; holding the line on costs and trimming development charges. We have created an environment in which business and industry wants to stay and grow, and a city so attractive and dynamic that other employers want to come here, invest and create good local jobs. Our goal is to be the kind of city where anyone can find fulfilling, sustainable, and meaningful work.

Our taxes, development charges and other building related costs must not only be fair and equitable in order to protect the public interest. When we compare ourselves to similar mid-size cities such as Waterloo and Kitchener and even the region of Waterloo, I am proud to say that Cambridge has maintained the lowest level of city budget increases year after year.

We are, without a doubt, one of the most efficient cities around. Our population has grown by 40% since 1991, and we have maintained services with an actual decrease in the overall staff since 23 years ago. By clearly establishing these rigorous standards, we have not only made it easier for large and small businesses to locate in Cambridge, but we have ensured a stable employment base.

Yet, we also need to go beyond simply fiscal management. We need to continue to focus on the core areas of our community. Next term lends us the opportunity to reassess the policies and the outcomes of all the programmes we have put in place over the years by setting a stage where all the BIA's in Cambridge can find a forum to work together.

As an example, great streets make for great cities and Dickson Street, Queen Street, and King Street have untapped potential that we can capitalize on to help build the businesses and create a more vibrant area for shoppers and citizens.

Competitive Priorities:

- Provide a climate of “certainty” for businesses at city hall by establishing clear, consistent development policies and regulatory rates
- Ensure that all municipal costs are competitive with other local jurisdictions within the Region of Waterloo
- Continue to foster and maintain the strong relationship with the Chamber of Commerce
- Create Community Improvement Plans for Brownfields so businesses can develop those properties
- Continue in co-operation with the other municipalities to develop a new Development Corporation which will co-ordinate business opportunities throughout the region
- Continue to annually benchmark Cambridge with other communities in the region and the province to ensure our efforts are retaining and supporting businesses

### (3) World Class Clusters:

For communities such as Cambridge, differentiation means identifying, supporting and understanding the unique “industry clusters” that will give us a competitive advantage in attracting growing companies and creating more jobs in our community.

In Cambridge, advanced manufacturing, life sciences, small knowledge based industries and the environment have been identified as industry clusters that will produce high value jobs. If these sectors are targeted and pursued, that will provide us with an economic advantage which will allow us to compete.

Cambridge needs to focus on several sectors where we are strong, or where we can become strong. Two good examples are the city’s direct investment in the University of Waterloo School of Architecture campus in downtown and the Conestoga College’s campus in Cambridge. We need to encourage more development to attract jobs in advanced manufacturing, life sciences and knowledge-based industries. We need more training facilities for highly-skilled technicians.

At the same time we need to build upon our success such as the school of architecture. The framework is already here for making Cambridge a “Design Centre” with the close proximity of the School of Architecture and the Cambridge Galleries’ Design at Riverside Gallery. We can help build on that

framework to create a centre of excellence that will attract students, entrepreneurs, investors, complementary businesses and the attention of the world.

#### Priorities to Produce Industry Clusters:

- Continue to ensure that an adequate supply of industrial and commercial properties is available to attract developers
- Place a priority on supporting economic drivers such as the School of Architecture and Conestoga College whose graduates will propel the knowledge-based economy
- Continue to support our present industry based retention programme to help secure the long term, security of our remaining traditional manufacturing base
- Work with a private developer to secure a “High Tech” industrial park in Cambridge

#### (4) High Quality of Life:

One of the crucial factors in establishing ourselves in a new, knowledge-based economy is to establish and support, a talent pool for a workforce that can be drawn upon for the new economy. Companies locate and establish themselves in communities where they can find the creative talent and creative minds that fuel their industry. Individuals who are the creative talent necessary for this new workforce will locate in cities where there are economic opportunities and cities that offer a high quality of life.

A high quality of life is considered across the social spectrum to include everything from healthy and safe core areas to live in, active nightlife, vibrant neighbourhoods, and a thriving arts and culture. Also, it is necessary to offer great pedestrian spaces throughout the community. Our trail systems, bike lanes and core area revitalization projects make Cambridge an attractive place to be. In Hespeler there is a major re-development of the old American Standard building by the Mill Pond. There are new developments going up like Waterscape Two, restaurants such as the Riverbank Mill. Drayton Theatre will be entering its third wonderful season full of attractions for the whole community. In all, the attractiveness of a city with its various offerings is one of the key factors in bringing new business and employees to Cambridge.

### Priorities to maintain a High Quality of Life:

- Continue to support the three unique core areas of Cambridge through policies that encourage new businesses and dwellings
- Continue to pursue recreational facilities such as a “Sportsplex” throughout the Cambridge community that offer a wide variety of opportunities for all ages
- Continue with the present planning policies that offer a wide variety of housing options throughout the city and that appeal to all wage earners
- Continue to support a policy of keeping our three existing Seniors’ Centres open,
- Review and implement recommendations for an Age Friendly City
- Look for opportunities to encourage cooperation between the Cambridge Film Festival, the Cambridge Orchestra and Drayton Theatre
- Request more policing in Cambridge to reduce speeding in neighbourhoods and more proactive patrols in the cores

### (5) The Green Economy:

Any kind of undertaking to implement a plan for sustainability in our community will not be an overnight process, because it has to be a flexible and built on consultation with our neighbours and the ever changing needs of the municipality.

The city is now working on Stage One of the green plan after I introduced it at council where it was unanimously accepted by all members. It is important that the city when working in concert with this new and evolving plan, direct itself at the same time towards greening the economy by emphasizing the need to look at everything from small hydroelectric projects to solar energy, conservation and energy management. This new direction will create the new “green collar” jobs. This will happen because through sustainable efforts and conservation we will move to reduce our carbon footprint.

This new economy will repurpose engineers, manufacturing and construction workers, technicians and research scientists. In all, the green economy will not only combat climate change, but it will create new industries that will help our residents to conserve and move us in the direction of a sustainable community. Industries are looking for communities that by their very example will help to support their own business practices and help be a showcase for their products.

#### Priorities to Implement a Sustainable Community and Green Economy:

- Continue to support policies that enhance and protect the natural environment of Community
- Continue to showcase the Gold LEED City Hall as an example of a cost savings building that has 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and is a sustainable operation and build upon this foundation both in city operations and as an example for the private sector
- Support policies to lease city building rooftops for energy conservation and electrical input back into the Hydro grid system
- Support the new energy conservation and management system now being established across Ontario to conserve energy on high demand days
- Work with staff to develop, showcase, and establish policies to make the Boxwood Subdivision an Industrial, LEED subdivision
- Implement a Green Plan in order to direct Cambridge towards a sustainable future

#### Regional Collaboration for a Metropolitan Economic Strategy:

The City of Cambridge plays a very important role in the Region of Waterloo as the second largest municipality. As an important player in the region's metropolitan area, it has become a creator of both wealth and innovation that contributes to the prosperity of the region. The vital economic contribution that Cambridge provides as a partner is a constant flow of creative ideas, and diversity that is essential to power our city into the global community of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Corporations such as Com Dev and ATS are successful examples of that new economy and cornerstones in the community upon which to generate future creative enterprises. Individual cities can only survive as an integrated part of a larger metropolitan region as we move ahead to face the realities of the economic challenges ahead of us. That's why collaboration and partnership with our regional neighbours in a global economic strategy is essential in attracting various knowledge based industries that will replace the traditional manufacturing base of the past. Yet, this can only be done when the mayors of our communities recognize the importance of their role in a collective leadership in moving our regional community ahead.

#### Priorities for Regional Collaboration:

- Continue to ensure that the economic goals for Cambridge are coordinated with the goals and objectives of the new Development Corporation and its strategy for economic development in the region
- Continue to support the Economic Development Department in its efforts to provide an industrial land strategy that includes both the availability of price competitive industrial land and co-operate with the private sector to help market the City of Cambridge and the Region of Waterloo
- Support the ongoing efforts of the Economic Development Department to retain businesses in Cambridge through a programme of retention and ongoing support

#### Final Comments

This new approach to our local economy must be approached in a manner that is constantly balancing the priorities in the six steps of the plan that I have addressed in the areas of Infrastructure, Competitiveness, World Class Clusters, Quality of Life, Sustainability and the Green Economy, and Regional Collaboration. These steps will help to build an attractive foundation for the future that will result in the shifting of Cambridge towards a more competitive focus in order for it to compete in the new global economy.



In step with these concepts is the need to focus on excellence in design and architecture in our community. The way a community looks and feels is an attractive agent for investors and allows the city to differentiate itself from other municipalities and compete globally. However, in order for any plan to be effective, it must have a process that will ensure that there is a proper follow-up to the recommendations. This has to be done through a number of steps that in some cases will require resource reallocation, periodic reviews and working within the current policy framework. To simply identify new strategies and other key initiatives will not result in a change, and I have the experience and know the effort that must be committed to obtain the future that we all envisage for Cambridge. We must commit to the strategy, put in the required energy and resources, and begin to enjoy the benefits of our new emerging economy. It's imperative for the future success of Cambridge for us to step confidently into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and build an economy that will sustain us through future challenges.