

## Background Brief and Executive Summary

### Respecting the Deputation from The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce

#### Background

Council may have noticed an increase in the involvement of the Chamber with town initiatives, particularly in the area of economic development. The Chamber has realized that policy decisions can and do impact directly on the ability of the Town to attract new and appropriate businesses into the area, and on the ability of the Town to sustain and support the current businesses. We have also recognized that in order to be effective in promoting business-friendly decisions, the Chamber must be involved in the decision-making process from initial conception, through planning, implementation and evaluation.

As one response to this realization, the Chamber of Commerce has formed an Economic Development Committee, which has been given the following tasks:

1. To stay informed about the economic development activities of the Town and the region,
2. to examine and review the various documents that relate to economic development in the Town of The Blue Mountains,
3. to communicate this information to the Chamber Directors and Members,
4. to provide Town Staff and Councillors with comments and input at appropriate stages of the document development process, and
5. To support and assist Chamber Members, Town Staff and Council to implement programs which will encourage economic development in the Town of The Blue Mountains.

#### Executive Summary

The deputation to be presented at this meeting of Council is in response to the review and re-writing of the Official Plan. In summary, the deputation will present the following points:

1. The Official Plan as it stands is too detailed. The revision should include a condensation of the plan to provide principles and guidelines for future decisions rather than a detailed list of specific items. Some examples will be presented in this regard.
2. The Official Plan as it stands is too restrictive. This is partly a result of being too detailed and trying to anticipate every issue or situation, thus either complicating or restricting the options to modify ideas or concepts for the town. We would ask that the revision use inclusive language rather than restrictive language, and some examples of this will be given.
3. The Chamber, through its members, directors and economic development committee is prepared to work with Town Staff on the economic development portions of the Official Plan, providing ideas and recommendations that Town Staff may incorporate and prioritize with other stakeholders in order to present a balanced, pro-active and positive tool for future development within the town.