



PRESS RELEASE:

To: All Media

Re: Kitchener City Council resolution on "Regional Reform"

On Monday, October 3, 2005, Kitchener City Council endorsed the following motion:

"That the City of Kitchener request the other municipalities in Waterloo Region to engage in a dialogue around municipal reform with the goal of moving towards one or more municipalities in a single-tier model; and,

That such dialogue commences immediately including the possibility of requesting assistance from the Province to provide a facilitator for such discussions; and further,

That assuming successful negotiations with the neighbouring municipalities, the newly structured councils take over no later than December 1, 2009."

Regarding this event, the official position of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce is:

1. Such "dialogue" will foster uncertainty and a general lack of confidence within the business community, which will have a negative impact on regional growth.
2. Since only the City of Kitchener is promoting this concept, it will isolate the City from the other members of the Region and hurt its important role in regional development.
3. Past studies by the Fraser Institute and recent amalgamations suggest that there is no clear benefit to a single-tier model compared to our existing structure, which means this exercise has no rational foundation.

"This move by Kitchener Council may be viewed negatively by potential investors to the Region." said Chamber President Paul Spencer "We are very concerned about this type of message and its timing. The business community within the Region of Waterloo is prospering, as indicated by the recent Conference Board of Canada announcement. Things are working well; now is not the time for political motivations to be risking our hard-earned successes."

The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce recommends that the seven local municipalities and the Regional Government continue to advance this community and seek efficiencies within their own operations to build on the already impressive accolades from the Conference Board of Canada.

Local governments should move swiftly to approve the development of the future employment lands surrounding our International Airport for industrial growth, and continue to work closely together to find efficient and effective ways in delivering affordable services. We believe low property taxes, availability of employment lands, and community attributes are essential to attracting and retaining the best people and companies to our Region. These important benefits are being put in jeopardy by tinkering with the structure of local government.