

## We're not your grandfather's chamber of commerce

By: **Stuart Harrison, President & CEO, Peterborough Chamber of Commerce**

I had an interesting lunch with a couple of Peterborough's cooler customers, Neil Morton and Cody May, and the topic of the Chamber of Commerce came up, not surprisingly...

In the course of explaining everything we do here at the Chamber, especially around the content we create, the social media we utilize to distribute it, the staff we employ, the volunteers we attract, I said "this is not your grandfather's chamber".

Remember that Neil and Cody are marketers and their reaction was along the lines of "OMG, YOU HAVE TO USE THAT AS A SLOGAN!!!!!!!"

Being a grandfather, not to mention an old white guy, I have to admit that I was not immediately on board. However, perhaps it gives me the opportunity to lay out just who we are and what we do.

First of all, we are indeed pretty damn old, having been around since March 21, 1889. (note to self, start planning 130th birthday party...)

We can put the Chamber's name on many of the community's accomplishments over the past century. There have been hundreds of women and men who, for no other reason than love of our city and county, have volunteered with The Chamber to make good things happen.



Like me, they believe that Peterborough will never be good enough for any of us until it's good enough for all of us.

The Chamber is people. People doing work that is purposeful, transparent, accountable and strategic, all with the goal of strengthening the community. And it's an organization that's driven by the leadership of its members.

At our core, we're a relatively small local non-profit, that runs lean. We don't make willy-nilly policy decisions based on the interests of a few. Rather, our positions on issues that impact your business and the community as a whole are based on a long-view and are based on fact, and broad input. Our members elect the peer representatives (our Board of Directors) each year who make those decisions.

Business advocacy is paramount to an economically vibrant city. And

that effort is privately funded by our membership. We're present in local government, at Queens Park, and in the Parliament of Canada to influence policy and to ensure that the stage is set and maintained for business success right here in Peterborough. Having a positive, productive relationship with government at all levels matters – and we're often able to resolve challenges for our members through those relationships.

There are no dark, smoke-filled rooms. We work openly and account for our work, with a focus on two fundamentals; the ultimate success of our member companies, and prosperity for the community of Peterborough City and County.

There are a multitude of organizations involved in this work, representing everything from economic development, innovation, new Canadians, women, the

downtown, the trades, the professions, etc., etc. We call them #TeamPtbo. But we feel that we represent all of those organizations, all of those sectors, all of that potential.

And, just like we've done for nearly 130 years, we leverage the passion, time, treasure and spirit of our community to ensure that Peterborough remains strong in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

There are many reasons to belong to The Chamber, from promoting your business, to saving you money, to helping you gain a competitive edge. But the most important is the simple strengthening of your business. I invite you, as always, to be a part of writing the next chapter. Your membership is not only an investment in your business, it's an annual vote of confidence in ours.

More: [peterboroughchamber.ca](http://peterboroughchamber.ca)

## Ontario Chamber supports VIA Rail HFR Project

Earlier this year the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) sent a letter to Minister Marc Garneau.

"The OCC believes in the merit of VIA Rail's HFR plan. As shared infrastructure becomes more congested and Canadians demand more of their rail service provider, VIA's proposal for a dedicated passenger corridor will create significant economic development along the route, including providing an estimated 336,000 person-years of employment. The

HFR plan will increase access to affordable housing in the new rail corridor and provide new residents with a transit option for commuting. Increasing rail service will also provide an avenue for alleviating some of the ever-increasing road congestion in the heavily travelled provincial roads.

Additionally, hybrid electric-diesel trains running on this route would dramatically reduce carbon emissions by 12.5 million tons of CO2, the equivalent of a car-pool

reduction of 2.8 million vehicles.

In addition to the benefits of more efficient and environmentally-friendly inter-city travel, dedicated tracks for high frequency trains between Toronto – Peterborough – Ottawa will also ensure the corporation can maximize ridership and revenue, and improve their on-time performance to over 95%."

Read the full letter: [peterboroughchamber.ca/blog](http://peterboroughchamber.ca/blog)

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### CHAMBER TIP

You should be able to explain what your business does in 30 seconds.

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Learn how: [peterboroughchamber.ca](http://peterboroughchamber.ca)



### Member Milestones

- **PTBO Northern Originals** has partnered with Ontario Parks to design shirts for the 125th Anniversary. The shirts will be sold in 88 locations around Ontario.
- **Lansdowne Place** will be hosting two FREE family events in July: Teddy Bear Picnic on July 20th and a Birdhouse Workshop for Kids on July 21st.
- After 32 years, **Christensen Fine Art** storefront framing shop and

gallery will be closing. Good luck Peer and Lois on the evolution of Christensen Fine Art!

- **The Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough** announced a \$20,000 grant to the Homeward Bound program, "to help inadequately housed or homeless mother-led families achieve self-sufficiency".
- **Cabinetree** is featured on the cover of Kawartha Cottage Magazine.
- **Pro-Tect Lock & Safe Ltd.** has moved to 380 Water Street, 2 doors north of their previous location.
- **Innovation Cluster** President and CEO Michael Skinner was named Chair of the Start-Ups Committee for the Brazil-Canada Chamber of Commerce.

### Featured Member Discount Program: Save on Domain and Hosting Purchases



Chamber members, send your Member Milestones to [reception@peterboroughchamber.ca](mailto:reception@peterboroughchamber.ca) or call 705-748-9771 x0.



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