

Media Release



For Release – Monday, January 19, 7pm

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS BUDGET 2009 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL

TIMMINS: As part of municipal budget deputations Monday night, Timmins Chamber of Commerce Treasurer Sue Gauthier and President Rob Galloway outlined the Chamber's recommendations for the city's 2009 budget.

Some of the items of note brought forth by Gauthier and Galloway on behalf of the 750 businesses of the Chamber included:

- The need for a planned, concerted approach to deal with the estimated \$80-100M infrastructure funding shortfall, including the need to strategically identify and leverage opportunities to fund long-term municipal development;
- The need to develop a prioritized infrastructure plan;
- Recommendation to the city to revisit its 2005 operational review to realize efficiencies and other cost-saving opportunities;
- The benefits of long-term sustainability planning to create the knowledge and resources to best deal with the economic highs and lows of northern Ontario;
- The need to limit services offered through city to core services and to contract services to the private sector where sound fiscal policy merits such action;
- Acknowledgement of the changes the city has implemented to date, including organizational restructuring.

Gauthier opened the presentation by offering congratulations to council for the city's planned centennial celebrations. Also noted were the economic extremes experienced by the city in 2008. According to Gauthier, our city must plan, manage expenditures and achieve efficiencies in all areas of operations to mitigate the impacts on businesses and tax payers when the economic climate changes.

Efficiently-run city operations mean lower operational costs, which translate to a lesser burden on tax payers. The 2005 operational review identified a number of strategies that council and administration could implement to realize operational cost-savings. "We want to remind council what a valuable tool the operational review was and continues to be, and to encourage them to continue to implement its recommendations. Lowering operational costs is a key way the municipality can lessen the tax burden on businesses and families in Timmins," stated Chamber Treasurer, Suzanne Gauthier.

The Chamber of Commerce's 2009 budget recommendations were developed through a consultative process with the 750 member businesses of the Chamber. Through surveying its membership, a common challenge cited by member businesses was dealing with the economic highs and lows of the northern economy. According to 2008-2009 Chamber President Rob Galloway, "The municipality may have little control over what takes place in the global economic field, but what they do have control over is implementing the right strategies that enable the municipality to respond effectively to hard economic times - without putting an increased burden on the taxpayers and businesses," stated Galloway, "The Chamber's goal is to do all it can to make Timmins an attractive place in which to live and do business. We are confident that City Council shares our goal and will give consideration to each and every one of our recommendations."

Visit www.timminschamber.on.ca/2009budget.pdf for a copy of the Chamber of Commerce's 2009 budget presentation to City Council.

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About the Timmins Chamber of Commerce

With over 750 members, the Timmins Chamber of Commerce is the largest accredited chamber of commerce with distinction in northeastern Ontario. As the "Voice of Business in Timmins" since 1949, our advocacy and policy initiatives focus on ensuring a positive business climate in the City of Timmins.