



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2018

ABOUT THE CHAMBER

WHAT WE DO

The Milton Chamber of Commerce is a not-for-profit organization financed through membership investment, events and special projects.

The Chamber is “your business network” and works to preserve and further the operation of Milton’s businesses based upon individual freedom of choice and personal initiative and responsibility.

Through the participation of its member volunteers on committees and task forces, the Milton Chamber of Commerce influences federal, provincial and municipal legislation affecting over 700 business members. It is this grass roots involvement that sets the Chamber apart from many other organizations in representing the business viewpoint.

OUR CORE VALUES

We value an entrepreneurial spirit. We deliver programs, services and products of the highest quality that support the needs of businesses at every stage of development.

We value integrity. We adhere to the highest ethical standards.

We value a collaborative environment. We connect businesses to each other, to prospective customers and to essential resources. We facilitate connections that lead to long-term business relationships built on trust.

We value diversity. We respect the variety of people, businesses and ideas in our community and consider this diversity to be an advantage.

We value accountability. We make evidence-informed decisions and take responsibility for our actions and outcomes.

VISION

As the voice of business Milton, the Chamber is a strong advocate for continued development of our community and a partner for prosperity. By working together and focusing on initiatives that support growth, members use the services of the Chamber an important catalyst for their business success.



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Strategic Direction 2018 outlines how the Milton Chamber of Commerce will continue its work and advance community prosperity.

This document is meant to be adaptive, non-static, and subject to amendments as change or needs dictate. The Strategic Direction is not a stand-alone document but is complemented by the annual business plans of the Chamber.

In the development of the Strategic Direction, many strengths and opportunities were identified, but weaknesses and threats also exist. This plan seeks to overcome the latter, while capitalizing on the strengths and opportunities. We will continue to reach out to our members to learn more about how our programs and services are being received and how we can maximize our efforts to the full benefit of the membership. As a member of the Chamber, your views and opinions are critical to the organization's success.

The Milton Chamber of Commerce has developed a plan of significant importance, with three goals that aim to take the organization to the next level in terms of advocacy, community leadership and member relations. While each goal is distinct, they are also interrelated and mutually supportive.

The Board of Directors of the Milton Chamber of Commerce is committed to the ongoing delivery of their strategic goals and priorities to ensure that the services offered remain relevant to the needs of its members and the broader business community. Through Strategic Plan 2018, the Chamber is also dedicated to embracing innovative solutions to address the challenges of today. The key objectives of each strategic goal are laid out in the following pages.



Vision

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Strategic Priorities

Membership Support & Engagement	Community Leadership	Advocacy	Operational Excellence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure our membership is appealing, meaningful, and welcoming to businesses in Milton 2. Continue to find ways to engage the broadest range of members, from small to large companies, and from various diversities and sectors. 3. Continue to articulate the value of the 'network' and 'networking'. 4. Explore new opportunities and events for member engagement. 5. Explore improved ways to integrate new members into the Chambers, such as event Ambassadors, mentors, and an improved New Member Orientation. 6. Capitalize on other Chamber initiatives, including Escarpment Country and the Farmers' Market to promote the Chamber and source new members. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to demonstrate leadership in building a strong working relationship between the business community and partners, including but limited to: the Town of Milton; Halton Region; Laurier University; and, Conestoga College. 2. Continued participation and leadership with aligned local groups, including the Milton Economic Development Advisory Council (MEDAC); Halton Economic Development Partnership (HEDP); Mayor's Business Leaders Roundtable; and, the Innovation Corridor Business Council. 3. Work on solutions to the key local issues of employee and business recruitment and retention. 4. Increased ability, through tools such as Magnet or the Small Business Access/ OCC initiative, for the Chamber to become a hub for business information. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to determine issues affecting Milton businesses and taking an appropriate stand on positions locally, provincially, or nationally. 2. Continue to create opportunities to engage and educate our membership to heighten interest in our advocacy efforts and successes; embedding more 'calls to action'. 3. Maintain our strong relationships within the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce to increase the Milton's profile and influence in these organizations. 4. Continue to leverage the Ontario Chamber and the Canadian Chamber reports and releases to communicate advocacy issues to Milton Chamber members. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure highest standards in operational management, internal team culture, finances, and policies and procedures. 2. Develop new or revised revenues sources 3. Explore new technologies to assist in Chamber operations and to create possible opportunities for connecting members.
<p>Core Values We value an entrepreneurial spirit. We value integrity. We value a collaborative environment. We value diversity. We value accountability.</p>			

Supporting Initiatives





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- VISION**
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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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To further focus the Strategic Priorities, specific goals have been developed for each of the functional areas.

GOALS

Membership Support & Engagement	Community Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To have annual net growth of the Chamber’s total number of members. ▪ To include in the President & CEO’s monthly report to the Board, a synopsis of new and cancelled members, along with current membership total. ▪ To do a full review of Chamber programs, events and membership benefits prior to the end of fiscal 2018 to ensure of value to current and prospective members. ▪ To continue recruitment for HR Roundtable and consider other applicable initiatives for large companies. ▪ To explore programming to target companies from various diversities and sectors. ▪ To better integrate new members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish an Ambassadors program for BAH and MYP starting in May, 2018; ○ Explore possible mentor program; and, ○ Establish bi-monthly New Member Orientation. ▪ To create a new e-sales kit for Chamber membership. ▪ To continue collection of member testimonials for use in Chamber marketing and communications. ▪ To explore communications opportunities to promote the Chamber and its successes at Chamber events and through initiatives such as Escarpment Country and the Farmers’ Market. ▪ To continue to engage and recognize Chamber volunteers. ▪ To continually improve the Chamber’s communications strategies, including social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To continue participation and leadership with aligned local groups and communicate Chamber’s involvement to membership ▪ To create opportunities for Milton through the Innovation Corridor Business Council and the NGM Canada Supercluster. ▪ To work with local employers and governments on solutions to the key local issues of employee and business recruitment and retention. ▪ To develop improved roll-out plans and communications strategies for Magnet. ▪ To develop roll-out plan and communications strategies for the OCC’s Small Business Access initiative. ▪ To assist the Town and its Economic Development office in attracting the development of more office space. ▪ To continue with the Chamber’s lead role, in partnership with Laurier University and CN, on the Annual World Class Supply Chain Summit. ▪ To create opportunities for Milton businesses through the participation of the President & CEO on Halton Region’s Export Advisory Group.



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GOALS

Advocacy	Operational Excellence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To develop appropriate tools to determine issues affecting Milton businesses▪ To work through the Government Relations committee to develop and recommend appropriate positions or action steps.▪ To continue with political speaker events in Milton.▪ To leverage Chamber communications tools regarding the Chamber's advocacy efforts, reasons for Chamber involvement, and any 'calls' for members to take action.▪ To continue using Ontario Chamber and Canadian Chamber reports and releases to communicate advocacy issues to Milton Chamber members, while also making efforts to 'localize' the issue.▪ To endeavour to have at least one co-sponsored or original policy resolution at the OCC or CCC convention annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To finalize review and updating of Chamber's policies and procedures.▪ To develop a new information manual for the Board of Directors.▪ To develop new or revised revenues sources.▪ To explore new technologies to assist in Chamber operations and to create possible opportunities for connecting members.▪ To look at possible improvements to Chamber budgeting and to the financial report package to Board members so numbers are less subject to timing issues.▪ To develop an annual survey tool to get member feedback on issues affecting their business and on improvements for the Chamber.▪ To review the current governance/committee structure and create a comprehensive succession plan for Board, staff and volunteers



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Appendix A:

Mission, Guiding Principles and Strategic Goals – approved by the Board of Directors January 2014

Mission

The Milton Chamber of Commerce is the recognized voice of business leading the way forward in an ever-changing growth focused diverse community. Built on a solid foundation the Chamber is dedicated to strengthening the success of its members.

Guiding Principles

- Integrity
- Collaboration and fellowship
- Innovation and leadership
- A primary focus on the needs of our membership
- Promoting free enterprise and commerce

Strategic Goals

Membership and Programming

1. Target youth and other specific membership segments
2. Increase emphasis on knowledge exchange in programs and activities
3. Leverage technology in attracting and retaining members
4. Launch projects that create community visibility and awareness
5. Refocus activities to reflect the changing needs of a growing community

Policy and Advocacy

6. Raise the visibility of existing advocacy activities
7. Expand and formalize policy development through a policy committee, partnerships, member discussion papers and allocation of necessary resources

8. Increase involvement with Ontario Chamber of Commerce and Canadian Chamber of Commerce advocacy initiatives

Organizational Development

9. Improve Chamber messaging, visibility and brand recognition
10. Ensure adequate technology resources are in place to support strategic goals
11. Review the current governance/committee structure and create a comprehensive succession plan for Board, staff and volunteers
12. Expand and enhance partnering, outreach and engagement with other groups and organizations



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Appendix B:

Strengths

- Experienced staff with strong capabilities and complementary skills
- Board with wide variety of experience from various sectors
- Volunteers
- Corporate partners
- Relationship with Town, Region, MPP and MP
- Large, diverse membership
- Strong market penetration with approximately 700 of Milton's 1895 businesses (Canada Post as of Dec 2017); equates to 36.9% market penetration*
- HR Roundtable involves many larger Milton companies
- 129 year history (founded in 1888)
- Relationship with OCC and CCC
- Methods of communication (e-news, social media, centrespread, local media)
- Variety of programs and events
- Involvement of Young Professionals

Opportunities

- To diversify revenue, need look to at potential form mission-related areas, such as the HR Roundtable
- Potential business growth in Derry Green Business Park
- Ethnic diversity of area
- Young Professionals - increased participation
- Increased marketing to members and potential members
- Chamber Group Insurance may be attractive to 'population based' small businesses
- Laurier University/ Conestoga College - possible partnerships; scholarships for STEAM
- Innovation Corridor strengths position Chamber as economic development partner
- Leverage technology for advocacy and member engagement - Chamber list serve to facilitate conversations and to promote Chamber initiatives
- New member mentors/ ambassadors
- Use testimonials to build Chamber credibility
- Use seat drops at Chamber events to promote advocacy initiatives and wins

Weaknesses

- Limited streams of revenue: heavy reliance on events, promotions, and sponsors versus memberships (dues are 22.2% of total budget)
- Policy development and advocacy - few local issues; few local companies have Government Relations or policy staff to offer input or expertise
- Most local business growth is in 'population-based' businesses or ones serving the residential growth (i.e., variety stores, nail and hair salons, etc.). Typically, these businesses are less likely to join Chamber
- Lack of community growth in offices and medium sized companies
- Links with tourism - 'Escarpment Country' is only local tourism effort; Town has no interest in tourism
- Limited number of member locations for BAH/ MYP - need 22 locations annually

Threats

- Other competing lobbying organizations and networking groups
- CN Intermodal - will be an election issue in 2018 so Chamber's position may again be challenged; possible loss or reduction of CN partnership support, depending on the final federal approvals/ disapprovals
- Future of printed business directory (net to Chamber of - \$21k; plus a large component of Chamber's sales staff person's compensation)
- Ethnic diversity - possibility of forming own groups
- Competition for sponsorships. (i.e., hospital fundraising)
- Retirement of businesspeople or company mergers
- Difficulty faced by local companies in employee recruitment may result in relocations of businesses to other municipalities

*Burlington Chamber 19.8%; Oakville Chamber 27%