



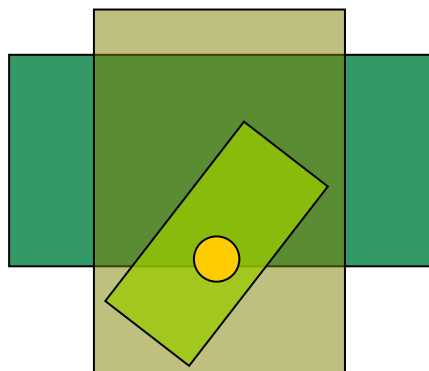
KAWARTHA LAKES

Community Futures Development Corporation

Summary Report
Community Consultations and Key Findings

“Taking Action To Become Ready for Business”

Fall 2009





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Background for "Ready for Business" Consultations - Phase II

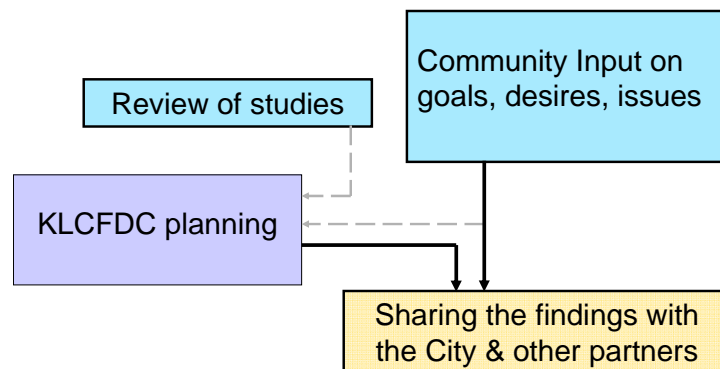
Momentum For Change Sparked By Initial Community Consultations

During the course of the KLCFDC's 2007 community consultations, individuals participating in nine focus group sessions and one-on-one interviews often raised issues of more direct interest to the City of Kawartha Lakes and/or their individual towns, villages and hamlets -- Bobcaygeon, Coboconk, Fenelon Falls, Lindsay, Little Britain, Omemee, Kinmount, Janetville, Rosedale, Burnt River, Bethany, Woodville and so on.

The Kawartha Lakes CFDC subsequently established four priorities in its own strategic plan, including one to support interaction and understanding among stakeholders through project, sector and community forums.

The spirit of the idea was that "we all must prosper together" and reflected the identified need to connect business leaders, entrepreneurs, business owners, developers, investors, civic officials, community leaders and residents from across Kawartha Lakes to share information and co-ordinate their plans and efforts.

Although a number of issues tabled during those sessions related more directly to municipal and community interests -- outside the CFDC's mandate, strictly speaking -- the organization saw an opportunity to further assist in the role of catalyst. It indicated its willingness to help organize follow-up sessions involving the City and stakeholders from the community.



For various reasons the issue was stalled for a period of time after a presentation to the City in January 2008, but the idea of bringing the City and business community together around the "Ready for Business" theme was actively endorsed by both the Business Development and Economic Opportunities Advisory Committees. Subsequently it was also confirmed as a strategic priority by the City of Kawartha Lakes.

At that point, the CFDC Board decided to commit further resources and follow through on its promise to consultation participants to bring their issues and concerns forward to the City. It sponsored and organized two follow-up consultation sessions in the Spring of 2009, involving the City and stakeholders from the community to consider how best Kawartha Lakes might become "Ready for Business".

Objectives for the "Ready for Business" Discussions:

The purpose of the sessions, as noted in a report to the Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes (Dec.2, 2008), was to:

- Share perspectives on the business community's needs and also to improve the public's understanding of municipal requirements and processes -- particularly with respect to achieving better communication and interaction with stakeholders.
- Propose ways to work together towards streamlined processes, faster approvals, and more practical application of regulations and policies.
- Explore the issues involved in working collaboratively with stakeholders to enhance the infrastructure needed for growth and prosperity. (For example, input from the community consultations stressed needs for water and sewer services, broadband access, improved highways and tourism infrastructure.)

Perspectives From Online Input: A broad cross-section of potential participants (including those who were not able to attend) were also invited to comment on some of the key issues identified in 2007, and discussions since then. An online tool was used to collect their ideas and concerns and formulate useful topics for the "Ready for Business" discussion. The input from all perspectives was compiled for distribution with the final agenda prior to the session.

Format: Each session opened with a presentation by City of Kawartha Lakes senior staff who helped ensure all participants had an understanding of municipal practices and limitations placed on its potential actions. Then participants spent time discussing ideas and concerns on the theme of what they could do together to make the City of Kawartha Lakes "Ready for Business." Each session finished with suggested steps for moving forward.

This report concludes the project by offering proposals for follow-up action based on the outline presented to Council and approved as a strategic priority.

Key Points From The City Briefing To Session Participants

Each "Ready for Business" consultation session opened with City presentations on Engineering and Public Works and on Planning and Development -- two areas that have key roles to play in business and economic development.

Engineering and Public Works:

- The City is responsible for the maintenance of more than \$3 billion in assets, which includes 300 bridges, 315 sanitary sewers, 80 storm sewers, and 21 water treatment facilities. Engineering and Public Works is organized into three operating units: Engineering Services, Operation Services, and Environmental Services.
- Engineering Services includes: a) Development Engineering – planning applications, development design standards, building inspections, and by-law enforcement; b) Capital Works -- rebuilding and maintenance of existing assets and c) Technical Services -- management of existing and planned infrastructure.
- Operation Services includes roads, storm water management, airport, cemeteries, corridor control, fleet maintenance, public transit and traffic control. The City fleet includes more than 400 vehicles and pieces of equipment which are used for snow removal.
- Environmental Services includes solid waste, water treatment and distribution, and wastewater collection and treatment. There are 5 landfill sites in the City of Kawartha Lakes.
- In 2008, the City of Kawartha Lakes Public Works department instituted an Issue Tracking System used to log requests for service or complaints from the public. Approximately 4,000 requests were entered into the system in 2008 (although it should be noted that they were tracked only for certain departments and, for the most part, did not apply to the economic development portfolio).

The Development Process:

- The development process is complex and highly regulated, and each application is unique. City staff would like the public to understand the complexity of the process.
- One of the most common complaints is that the process is too long. In some cases, however, clients have not allowed adequate time to navigate it. They often become frustrated because they are unfamiliar with the application process and unaware of the requirements, especially for building design.
- The City must balance development with land use planning, which involves the Master Plan and the Official Plan, and legislation such as the Municipal Act, Planning Act, Public Transit Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act. The Province of Ontario also issues policy statements on growth and development that define the boundaries within which the municipality must plan. The master planning process is comprehensive and has a 20-year timeline.
- There are two competing philosophies of who, when and how residents, developers and the community should invest in development: a) "development should pay for itself" vs. b) "build it and they will come". The question for the community is: Who bears the cost of servicing commercial lands? Should current or future residents foot the bill? Should development pay for itself?
- The role of City staff is to help applicants navigate the planning application process. This requires effective communication and customer service. Staff is pulled in two directions -- mandatory compliance with legislation and customer service to ensure the development application process is efficient.

Development Pre-consultation Process:

- The City has implemented a pre-consultation process and published a design standards document to address some of the challenges inherent in the planning application process. A flow chart prepared by the City, entitled "Planning Application Process -- 2007", illustrates how an application should move through City approvals.
- Twice per month, a committee of City staff from planning and other departments (such as engineering) reviews pre-consultation documentation, in which developers outline their preliminary ideas. The committee then meets with the applicant/developer to provide a list of items required to complete a full application and/or discuss issues related to proposal development.

- The City may require input from other organizations, such as the four local conservation authorities, Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of the Environment. Some applications may be fairly straightforward, whereas others may involve situations that require substantial research. The timeline from submission of a pre-consultation form to the meeting is 6 to 12 weeks.
- Allowing for official notice periods, the minimum time line from receipt of a completed application gaining Council approval to final OMB approval is 90 days.

Findings From the 2009 "Ready For Business" Forums

Several key themes were identified through this process, including the point that being "Open for Business" was only a first step in becoming "Ready for Business". These themes and extensive documentation of the input and discussions were submitted for review to the City and the CFDC Board of Directors. (They are also available on file.)

Major Themes That Emerged:

- Establishing a **single point of access to services** at one location to help residents, developers and other businesses to work through various City processes, including the planning application process. This function/ 'one window access' to services would be supported with training and various types of guides, checklists, and process documentation.
- Implementing a **"navigator" position** within the City (not necessarily in a designated location) to guide developers and entrepreneurs through City services and required approvals, supported by plain language guides, checklists of standards and access through voicemail.
- Enhancing the well-received **pre-consultation** step in the development process by assigning sufficient resources to meet demand in a timely manner and establish screening tools to vet applications more quickly.
- Making it a priority to **attract and retain planning and other quality talent** needed for positions at CKL.
- Supporting a **"customer-first" culture** throughout the organization, focused on service, innovation and continuous improvement. This would be complemented by training, clear policy guidelines for development, and a "Ready for Business" philosophy.

Other Themes Discussed:

Communications and Culture:

- It was suggested that the City can do a better job of communicating the steps involved in the planning application process as well as the design standards involved.
- Participants expressed a conviction that a change in culture, from the top-down, is required within the City's organization. The existing culture is viewed as stagnant and information as difficult to find. Suggestions for shifts in culture included a more active customer focus, with emphasis on innovation and flexibility.
- Business participants expressed frustration that some City staff define the "customer" as City Council rather than taxpayers (including businesses) who are the end-user of City services. City staff answered that their "customers" include more than end users alone. They include City Council; individuals submitting development applications; residents opposing development applications; and the general public.

Need For Human Resources:

- The lack of adequate human resources was brought up several times. The City of Kawartha Lakes' Engineering Services Department is one half the size of those in comparable municipalities. Further, the Planning Department currently has two vacancies, one of which has been open for two years because of the difficulty in attracting qualified candidates.
- This lack of human resources affects every aspect of the planning and development process. The inability to fill vacant positions is due in large part to the salary gap between the public and private sector (planners can make significantly more money in the private sector) and the shortage of planning professionals in general. CKL is not the only municipality facing this challenge.

Open vs. Ready For Business:

Participants agreed the city was "open" for business, but may not be "ready" for business. As a community, the City of Kawartha Lakes must also define what "open for business" means: What type of development should the community support? What do we do, and what do we not do?

- Open for Business also involves an attitude; welcoming, positive, promoting local advantages, and pursuing the type of development we want. It includes providing information and advice. Open for Business also includes celebrating our successes and educating the public on the activities happening throughout the community.
- Ready for Business includes the infrastructure that supports the establishment and expansion of business. This includes the planning process, engineering requirements, serviced land, and other infrastructure and services that are building blocks for starting a business.

Suggestions for Follow-up Action

Suggestions For Follow-Up By The Business Community:

It was suggested that the business community should:

- Learn more about the application process, and take responsibility for providing information required to meet current standards.
- Take greater advantage of opportunities offered through pre-consultation.
- Recognize that much of the development application process is provincially mandated.
- Contribute to the development costs of servicing land.
- Work with the City to find solutions to educating the public.

Suggestions For Follow-up By The Municipality:

It was suggested that, in order to be "Ready for Business", the City must:

- Market the unique attributes of the community.
- Identify, define and establish goals in terms of sectors and types of development.
- Streamline communication with the community.
- Ensure information is available for all types of business/industry: publishing information on CKL services, government funding programs, planning application process, inventory of development lands, and design standards.
- Track and learn from missed opportunities -- those businesses that chose not to locate or expand within CKL.
- Identify the key success factors that influence relocation decisions.
- Recognize existing businesses that want to expand and guide them through the process.
- Recognize and celebrate the contributions of the business community.
- Endeavour to continually improve the planning application process.
- Provide a step-by-step guide to the development process, and a designated staff person to act as a guide. Establish responsibility for "carrying the ball".
- Recognize that the business development model is a partnership between City and business. Both the City and the business community need to take responsibility for understanding and meeting each other's requirements.
- City Council must lead the community in a consistent manner -- leadership involves making decisions that are right for the community, not merely because they are popular with the community.
- Establish an action plan to move forward.
- Establish a one-stop shop at the City that upholds customer service excellence and provides clients with a checklist of what to do and who to contact during the planning application process.
- Give frontline City staff reasonable authority to respond immediately to questions related to the planning process and make decisions that put the customer first.

"Taking Action To Become Ready For Business"

It now falls to the City to take action on the ideas and concerns expressed by the wide range of stakeholders involved in discussions about the "Ready for Business" strategic priority. In an effort to assist that process, three action objectives and suggested processes for moving forward have been defined below:

■ Action Objective #1:

Define a clear, streamlined path for business development.

- Map the current process and work to identify areas where policy and/or requirements need greater clarification; steps are out of sequence, repeated or unnecessary; documentation is onerous or duplicated; or applicants typically encounter pitfalls.
- Look at process improvements such as critical path timing to minimize (within regulations) application-to-approval wait times, and review opportunities to create a "fast track" for standard applications meeting City/other regulatory requirements.
- Enhancing the pre-consultation step in the development process by establishing screening tools to vet applications more quickly and assigning sufficient resources to meet demand.

■ Action Objective #2:

Improve access to the business development path.

- Establish a single point of service ("one window") at one place or location (or at least a limited number of access points related to well-defined stages in the development path).
- Investigate the options for establishing a staff position as a "navigator" within the City (not necessarily in a designated service location) to guide developers, site locators, entrepreneurs and others through City services and required approvals.
- Provide self-help tools such as various types of development process guides and checklists, and provide documentation on City processes.
- Provide training sessions, materials or self-paced learning tools to support novice or inexperienced applicants submitting planning applications.
- Make effective use of technology such as websites, email enquiry, telephone directories and voicemail messaging, e-mailing lists (ListServ), online tutorials and similar methods.

- Action Objective #3:

- **Develop a stronger "customer first" culture throughout the organization.**

- Implement a *customer service improvement framework* that can be used to monitor, evaluate and further develop "Ready for Business" service levels in key areas identified as priorities in other communities and in the customer service literature. (For more details, see Appendix.)

This framework should also be coordinated with the extensive range of web resources and electronic tools available on government and other websites.

Effective use of this framework would involve an ongoing dialogue among those delivering and receiving services to ensure understanding and fully "close the loop" on resolution of issues.

- Explore the merit and options for implementing an *ombudsman* function, now that it is permitted under the Municipal Act.
 - Work to develop an *accountability framework*, including an annual review to identify opportunities for innovation and continuous service improvement across all departments.
 - Implement a proactive *customer service training/professional development* program for all staff involved in "ready for business" activities.

Suggested Processes To Guide Follow-up Action

- Establish a *small task force (6-8 members) to spearhead further development and implementation of the "Ready for Business" model*. This leadership group might have members from the City, CFDC, community and the Economic Development Advisory Committee, with the new Economic Development manager as a resource and consultation with experts and other leaders as necessary.
- *Engage others as needed*. (It may be valuable to include one-off meetings with third parties, key City staff in other departments, experts or community leaders.)
- *Report back to consultation participants* and other interested parties to keep them up to date on implementation activities.
- Make it a priority to *attract and retain Planning talent* and other quality expertise needed for positions at the City of Kawartha Lakes to bring it to full capacity.

The Case For Taking Action: Pros and Cons

Pros:

- Implementation of the "Ready for Business" recommendations will actively support the economic sustainability and growth of the City of Kawartha Lakes.
- A streamlined path for business will save time for both City staff and applicants.
- Better understanding and education of first-time applicants will contribute to more satisfying interactions, fewer frustrations and faster progress.
- A new process will build confidence in and support for City departments/ services.

Cons:

- Some of these recommendations involve costs, but the long-term economic payback justifies the investment. External support, including resources or project funding from government programs, may help reduce these potential costs.
- Expertise for implementation may be lacking in some areas, but examples from other municipalities and access to outside expertise can fill in any gaps.
- There will always be exceptions, but clear policy, a dependable customer service framework and efficient service will help process the bulk of the work more quickly and effectively.

Next Steps

Follow-up action by the municipality is now required on these key "Ready for Business" themes. Although the CFDC's role in leading the City's economic development effort has changed, it remains prepared to assist with implementation as part of its continuing partnership with the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Dec 2009	Review the "Ready for Business" Implementation Proposal with the City
Jan 2010	Present findings and proposals to the Business Development Advisory Board and the Economic Development Opportunities Committee
Feb 2010	Identify general budget implications that may apply
Feb 2010	Establish a leadership task force to spearhead follow-up/implementation Develop timelines for implementation milestones
Mar 2010	Meet to confirm the plan, participation, accountability and governance
Apr 2010	Announce the project and timelines for reporting back to the community
Ongoing	Check back at designated milestones to monitor and support progress

Appendices and Consultation Documentation

Appendix: Customer Service Frameworks

A number of customer service frameworks are readily available to support standards for "Ready for Business" service levels in Kawartha Lakes. Typically they touch on:

- Responsiveness (prompt turnaround on service enquiries/requests)
- Reliability (keeping promises)
- Access to services (signage, location of services, physical accessibility)
- Communications (clear language, active outreach and interaction)
- Customer Care (welcoming, friendly service attitudes)
- Fairness (i.e. policies applied fairly and consistently to all)
- Value for Investment (of customer time, effort, money, resources)
- A couple of other references are included below.

Federal Service Standards Guide

http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/opepubs/tb_d3/guid1-eng.asp

Set client-sensitive service standards: Research has shown that clients regard the following factors as critical to good service:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> responsiveness; | <input type="checkbox"/> credibility; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> competence; | <input type="checkbox"/> reliability and accuracy; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> easy access; | <input type="checkbox"/> security; |
| <input type="checkbox"/> courtesy; | <input type="checkbox"/> appearance of staff; and |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good communication; | <input type="checkbox"/> attractive physical facilities |

OMAFRA Factsheet (written by: D. Collins, Marketing & Customer Service Program Lead)

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/99-013.htm>

Key Elements of Customer Service:

- Consumer Needs; Cost to Satisfy Needs; Convenience; Communication

Customers keep a mental tally of six basic needs that must be met. These include:

- Friendliness
- Understanding and empathy
- Fairness
- Control
- Options and Alternatives
- Information

Documentation: "Ready for Business" Consultations, April 2009

Note: The project file includes full documentation from the various public consultations and advance input from participants in the process.

Ready for Business -- Session One: Wednesday, April 8, 2009

1. Welcome

Mr. John Bennett, Chair, CFDC Board of Directors
Mayor Ric McGee, City of Kawartha Lakes

Bennett and McGee introduced two themes:

- 1) Working together. All community members, including municipal employees, business operators and individuals can make a positive impact on the success of the community. Community members can be community champions.
- 2) Define "Open/Ready for Business". As a community, the City of Kawartha Lakes must define what open for business means: what type of development should the community support – what do we do, and what do we not do?

2. City Presentation: Municipal Jurisdiction and Processes

Ken Becking, Director, Engineering and Public Works, City of Kawartha Lakes
Richard Danziger, Director, Development Services, City of Kawartha Lakes

The first item on the Agenda was the presentation from City staff. The purpose of the presentation was to outline and clarify the role and responsibilities of the municipality in the planning process.

Municipal Assets and Service Provision

Becking outlined the organization of the Engineering and Public Works Departments and provided participants with an organizational chart.

The City is responsible for the maintenance of more than \$3 billion in assets, which includes 300 bridges, 315 sanitary sewers, 80 storm sewers, and 21 water treatment facilities. Engineering and Public Works is organized into three operating units: Engineering Services, Operation Services, and Environmental Services.

Engineering Services includes: a) Development Engineering – planning applications, development design standards, building inspections, and by-law enforcement; b) Capital Works -- rebuilding and maintenance of existing assets and c) Technical Services -- management of existing and planned infrastructure.

The process for development applications has evolved over the years. At one time, a client could submit a building design "on the back of a napkin," and it would have been sufficient. Now there are very specific requirements mandated by provincial legislation.

One of the most common complaints is that the process is too long. In some cases, however, clients who are unfamiliar with the process have not allowed adequate time to navigate it.

City staff find that individuals often become frustrated with the application process because they are unfamiliar with the process, and unaware of the requirements, especially for building design.

Operation Services includes roads, storm water management, airport, cemeteries, corridor control, fleet maintenance, public transit and traffic control.

The City fleet includes more than 400 vehicles and pieces of equipment which are used for snow removal. Storm water management is provided, among other services. Council has approved the creation of a local Commission to assume the management of the airport.

In 2008, the CKL Public Works department instituted an Issue Tracking System used to log requests for service or complaints from the public. Approximately 4,000 requests were entered into the system in 2008, and 92% of those requests were completed "satisfactorily" (that is, to the standards established by the department as well as policy as determined by City Council – not necessarily to the satisfaction of the complainant).

Environmental Services includes solid waste, water treatment and distribution, and wastewater collection and treatment.

There are 5 landfill sites in the City of Kawartha Lakes (CKL). The Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002, sets very specific standards for municipalities in the provision of potable water. This presents a unique challenge to CKL, as it has the highest number of water-treatment facilities of any Ontario municipality.

Master Plan and the Planning Application Process

Becking and Danziger addressed the perception that the City is non-responsive to the needs of the business community.

The City must balance development with land use planning. Land use planning, including the Master Plan and the Official Plan, are shaped by legislation which governs the municipality's development. Examples of such legislation include the Municipal Act, Planning Act, Public Transit Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act. In addition, the Province of Ontario issues policy statements on growth and development that define the boundaries within which the municipality must plan.

The master planning process is comprehensive because it involves planning ahead over a 20-year timeline, rather than developing on an ad hoc basis as was often the case in the past. The planning process is resource intensive in terms of time and effort. The process identifies where growth can and should occur as well as plans for how to service the development lands.

City Council has the responsibility for developing policy to guide planning. There are two competing philosophies of who, when and how residents, developers and the community should invest in development: a) "development should pay for itself," vs. b) "build it and they will come". Past councils have adopted the former approach of development paying for itself up front. Comments from the representatives of the business community indicated a preference for the latter philosophy of public investment in development, with that investment to be recouped at a later date.

The two sides need to come together to reach a decision -- or at least a compromise -- on the approach to be followed: There can be no dance if each side is waiting along the wall for something to happen. Business participants stated that they look to City staff to provide a solution and not simply highlight the problem.

Becking pointed out that City staff have a responsibility to engage with the business community, and help guide them through the planning application process as quickly as possible.

Danziger has 41 years of experience in municipal planning in three provinces: Ontario, New Brunswick and British Columbia. In his opinion, Ontario's process is by far the most cumbersome. Ontario's process is demanding and complex, and many planners find it frustrating. Danziger referred the participants to a flow chart entitled "Planning Application Process -- 2007", which illustrates how an application should move through City approvals.

Some of the frustration is a result of most applications coming from inexperienced persons, who may be one-time developers. To address this, the CKL has established a pre-consultation step. A committee of City planning staff reviews the pre-consultation forms twice per month. The pre-consultation form allows a developer to outline the preliminary idea. The committee reviews the application and then meets with the applicant/developer to provide a list of items required to complete a full application.

The pre-consultation process can be intense, as it is somewhat like a jig-saw puzzle. The City may require input from other organizations, such as the conservation authorities (there are 4 different conservation authorities in the CKL) or the Ministry of the Environment. Further, not all applications are equal. Some may be fairly straightforward and can proceed directly to the application process, whereas others may want to develop on small privately owned pieces of property -- situations that require substantial research.

The timeline from submission of a pre-consultation form to the meeting is 6 to 12 weeks, reflecting constraints such as the lack of human resources (CKL has 2 vacancies in the planning department. Staff noted they have "only so many hours in the day" plus the challenges of co-ordinating meetings with outside agencies -- conservation authorities, Ministry of the Environment and, in some instances, other City departments.)

Customer Service and Capacity

Discussions and questions on the themes of customer service and capacity dominated.

Business participants expressed frustration that some City staff define the "customer" as City Council rather than taxpayers (including businesses) who are the end-user of City services. Participants questioned who City staff view as their customers; what staff define as "Open/Ready for Business"; and what is being done to improve customer service.

City staff answered that their "customers" include more than end users alone. They include City Council; individuals submitting development applications; residents opposing development applications; and the general public. In terms of customer service, staff agreed that improvements could be made, and that part of customer service involves managing expectations. The City can do a better job of communicating the steps involved in the planning application process as well as the design standards involved.

It was noted that many members of the community have an "ask later" attitude to development. Participants stated that, in the past, many people would ask for forgiveness after a building/structure has been erected rather than first engage in the planning approvals process because it was seen to be time consuming, onerous, and inefficient. Now, waiting for City approvals can cost them both time and money.

Participants expressed a conviction that a change in culture, from the top-down, is required within the City's organization. The existing culture is viewed as stagnant and information is difficult to find. Suggestions for shifts in culture included a more active customer focus, with emphasis on innovation and flexibility.

During the presentation from City staff, participants identified the following as areas of concern and opportunities for improvement:

- **Customer Focus:** recognize service applicants as "the customer"; be ready for the one-time developer; track customer satisfaction; manage expectations; change staff mindset; offer to help.
- **Human Resources:** encourage innovation; fill vacant positions.

- **Communication:** manage expectations; clearly outline planning application process and design standards; respond to enquiries; outline time-lines; provide instructions in lay-man's terms.
- **Timeframes:** increase efficiency, be ready for one-time developer; build on pre-consultation process; provide a faster track.

The lack of adequate human resources was brought up several times during the presentation by City staff. Ken Becking stated that the City of Kawartha Lakes' Engineering Services Department is one half the size of those in comparable municipalities. Further, the planning department currently has two vacancies, one of which has been open for two years because of the difficulty in attracting qualified candidates.

This lack of human resources affects every aspect of the planning and development process from the ability to act on incoming applications, to the pre-consultation step and effective communications, to the completion of master planning documents, a number of which are currently required.

The inability to fill vacant positions is due to the salary gap between the public and private sector (planners can make significantly more money in the private sector) and the shortage of planning professionals in general. CKL is not the only municipality facing this challenge.

The business participants acknowledged the human resources capacity issue, and expressed a desire to hear about solutions, not only identification of the problem. Suggestions included increased fees for service for planning applications, re-allocating resources from other budget lines or departments, and innovative thinking to find other funds or identify other appeals to attract talent and solve the issue.

3. Discussion: Ready for Business

Is the City of Kawartha Lakes "Open" for or "Ready" for Business?

Participants agreed the city was "open" for business, but may not be "ready" for business. A few participants said they have found that City staff have been willing to work with clients and have been very responsive during the process.

In order to be Ready for Business, the City must:

- Endeavour to continually improve the planning application process (including both internal and external communications).
- Streamline communication with the community.
- Recognize and celebrate the contributions of the business community and business leaders.

- Market the unique attributes of the community (e.g. proximity to the GTA, Trent-Severn waterway) and broadcast the awards and achievements of local businesses. Buckeye Marine is the top Canadian Dealer for the 4th consecutive year, and has been ranked 7th in North America by Boating Industry Magazine. Boat tours of the Trent Severn waterway have been featured in National Geographic's book, *500 Journeys of a Lifetime*.
- Track and learn from missed opportunities -- those businesses that chose not to locate or expand within CKL.
- Identify the key success factors that influence the decisions of businesses to either locate or expand in KCL, and then build on them.
- Establish a one-stop shop at the City that upholds customer service excellence, and provides clients with a checklist of what to do and who to contact during the planning application process.
- Identify, define and establish goals in terms of sectors and types of development CKL wants to attract or see expand in CKL (internal or external businesses).
- Establish an action plan to move forward from here – which includes a Mission Statement, goal setting and metrics for success.
- Empower City staff to put the customer first and make decisions and respond to questions related to the planning process. Staff often provide explanations defending their reasons for being unable to help, rather than saying: "I don't know the answer, but I will find out and get back to you within such and such period of time" or "I will put you in touch with so and so who can answer that question".
- City Council must lead the community in a consistent manner – leadership involves making decisions that are right for the community, not merely because they are popular with the community.

What should the City expect of the business community to be "Ready for Business"?

- Recognize that much of the development application process is provincially mandated, and that simply adding more staff is not necessarily the solution to some of the challenges identified with the planning process.
- Learn about the application process, and take responsibility for providing the required information to current standards.
- Contribute to the development costs of servicing land.

- Work with the City to find solutions to educating the public. One suggestion is organizing a course for Kawartha Lakes realtors regarding the planning application and building permit processes. This would enable realtors to help their customers navigate the process, and to help the City educate the end-users.

Ideas for Moving Forward

1. Establish a Single Point of Access with a "One-Stop Shop"

- Develop a full-time position within the City to help residents and businesses navigate the various City processes including the planning application process. The healthcare system can be used as an example for this position – the position of patient advocate would be similar.
- Provide staff with training in land development, planning applications, and customer service to equip them to provide excellent service and the ability to both answer questions and/or direct the customer to the appropriate person.
- Build upon the existing community information collaterals such as the Relocation Guide, which is very successful.
- Develop plain language guides for the planning application process and design standards, and make them available to the development community and the general public.
- Update City voice-mail system to include a staff directory as well as specific contacts for various types of enquiries

2. Advocate with City Council to Set Policy and Guidelines for Development

- Serviced commercial land is necessary to facilitate further development
- As infrastructure is expensive, Council must guide the process (with staff input and support) in terms of establishing how the service costs will be recovered.
- Evaluate existing revenue streams and identify opportunities for new or enhanced revenue streams in order to service some lands for future development.
- Council must ensure that by-laws are current and flexible enough to support building permits and new development.

3. Enhance the Pre-Consultation Process

- The process is a success and should continue to be enhanced and promoted.
- Re-assign resources to the process, and establish screening tools to vet applications that can be fast-tracked directly to the full application process.
- Further streamlining could be possible by ensuring that planning process guidelines in a checklist format, and design standards in plain language, are easily accessible to the public.

4. Inspire a Corporate Culture-Shift within the City

- Begin with Council and senior management to shift to a culture of service, innovation, and continuous improvement.
- Staff need to know they are supported by line managers all the way up to the CAO.
- Empower staff to make decisions: encourage a culture of learning and team work.
- Communicate successes, not failures (and learn from both).
- Model customer focus on system used in the Barbados, where every citizen participates in SMART = Service, Marketing, and Royal Treatment. The system is taught in schools, and every business and government office uses it as a guiding principle or mission statement.

5. Develop an Action Plan

- Assign due dates and follow-up actions to the appropriate person(s) for each item outlined above.

Attending: Wednesday, April 8, 2009

Participants

Mike	Barkwell	Broker, RE/MAX County Town Realty Inc.
Ken	Becking	Director, Engineering & Public Works
James	Bogar	Cameron Steel
Doug	Carroll	Manager of Planning, CKL
Mike	Casteel	NP Business Solutions, Omemee
Richard	Danziger	Director, Development Services, CKL
John	Fox	Lindsay Canadian Tire, Ec. Development Opportunities Committee
Mark	Lowell	Log Chateau Trailer Park
Dan	Lynch	General Manager, Operation Services, CKL
Susanne	Murchison	Chief Building Official, CKL
Bruce	McKauge	Retired Business Owner
Glen	Morrison	Inverlochy Capital Ltd, Ec. Development Opportunities Committee
Lynda	Moss	Buttertarts 'n More
John	Oostveen	Manager, Engineering Services, CKL
Gary	Poole	Buckeye Marine, Bobcaygeon
Jill	Quast	Happy Days House Boats, Tourism Advisory Board
Paul	Reeds	Agri-business Farm Credit Canada, Agriculture Advisory Board
Rob	Saltys	Electric Electric Ltd
Christina	Sisson	Development Engineering Supervisor, CKL
Glenn	Wilcox	Wilcox Architects, Business Development Advisory Board
Mark	Wilson	MVW Construction
Allan	Windrem	Dillon Consulting Ltd, (planner)

Observers

John	Bennett	Chair, KCL CFDC Board of Directors
Vincent	Germani	Business Development Officer, CKL
David	Hodgson	Councillor, Ward 3, CKL
Gord	James	Councillor, Ward 12, CKL
Ric	McGee	Mayor, City of Kawartha Lakes
Patrick	O'Reilly	Councillor, Ward 11, CKL
Stephen	Strangway	Councillor, Ward 5, CKL
Andrew	Wallen	General Manager, Economic Development & KLCFDC
Pat	Warren	Councillor, Ward 13, CKL
Tony	Sutcliffe	Economic Development Opportunities Committee Member

Ready for Business -- Session Two: Thursday, April 9, 2009

1. Welcome

Mr. Mark Knoester, Incoming Chair, CFDC Board of Directors
Mayor Ric McGee, City of Kawartha Lakes

Knoester and McGee noted this session would build on the discussion by a similar group the previous evening and introduced two themes:

- 3) Working together. Communication and understanding are essential to moving forward and establishing a process to put "Open for Business" in place in the community. Healthy economic development will occur when CKL is both open and ready for business.

There is tremendous growth potential in CKL. Council, the business community and community members at large need to work together to support and promote one another. An example of working together for the success of everyone: promoting and purchasing from local businesses (Shop Locally program).

- 4) Define "Open/Ready for Business". As a community, the City of Kawartha Lakes must define what open for business means: what type of development should the community support – what do we do, and what do we not do?

2. City Presentation: Municipal Jurisdiction and Processes

Ken Becking, Director, Engineering and Public Works, City of Kawartha Lakes
Doug Carroll, Manager, Planning Services, City of Kawartha Lakes

The first item on the Agenda was the presentation from City staff. The purpose of the presentation was to outline and clarify the role and responsibilities of the municipality in the planning process.

Ken Becking's presentation, modified based on feedback from the previous evening's session, addressed four themes that he had identified as emerging from both the advanced input to the consultations and also the previous day's session held on April 8. The presentation covered: 1) Who does what, 2) Communication, 3) City's Role in the Business of Development, and 4) Service Delivery. Following Becking's presentation, Carroll outlined the planning application process for the group.

Theme 1: Who does what?

The Public Works and Engineering Department is responsible for the delivery of hard services for the city. Engineering and Public Works is organized into three operating units; Engineering Services, Operation Services, and Environmental Services.

Engineering Services includes: a) Development Engineering – planning applications, development design standards, building inspections, and by-law enforcement; b) Capital Works -- rebuilding and maintenance of existing assets and c) Technical Services -- management of existing and planned infrastructure.

Operation Services includes roads, storm water management, airport, cemeteries, corridor control, fleet maintenance, public transit and traffic control.

Environmental Services includes solid waste, water treatment and distribution, and wastewater collection and treatment.

The City is responsible for the maintenance of more than \$3 billion in assets, which includes 300 bridges, 315 sanitary sewers, 80 storm sewers, and 21 water treatment facilities.

Theme 2: Communication & the Planning Application Process

There is an apparent perception of City staff as being unresponsive, specifically in respect to the development process. Staff are making efforts to address this, and recognize that the process is not as user friendly as it could be.

The development process is complex and highly regulated, and each application is unique. City staff would like to public to understand the complexity of the process.

The role of City staff is to help applicants navigate the planning application process. This requires effective communication and customer service. The City has implemented a pre-consultation process and published a design standards document to address some of the challenges inherent in the planning application process.

A pre-consultation committee of City planning staff reviews pre-consultation forms twice per month. The pre-consultation form allows a developer to outline a preliminary idea. The committee reviews the application and then meets with the client to provide a list of items required to complete a full application.

City recognizes that further improvements are needed in regards to communicating the requirements, standards, and timelines.

Theme 3: City's Role in the Business of Development

An opinion expressed with some conviction was that the City should be in the development business: specifically, providing serviced lands for future development.

There are two competing philosophies of who, when and how residents, developers and the community should invest in development: a) "development should pay for itself," vs. b) "build it and they will come". Past councils have adopted the former approach of development paying for itself up front. Comments from the representatives of the business community indicated a preference for the latter philosophy of public investment in development, with that investment to be recouped at a later date. Therefore, the question for the community is: Who bears the cost of servicing commercial lands? Should current or future residents foot the bill? Should development pay for itself?

Land use planning, including the Master Plan and the Official Plan, are shaped by legislation within which the municipality must operate. There are specific regulations regarding "bonusing" (incentives, tax breaks, waiving of fees), that the municipality must adhere to when it comes to servicing land.

City Council has the responsibility of developing policy to guide planning. An open discussion about the role of the municipality in development is necessary to move forward and potentially find middle ground between "development pays for development" and "build it and they will come". Input from the business community is very important.

Theme 4: Service Delivery & Meeting Expectations

Managing expectations was one of the recurrent themes in the April 8 consultation session. In terms of service delivery, the City has many customers -- and, the expectations and needs of each of those customers can compete with one another. Customers include: City Council; clients submitting development applications; residents opposing development applications; and the general public.

The City must balance development with land use planning and budgetary constraints. City Council and the Province establish service standards for the city. Legislation includes the Municipal Act, Planning Act, Public Transit Act, and the Safe Drinking Water Act to name a few. In addition, the Province of Ontario issues policy statements on growth and development that define the boundaries within which the municipality must plan.

In 2008, the CKL Public Works department instituted an Issue Tracking System used to log requests for service or complaints from the public. Approximately 4,000 requests were entered into the system in 2008, and 92% of those requests were completed "satisfactorily" (that is, to the standards established by the department as well as policy as determined by City Council, not necessarily to the satisfaction of the complainants).

The Planning Application Process

Standing in for Richard Danziger, who could not attend the Thursday session, Doug Carroll referred the group to three documents: 1) City of Kawartha Lakes Mission Statement, 2) one-page overview of the Development Services Department, and 3) Guide to Obtaining Residential/Agricultural Permits brochure. He said that while the resources are not exhaustive, they offer a good starting point.

The land use planning and development has become more and more tightly regulated over the past 20 to 25 years. At one time, building design standards were not mandated, and a client could obtain a building permit with a "back of a napkin" design. That is no longer the case. In addition to provincial legislation and policy statements, a number of outside agencies must be consulted during the development application process. These agencies include the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Transportation, and the 4 local conservation authorities.

The evolution of policy and legislation presents some very real challenges for planning staff. The provincial government has made changes to planning policies and guidelines for the official/master planning process in 1983, 1995, 1997, 2005 and again in 2006. The penalties for non-compliance include exclusion of the municipality from funding for infrastructure. Staff is pulled in two directions – mandatory compliance to secure funding and customer service to ensure the development application process is efficient.

Access to infrastructure funding has been decreased with amalgamation. Previous to amalgamation, CKL consisted of 18 separate municipal jurisdictions, each of which was eligible to apply for funding.

Compliance with provincial guidelines, through the master planning process and adoption of an Official Plan, is very resource intensive. As highlighted previously, policy is constantly changing, and it is necessary to stay current in order to ensure the Official Plan has "teeth". In 2002, Council created Vision 2012 to guide development. The completion of the Official Plan is necessary to ensure that the planning process is efficient and applied consistently.

In addition to legislative and policy considerations, most applications come from inexperienced persons, who may be one-time developers. Of these applications, many are from those who reside outside of the community, and do not have knowledge of local conditions (flood plains) or authorities (Trent-Severn Waterway). One prevalent perception is that "it is damn hard to build here". The City can do a better job of educating the public on the specific requirements for development including the design requirements, local bylaws, and steps in the application process.

In terms of the length of time it takes to proceed through the planning application process, the minimum time frames are set out by the province. Carroll referred the participants to a flow chart entitled "Planning Application Process -- 2007", which illustrates how an application should move through City approvals

- Once an application has been received, staff determine if it complete or incomplete.
- If the application is complete, a Notice for a Public Meeting is issued, including circulation to the required agencies.
- The *minimum* time between the notice of a public meeting and the meeting is 20 days, and the City must issue a reminder 11 days before the meeting.
- The timing of the public meeting can be a challenge: during business hours or after business hours? It's difficult to make everyone happy.
- Following the public meeting, the application goes to Council through committee (i.e. Committee of Adjustment, Environmental Advisory Committee) for approval. Council (the Committee of the Whole) makes the final decision.
- If Council adopts the application, it is then submitted to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) for final approval.
- BUT, the public has an opportunity to appeal the application within 21 days of the application being submitted to the OMB. Filing an appeal costs only \$120, and anyone can file an appeal, and they do. An example is the development application for the parcel of land near the junction of Highway 7 and 35. Council adopted the application 2 years ago, and it is still before the OMB.

The minimum time line, from receipt of completed application to final approval from the OMB is 90 days. This is for a complete application gaining Council approval that is not appealed.

The frustration with timelines expressed by the business community is shared by many planners as well. Timelines can be extended due to external factors such as the availability of outside agencies, the number of applications received by both the City and the OMB, and the appeal process. In addition, Carroll noted there are only three planning staff to process all incoming applications, which can cause delays at times when volume exceeds current capacity.

In addition to the challenges outlined above, the Development Services Department has resource constraints which affect timelines:

- The City employs 4 planners, 3 technicians and 3 administrative staff.
- There are 2 vacancies within the department for senior planners. One has been vacant for 2 years, the other for 8 months. Planners are leaving the public sector to earn higher wages in the private sector.
- 7 people are responsible for approving all applications.
- The City has 9 building inspectors who must perform 7 to 9 inspections on each new building. Further, in the last 2 years, the province has introduced new standards for building inspectors which has meant that some of the inspectors were removed from duty in order to achieve certification. The City requires 10 building inspectors to be considered fully staffed.
- The City employs 7 to 9 by-law enforcement officers who are responsible for investigating all calls from the public.

The pre-consultation process was established to try to address the constraints outlined above. Pre-consultation is fairly flexible, and the Director of Development Services has the authority to advance an application into the full process.

3. Discussion: Ready for Business

Is the City of Kawartha Lakes "Open" for or "Ready" for Business?

Participants made a distinction between "open" for business and "ready" for business.

Open for Business is an attitude: welcoming, positive, promoting local advantages, and pursuing the type of development we want. It includes providing information and advice. Open for Business also includes celebrating our successes and educating the public on the activities happening throughout the community.

Ready for Business also includes the infrastructure that supports the establishment and expansion of business. This includes the planning process, engineering requirements, serviced land, and other infrastructure and services that are building blocks for starting a business.

Ready for Business entails:

- Recognizing existing businesses that want to expand, and guiding them through the process.
- Providing a step-by-step guide to the development process, and a designated staff person to act as a guide.
- Establishing responsibility for "carrying the ball". Public and staff must know who is charged with responding to enquiries and following up on those enquiries;
- Ensuring information is available for all types of business/industry: publishing information on CKL services, government funding programs, planning application process, inventory of development lands, and design standards.
- Recognizing that the business development model is a partnership between City and business. Both the City and the business community need to take responsibility for understanding and meeting each other's requirements.
- Working together as a team. City and business community must work together creatively to find solutions to development challenges, and City Councillors can become community ambassadors to help educate the public.
- Focus on the basics. The Official Plan is the foundation for economic development: it is a map for development as well as a marketing tool. The Development Services Department has the capacity to generate revenue by increasing the commercial tax base. It is important to adequately fund this department so that the Official Plan can be completed and adopted.

What are measures of success?

- Create a detailed list of minimum requirements for design standards and the development application process in plain language.
- Divide the lists into Urban and Rural standards, and further by residential and industrial to make it easier to find the information that applies.
- Develop creative solutions to the challenges of talent attraction and retention. Suggestions included merit pay for City staff who exceed expectations (such as number of successful applications) and/or who participate in change/innovation to enhance the process.

Other Comments:

- Complete and adopt the Official Plan. This will act as a tool for planning staff to vet applications so that the community gets the highest return on investment.
- Investigate and pursue opportunities for growth within existing industries in CKL.
- Pooling resources: Individual businesses advertise, but if the business community pooled its marketing resources, it could reach a larger audience.

Ideas for Moving Forward

1. Implement a "Navigator" within the City

- Develop a full-time position within the City to help residents and businesses navigate the various City processes, including the planning application process.
- Develop plain language guides for the planning application process and design standards.
- Publish checklists of minimum standards.
- Update City voice-mail system to include a staff directory as well as specific contacts for various types of enquiries.

2. Complete the Official Plan

- Encourage Council to adopt the Master Plan by the end of 2009.
- Seek provincial approval of Official Plan by the second quarter of 2010.
- Assign appropriate resources to the Development Department to ensure that the timelines for adoption of the Official Plan are met.
- Establish serviced industrial parks (both City and private). Market the parks to business.

3. Make Talent Attraction and Retention a Priority

- Benchmark salaries for engineering and planning staff.
- Research and develop attractive compensation packages. Be creative, this can include the comparative advantages of the community such as lifestyle, and proximity to GTA.
- Develop an attraction and retention plan: post-secondary recruitment, developing internal candidates, and aligning reward systems.

4. Establish a Continuous Improvement Review Process

- Establish a committee, with representation from the municipality, business community, and perhaps the province to review the development application process semi-annually.
- The review process could address milestones such as; public perception, progress on challenges, timelines for processing or pre-approval, and communication collaterals.

5. Celebrate Success

- Create a venue in which to celebrate the successes of our community.

Attending: Thursday, April 9, 2009

Participants

James Barrett	Lakeview Arts Barn, Bobcaygeon Chamber of Comm
Ken Becking	Director, Engineering & Public Works, CKL
Doug Carroll	Manager, Planning Services, CKL
Wayne Cockburn	Stewart Morrison Insurance
Roger Cunnington	Dunster Investments Inc., (former town planner)
Nicki Dedes	Olympia Restaurant, Lindsay BIA Chair
Blake Frazer	VP Operations, Kawartha Dairy
Nancy Griffin	Scotch Line Golf Club, Tourism Advisory Board
Richard Holy	Coordinator, Current Planning, CKL
Brenda Karagiannis	Trinity Taxi, Business Development Advisory Board & Economic Development Advisory Committee
Frank Kinzinger	Retired business owner, PowerLinks Committee
Dan Lynch	General Manager, Operation Services, CKL
Susanne Murchison	Chief Building Official, CKL
Ashley Mason	Mason Homes, lawyer
John McLeod	Kawartha Lakes Business Equipment, Lindsay
Christina Sisson	Development Engineering Supervisor, CKL
Scott Wagstaff	Riverwood Park Campgrounds

Observers

Doug Elmslie	Councillor, Ward 6, CKL
Vincent Germani	Business Development Officer, CKL
Gord James	Councillor, Ward 12, CKL
Mark Knoester	Incoming Chair, KLCFDC Board of Directors
Andy Luff	Councillor, Ward 9, CKL
Ric McGee	Mayor, City of Kawartha Lakes
Stephen Strangway	Councillor, Ward 5, CKL
Andrew Wallen	General Manager, Economic Development & KLCFDC

Of significant note...

Over the past number of months since this exercise was initiated, the City of Kawartha Lakes has demonstrated through its activities and planned investment that the concepts of being "open" and "ready for business" are a priority.

This includes increasing the staff compliment in departments within the City directly-relating to this issue; to moving forward with aspects of some of the processes mentioned in this report; to being successful with its applications involving senior levels of government support, which include municipal funding commitments to infrastructure improvement.

The KLCFDC Board of Directors salutes the activities in these areas as it shows that the interest and effort is there to be both
open and ready for business.