

**BURLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DELEGATION TO CITY OF BURLINGTON COUNCIL, OCTOBER 20, 2008
PROPOSED McMASTER CAMPUS IN BURLINGTON
PRESENTED BY JANET WHITEHOUSE, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



Mayor Jackson, councillors. Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight about the proposed McMaster Burlington campus.

I want to state clearly and up front, the Board of Directors of the Burlington Chamber of Commerce supports bringing the McMaster Centre for Advanced Management Studies to Burlington and we urge council to make certain the project is viewed as a high priority for the City of Burlington and to ensure this campus comes to Burlington.

In May 2007, in the Chamber's presentation to the city's Strategic Planning Team, the Chamber urged council to do all it can to bring the campus to Burlington. Our support for this project has not wavered. In fact, our support has strengthened based on the consultant's economic impact study and the development of the medical school aspects of the project. While the upfront cost of ten million dollars seems high, we believe that focussing on the ten million dollars is focussing on the short-term pain. We submit that there are both short-term and long-term benefits to the city and to business, all of which are well outlined in the consultant's economic impact study. From a business perspective, a university campus will help to attract new businesses to the area. The potential for spinoff businesses and cluster development is well documented in the consultant's report. We are also pleased to see the consultant's positive statements about the benefits the campus will bring for talent attraction and retention. A lack of talented, qualified people is a concern for chamber members. The Centre for Advanced Management Studies will produce highly employable people, and, I expect, many of them will stay in the area.

We were pleased to hear that McMaster has proposed the establishment of a Local Business Advisory Council and I am happy to offer the chamber's services to sit on or assist this advisory council in any way possible.

Now to the healthcare aspects. The positive impacts of a family health unit in the downtown core, and an affiliated teaching facility at Joseph Brant Hospital should not be under estimated. As a matter of fact, I would go so far as to say the positive impact on the city of these two medical resources is as great as, or greater than, that of the Centre for Advanced Management Studies. In the last two member surveys done by the chamber, health care has been at the top of the list of concerns. Our members are more concerned about healthcare in our city than any other single issue. It is well known and appropriately documented in the staff report to council that doctors have a tendency to live where they have learned. A teaching facility at Joe Brant will bring more doctors to Burlington. This is important to our citizens and it is important to businesses in Burlington.

We applaud council's desire to seek funding assistance from the Region since we agree that there are benefits for other Halton communities. However, whether the cost for Burlington is 5 million or 10 million dollars, we believe that it is taxpayers' money well spent.

In summary, we have reviewed the consultant's report on the economic impacts of a McMaster campus in Burlington. The impacts are positive and substantial. We urge this council to ensure that a McMaster presence in Burlington, including a school of advanced management, a downtown Family Health Unit and an affiliated teaching facility, is a top priority for the city.

Thank you.