



### **Bayers Lake Committee: Key Issues**

The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce is a voluntary, not for profit business advocacy organization, working on behalf of 2000 corporate members, and representing over 60,000 employees. The Chamber believes that through strong leadership and effective long-range planning, sustainable growth and a prosperous economy can be achieved.

Bayers Lake Business Park is comprised of more than 200 businesses including industrial, retail and hi-tech. A group of volunteers who operate businesses in the Bayers Lake Business Park have organized themselves to promote the interests of the Park. The group has recently joined the Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce to form the Bayers Lake Committee. The current focus of the Bayers Lake Committee is on issues relating to transportation and taxation.

The Bayers Lake Business Park has seen significant growth in vehicular traffic in the past few years. This can be attributed both to the expansion of retail outlets in the park and to the growth of multi-unit residential complexes in close proximity to the park. The Chamber's report, "An Integrated Transportation Strategy for The Halifax Regional Municipality" (attached) highlights the magnitude of the transportation related problems in Bayers Lake. It was found that a number of commercial and industrial centres of commerce within HRM are choking under the strain of transportation problems. Specific to Bayers Lake, the report notes that the park is experiencing traffic delays and significant traffic congestion, particularly at the end of each week. Furthermore, we found that public transit (outside of peak weekday hours) does not serve the needs of this park.

This is of great concern to the Bayers Lake Committee. There is concern amongst resident businesses that traffic congestion is discouraging potential customers from entering the Park, thus severely impacting business. Safety is also a concern. Not only do the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks in the park force pedestrians onto the street, but, traffic congestion impedes the access of emergency vehicles to the park when required.

The Chamber of Commerce strongly supports growth and expansion in our region, but it must be strategically planned and managed. We are aware that HRM is currently working to alleviate some of the traffic problems (for example, lane widening is underway); however, Bayers Lake Business Park continues to grow. Long-range infrastructure and integrated transportation planning are required if similar traffic problems are to be alleviated in the future.

Businesses in the Park contribute toward significant economic prosperity for the region both through the sale of goods and services and through property taxes paid to the Municipality. It is the belief of the Chamber that any costs associated with infrastructure improvements should not be at the expense of business by way of tax increases, but should be covered by the existing budget envelope.

The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce and our Bayers Lake Committee look forward to a continuing mutually beneficial relationship with HRM. Together we can build and sustain a strong and prosperous region.

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