



Chatham-Kent Tomorrow: BE THE CHANGE!

A Civic Engagement Opportunity for Community Leaders - A One Day Conference
in Celebration of World Town Planning Day

Thursday, November 6, 2008 10 am to 6 pm
Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Centre
University of Guelph - Ridgetown Campus, Ridgetown, Ontario

MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2008

Census Highlights Chatham-Kent Challenges

- Between 2001 and 2006, Chatham-Kent grew 0.8 per cent in population to 108,177 people while Ontario experienced an increase of 6.6 per cent.
- In those years, more than 1,000 immigrants moved to Chatham-Kent, accounting for a large portion of that growth, with Wheatley attracting the most immigrants of all urban areas.
- In those years, the rate of unemployment in Chatham-Kent decreased from 8.3 percent to 7.2 percent, with more than 2,000 net jobs being created. However, those jobs are in the unskilled category, which suggests a need for the creation of more skilled jobs to prepare for the knowledge-based economy of the future.

These and other major findings from 2006 Canada Census data will offer a comprehensive portrait of the health of the 13 Urban Communities in Chatham-Kent as one of the features of an upcoming one-day conference called Chatham-Kent Tomorrow: BE THE CHANGE! on November 6. The conference is a project of the Community Strategic Planning Committee (CSPC) of Chatham-Kent Council and the University of Guelph – Ridgetown Campus.

Chatham-Kent Councillor Art Stirling will be presenting original data and commentary on the changing demographic trends, growth rates and socio-economic shifts in Chatham-Kent between 2001 and 2006: "In order to create positive change in Chatham-Kent," he said, "it's important that we as a community understand what our current situation is, what the challenges are, and where we should direct our collective efforts. The Census Canada information we are presenting at this conference is specific to Chatham-Kent and should help our discussions immensely."

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has developed strategies to deal with many of the challenges facing the community, including an advanced Economic Development and Tourism Strategy that addresses diversified high-value agriculture, advanced automotive parts manufacturing, business process outsourcing, next generation energy, retail/commercial, and tourism. But, government cannot do it all and the Chatham-Kent Tomorrow: BE THE CHANGE! conference is bringing community leaders and active citizens together to create partnerships, to address the challenges and build the best possible future for Chatham-Kent.

The conference will be held at the Rudy H. Brown Rural Development Centre, Ridgetown Campus, on Thursday November 6 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. To cover costs, registration fees apply and pre-registration is needed through the Municipality of Chatham-Kent website at www.chatham-kent.ca. Interested citizens can also e-mail CKcsp@chatham-kent.ca or telephone the municipality at 519-360-1998.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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A project of the Community Strategic Planning Committee (CSPC)
of Chatham-Kent Municipal Council

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www.chatham-kent.ca

