

City of Ottawa Council Meeting: August 28, 2013

Response to: **FEDCO Report Recommendations from Meeting on August 26th**
Recommendation re: City of Ottawa Participation in OLG RFP Process

Submitted by: **The Kanata Chamber of Commerce**

The Kanata Chamber of Commerce is the largest independent business organization in West Ottawa, representing over 400 business members in the communities of Kanata, Goulbourn and West Carleton. This letter is a follow-up to our submission that was originally presented at the FEDCO meeting on July 9th, with the unanimous support of the Chamber's Board of Directors, and subsequently submitted to the Council meeting on July 17th, 2013. Our Board is appointed by our membership to represent their interests, and is comprised of business leaders from across the entire West Ottawa region of Kanata, Goulbourn and West Carleton.

The Kanata Chamber of Commerce would like to reconfirm its concern over the lack of process to date on the OLG expansion. In particular once again, regarding the FEDCO recommendation for City Council to support only the Rideau Carleton Raceway as a potential casino expansion site.

From the beginning, the Kanata Chamber has expressed its concern over the lack of process in the Council's actions to date on this file. Our hope has always been that the OLG process would be fair and competitive, and that all potential expansion site options would be considered on a level playing field. Only once all aspects are fully evaluated, would the optimal site for any expansion be selected, based on its own merits and what is in the best interests of the community.

In the City of Ottawa we should make significant long term decisions via an open process, where facts and arguments are carefully considered and where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the process and the resulting business activity. Last year the Council agreed to a process that involved OLG receiving proposals for a new Ottawa casino and then choosing the optimal business plan and site and bringing that back to the city. This process was in place. However, over the past year the Mayor and Council have changed their direction on more than one occasion, and despite recent amendments in an attempt to rectify the situation, on August 28th, Council will be voting on shutting down any fair evaluation or competitive process for the OLG expansion.

Following the provincial government's refusal to grant a separate and therefore second gaming zone to Rideau Carleton Raceway, the motion presented here today will take us back to the same situation as the FEDCO meeting of July 9th, where Council will be effectively sole sourcing any casino expansion to just one site. There will be no consideration given to any other proposals, irrespective of their merits.

We respectfully ask members of Council to support an open and competitive process for any possible gaming expansion in the city and allow all sites to be considered and evaluated on equal terms and in the best interests of the entire community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rosemary Leu
Executive Director, Kanata Chamber of Commerce