

Oakville Beaver

Chamber endorses funding new hospital

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The Oakville Chamber of Commerce's board of directors is encouraging Oakville council to approve the \$200 million contribution Halton Healthcare Service has asked for to help build the new Oakville hospital.

"Funding of the hospital is one of the biggest issues our community has dealt with in decades," said Sonny Jelinek, chamber chair. "We know some members of council have concerns.

However, our board of directors overwhelmingly agrees that if council does not approve the proposed funding, the hospital project will be at serious risk. We don't want to lose this opportunity because of principles related to provincial funding formulas. We can't change those now. Bottom line is that we need the hospital."

Jelinek said the business leaders in the community, whom he has spoken with, and those senior business owners and managers who attended a recent Chamber-hosted consultative session with the mayor clearly support the Town making the contribution.

For Oakville Chamber of Commerce Vice Chair Mark Brown, the hospital just makes good business sense.

"The hospital is an important issue to the chamber and the business community for several reasons," said Brown. "First, the bio-sciences park planned for around the hospital is a key component of the Town's new Economic Development Strategy. It was the Chamber that championed this strategy. Companies consider access and the quality of local health care when selecting a community in which to locate a business. Finally there will be considerable economic spin-off activity related to the project."