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For Immediate Release

Business Retention A Priority in Cambridge Manufacturing Sector Weighs in on Cambridge Climate for Business

Cambridge, Ontario. July 8, 2011... Cambridge City Council will receive a report on Monday July 11th which provides a snapshot of the local manufacturing sector which is based on a recent survey. The survey stems from one goal of the City's Economic Development Strategy 'Designing the Future' which identified reaching out to manufacturers to better understand factors affecting business performance.

"The Economic Development team regularly performs business visits, however, this concentrated program included a survey element to help us better evaluate the needs of our manufacturing base, an important component of our local economy," says Bo Densmore, Director of Economic Development.

The Cambridge manufacturing sector is diverse and ranges from advanced manufacturers in the automotive and aerospace sectors to traditional manufacturers of textiles, plastics, metals and equipment. Of the 7,392 businesses in Cambridge, 512 are manufacturers and nearly half employ fewer than 10 people, and nearly half are planning to expand their sales to other markets including the US and overseas locations.

Respondents of the survey which was conducted between 2010 and early 2011 rated their current business health as excellent to fair. This was important given that the global economy was still in recovery mode. Asked how their workforce numbers have changed over the last year, 74% either grew or stayed the same - and 71% planned to hire more staff in the next three years. The recent drop in the Region's jobless rate to 6.9% for June is another measure of the economic health in this community.

"Cambridge manufacturers have continued to evolve their products and processes, adding new technological innovation where they can, to remain globally competitive," says Leah Bozic, Senior Economic Development Officer. "This constant transformation along with the reputation for quality products and highly skilled labour help set this area apart."

Contributing to the steady flow of talent and workforce development is the high quality post-secondary education options here; industry benefits from the presence of Conestoga College Institute of Advanced Technology, Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo. However, the survey indicated that attracting skilled trades was a priority as the overall decline in

the economy, particularly in manufacturing, has shifted skilled trades people into other areas of the labour force.

The post-secondary institutions also helped to support the local research & development outcomes. The survey revealed there was a high percentage of local research & development happening; some 83% of Cambridge companies do R&D on such things as product improvement, production methods and prototyping. "This is higher than we anticipated which affirms Cambridge's contribution to this Region's 'Intelligent Community' epithet," adds Bozic.

Last year, the City undertook a gap analysis evaluation of the local supply chain for manufacturing which was in part funded by the Government of Canada's Invest Canada-Community Initiatives program. While it revealed that there were few gaps in the supply chain network, it also provided the City with some investment attraction leads to pursue as part of the overall economic development strategy.

Topping their list of suggestions to improve the community, manufacturers responded with reduced taxes, keep Cambridge 'Open for Business' attitude, improve traffic flow, create incentives for investing in 'green technology', streamlining the building permit process, attracting more manufacturing and fostering corporate connections.

When asked about their reasons for choosing Cambridge manufactures indicated: location, proximity to customers, transportation networks, excellent employees, great quality of life, reasonable cost of living, and a strong economy were among the top reasons. The information reinforces Cambridge as a strategic location for manufacturing, astride the 401 and in close proximity to US border points. The 'Just in Time' manufacturing concept is also supported with a strong complement of logistics companies that call Cambridge home.

The City is currently developing the Boxwood Business Park, 88 hectares (220 acres) of City-owned lands on Maple Grove Road strategically located adjacent to the Cambridge Business Park where world leader Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada is located. Designed with the environment in mind, the available parcels will be carved out to facilitate sustainable development and will have pedestrian trails, energy efficient lighting, and other environmental features.

To view the Economic Development survey summary visit:

<http://www.cambridge.ca/relatedDocs/BusRetReportExecSummaryManufJuly2011.pdf>

To view the Economic Development strategy, visit:

http://www.cambridge.ca/economic_development/economic_development_strategy_designing_the_future_video_vignettes

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The City of Cambridge is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is strategically located astride highway 401 in southwestern Ontario, part of Canada's Technology Triangle. In 2010, the population reached over 130,000 people. With a multicultural mix and a strong foundation of support services, Cambridge has a diverse economic base with leading industries in advanced manufacturing, automotive, high technology, pharmaceutical, business and financial services and hospitality/retail. The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a progressive work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with opportunities for career growth and advancement.

You meet the nicest people in Cambridge. It's a place that understands all about coming together. There is so much more to Cambridge than the beautiful lands created at the convergence of two rivers or its logistically perfect location in the heart of Ontario's economic corridor. Cambridge is the coming together of people from diverse, close-knit and proud communities. The people of Cambridge 'do the right thing' by respecting history, family values, a sound work ethic, the arts, environment and advancement. A young city, Cambridge is a master of balancing the excitement and promise of the new with the historical significance and stability of the old. A place where coming together is just the start. Uniting together is what sets Cambridge apart. Undiscovered-Cambridge families and entrepreneurs get more for less, and sacrifice nothing.

The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with potential for career growth and advancement. For more information on the area or the corporation visit www.cambridge.ca. The City of Cambridge press room is located at <http://www.cambridge.ca/pressroom>. To opt out of the news release distribution, please send an email to Linda Fegan feganl@cambridge.ca.