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Thursday, January 11, 2001.

His Worship Bob Chiarelli
Mayor of Ottawa
Ottawa City Hall
110 Laurier Ave. W.
Ottawa ON K1P 1J1

By Fax

Dear Mayor Chiarelli,

I write to you today in response to your public statements and media interviews over the past few days where you are on record as stating that it is your intent to review all 400 or so recommendations/decisions that were made by the Transition Board over the last twelve months.

Frankly, I find this posture that you have adopted with respect to the Transition Board to be confusing, counter-productive and potentially detrimental to your future ability to work with your City Manager and his senior management team.

As I canvass newspaper and radio coverage of the municipal transition activities underway in both Hamilton and Sudbury, the new Mayors and councils in these two cities appear to have a much more harmonious relationship with their respective Transition Boards. However, it appears that you have chosen a more adversarial path with respect to the final weeks of the mandate of Mr. Bennett and his team. While I appreciate and support your efforts to ensure that the new Council works together as a team, your approach toward the Transition Board is incongruent with these same public pronouncements encouraging camaraderie and teamwork.

In addition, I am fundamentally concerned that should you follow through on your vow to review all Transition Board recommendations and decisions, you may be irreparably impairing your ability to work with the senior management team at City Hall. It is important to remember that the work of the Transition Board was the culmination of the efforts of dozens of project teams, hundreds of staff and volunteers and most importantly, for the last six months, this effort was primarily led by the City Manager and his team with the Transition Board adopting more of a governance and oversight role as opposed to the detailed planning, policy and process work which was done by volunteers and senior staff. This is the same senior staff team that now serves you and your Council.

Mayor Chiarelli, you were elected last November with a convincing mandate to manage growth, maintain our enviable quality of life and cut property taxes. Your challenge in this regard is immense and it requires an unwavering focus on the future. You yourself have identified the production and passage of a budget and the creation and adoption of a new Official Plan as the most important priorities for Council in the short-term.

I wholeheartedly agree with you that these should be the priorities for Council. Furthermore, I look forward to offering constructive input from our organization's perspective into this process. In The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, a former New York Times bestseller, author Robert C. Maxwell notes that the "true measure of leadership is influence ... nothing more, nothing less." Mayor Chiarelli, I encourage you to lead and exercise the authority of the Mayor's chair to influence the future, as opposed to revisiting the past. Such a posture is in the best interests of the new City of Ottawa.

Sincerely,

Walter Robinson
Federal Director

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For more information:

Contact Walter Robinson or Bruce Winchester at 613-234-6554

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