



# Cobourg Taxpayers Association

*Making Local Government Accountable*

<http://www.cobourgtaxpayers.ca>

Here is a copy of the email we have sent to the Mayor. It is quite long but we hope you take the time to read it, We have also posted the email on our web site, [cobourgtaxpayers.ca](http://www.cobourgtaxpayers.ca). We want to keep you informed and will post the response on our web site.

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To: Mayor Brocanier, Council Coordinator for Economic Development Services

Mr. Mayor, we are asking you, in your role as council coordinator for Economic Development Services, to respond to questions the CTA has on the proposed hiring of a "Manufacturing Attraction Specialist".

1. First we want to understand the rationale on how this hire fits into the Draft Economic Development Strategic Plan recently presented by Wendy Gibson at the March 14th Council of the Whole.

The Strategic Plan calls for focus on developing the Food Sector and Agri-business to attract and develop economic activity. This directional thrust is reiterated in the more detailed Action Plan.

- Nowhere in that Strategic Plan or the Action Plan does it state the need for (or call for) the hiring of a Manufacturing Attraction Specialist.
- The "Required Skills and Qualifications" in the job description for this position, make no reference to having a background or experience in Agri-business or the food processing sector. If the Town's focus is to be Agri-business, this person should have the experience, contacts and network in this focus area.
- In this era of shrinking manufacturing in Ontario (and North America) there is a need to specialize and focus, as per the Strategic Plan. From looking at this job description, a shotgun approach is being taken.

These discrepancies indicate a disconnect between the Strategic and Action Plans going forward and this proposed new hire.

How do you reconcile this gap?

2. Second, how will this position be measured for success on an ongoing basis? This job description is open ended and will require specific targets to understand its effectiveness. Best practices always advise that when creating a position there should be measurable targets to judge performance. Additionally, when implementing a new position, it is often desirable to make it a contract position to allow for more options down the road.

What then is the specific deliverable you expect from this position and what are the performance measures that will determine success?

The article in the link below from economist Ben Casselman spells out the reason why manufacturing jobs are not coming back to North America.

Politicians saying they will get manufacturing jobs are misleading the public. To quote Casselman:

*“There is nothing wrong with politicians’ trying to save what remains of U.S. (North American) manufacturing, nor with trying to avoid repeating old mistakes on trade. But like it or not, the U.S. (North America) is now a service-based economy. It’s time candidates started talking about making that economy work for workers, rather than pining for one that’s never coming back.”*

[http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/manufacturing-jobs-are-never-coming-back/?utm\\_source=nextdraft&utm\\_medium=email](http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/manufacturing-jobs-are-never-coming-back/?utm_source=nextdraft&utm_medium=email)

This is a commitment of taxpayers’ money of \$43,680 per year plus a comprehensive benefits package. Hiring staff, even part-time, creates a significant commitment and liability over the coming years. There is no question that having commercial enterprises locating in Cobourg is positive. Bringing in jobs and families adds to the Town’s vibrancy and increasing the tax base would help to alleviate the tax burden on both residents and businesses.

We do not see the laser focus in this job that the current business environment requires.

So, to summarize, the questions are:

1. How does this position as described fit the Town’s Economic Development Strategic Plan?

2. What are the measurements that will determine this position's effectiveness?

Thank you for your consideration to our inquiry.

Dennis Nabieszko  
Secretary, CTA

Bill Stuckey  
Advisory, CTA



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