

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Marketing Partnership Will Promote Unique Regional Amenities To Attract The Lucrative Active Retirement Market And Diversify Ailing Windsor-Essex Economy.

The WindsorEssex Peninsula: Less snowfall than any other Ontario region, 7 months of summer weather, Canada's most affordable real estate market at all price levels, convenient access to global travel, the new Caesars Casino and Colloseum and an impressive 100 mile peninsula are just a few of a long and growing list of amenities that position the Windsor-Essex region as an ideal destination for the active retirement market.

"Today marks a first for Windsor and Essex County and perhaps a first of its kind in Canada as we launch a co-operative marketing partnership to target the active retirement market and the retirement development industry," states Mike Dinchik, Executive Director of the Windsor-Essex Active Retirement Community Initiative (WEARCI). "We're laying the foundation now to build a new and very promising 'green' economic future for our region and we invite retirees of all ages and the public and private sector to explore the opportunities on the WindsorEssex Peninsula."

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Recently formed by three not-for-profit business organizations, the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce, Greater Windsor Home Builders' Association and Windsor-Essex County Real Estate Board, WEARCI members have committed both human resources and seed funding to launch their day-to-day operations and the marketing, branding and communications that will be fundamental to attracting their target market.

"The City of Windsor and the eight communities that make up the Essex County region are often overlooked or seriously underrated when it comes to lifestyle choices and amenities", says Dinchik, who holds the position as Executive Officer with the Greater Windsor Home Builders' Association and is spokesperson for the group. "We are committed to changing that mindset and creating economic diversity around our strengths."

Canada's aging population accounts for 14 million people age 50 plus. 2.2 million age 50 - 65 live in Ontario. More importantly 425,000 live in the GTA and are most likely considering their pre-retirement, semi-retirement or retirement options. Choosing to live on the WindsorEssex Peninsula will be an uncongested, convenient and comfortable lifestyle worth considering. With a population of 393,402, covering 715 sq. miles, the region is one of the most culturally diverse in Canada having 175 ethnic backgrounds represented.

"Migrating retirees are a significant economic asset to any community able to attract them" says Linda Smith, President, Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce. "Focusing on a sustainable marketing program to promote an active

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retirement community will have a major impact on our regional economy and create a domino effect in the housing market, tourism and hospitality, gaming and wagering, transportation and public safety sectors to name a few.”

Recognized as a key region for growth, investment potential and specialized development opportunities, a few major players have already identified the retirement industry potential in Windsor-Essex. Luxury retirement properties are under construction, completed or scheduled to break ground between 2007 and 2010, and account for \$90 Million dollars in private money.

“The marketing of these new luxury retirement properties can only help to raise awareness around the real value of this region’s real estate market,” adds Krista Del Gatto, Executive Officer, the Windsor-Essex County Real Estate Board. “We fully understand housing and property values aren’t the primary reason the 50 plus market bases their retirement destination choices on, but when you can purchase a home here at half the price you would pay in Toronto, the savings can be significant, and for some homeowners, enough to invest in a second property!”

The average price for a home in Toronto (or the GTA) is \$375,000. A move to the WindsorEssex Peninsula could mean a 1,200 sq ft condo on the waterfront, a few blocks from the city centre, a 3,000 sq. ft. executive home in an exclusive neighbourhood, or 70 acres of county farmland only 20 minutes from a lakeside town or Windsor’s downtown.

“Creating a retirement destination doesn’t happen overnight and more importantly, the investment required to communicate with and attract our target market will be substantial and long-term concludes Dinchik. “Financial support from both the public and private sector is imperative to our success and we look forward to discussing our business plan going forward and the opportunities we see unfolding, with all interested stakeholders.”

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