



**Address  
To  
The Future of  
the Automotive Industry  
in Canada Luncheon**

**October 29, 2009**

**St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce  
Executive Vice President and General Manager  
Walter Sendzik**

Greetings,

On behalf of the St. Catharines – Thorold Chamber of Commerce welcome to today's special luncheon. My name is Walter Sendzik, Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Chamber.

If I can ask everyone to please stand for our national anthem, and please remain standing for a moment of personal reflection and pray giving thanks for the blessings in our life.

Thank you,

First, I would like to welcome: St. Catharines Mayor Brian McMullan and Regional Councilor – Bruce Timms.

We also have members of the Chamber's board of directors:

Joe Critelli, Critelli Fine Furniture; Nancy Diamond, Kelly Services; Ted Hoxie, Beatties Basics; and this year's president of the board of directors – Rob DePetris of Deloitte.

As well joining us is the President of the Grimsby Chamber of Commerce – Cheryl Miffin and Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce President – Kim Zanko.

I would also like to acknowledge and say thank you to Performance Toyota for its sponsorship of today's event.

We are joined by:

Neils Peterson, Bill Anderson, Roseanne Morissette, Morgan Kettler, and Brett Wood.

We truly appreciate the support of companies like Performance Cars – you are strong community and corporate partners, and we value your support of the Chamber.

And a very special welcome to today's guest speaker, the President and CEO of Toyota Canada, **Mr. Yoichi Tomihara.**

On behalf of the business community, we are honored to have you join us today.

Through strong corporate governance, leadership and planning and a commitment to innovation and quality, Toyota has emerged as the world's leader in the automotive industry.

As a business community, we recognize and celebrate the leadership of Toyota, and we thank you for the investments that you have made in Canada, and more specifically in Ontario through assembly plants and dealerships.

We believe that Canada is a leader in the production of world-class vehicles – and clearly Toyota does as well.

Now, as you enjoy the first course, allow me to briefly talk about Niagara, and its role in manufacturing and how the Chamber is working to strengthen the sector in our community.

Niagara is a community of innovators and entrepreneurs, and it is through this spirit that we have been successful in developing and sustaining a manufacturing industry for the past 100 years.

Although global shifts have greatly reduced the once dominant sector in our community – it certainly has NOT diminished our abilities – we have simply moved from large scale manufacturing producers to smaller, more advanced manufacturing companies.

Through adversity and economic challenges, companies like Pop & Lock Corporation, Toolneeds, and Phoenix Machining – who are joining us today - have emerged as leaders in advanced manufacturing – smaller companies with a commitment to innovation and quality that positions us well for the future.

And when you combine the assets of Niagara:

- 40 minutes to the GTA
- Two 400 series highways
- Three border crossings
- Centre of the 4<sup>th</sup> largest economic zone in North America connecting the GTA with the Eastern United States
- Niagara College – a nationally recognized college for its work with the manufacturing sector
- Brock University – a leading research facility
- And a skilled workforce that has been identified by the Niagara Workforce Planning Board as one of the most technically skilled and adaptable workforces in Ontario.

Clearly, Niagara is well positioned to be a leader in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

And as a Chamber, we have worked with St. Catharines Economic Development, Niagara Economic Development Corporation, and Niagara Workforce Planning Board to produce action plans for Niagara's collective future.

With guiding documents like:

*Paths To Prosperity* by the Prosperity Council

Niagara Labour Market Plan – A Vision in Action

Niagara Economic Growth Strategy

Each plan is linked together – creating a vision for Niagara – one that includes a strong advanced manufacturing base.

And for our members in manufacturing – the Chamber has successfully fought to make Niagara a competitive leader with one of the lowest industrial tax rates in Ontario.

We have fought for lower business education taxes for Niagara businesses – and we've succeeded.

And through the Chamber's Report on Manufacturing in Niagara released in 2007, we:

- Recommended the development of a Niagara manufacturing association – Niagara Industrial Association - that would work together to pursue global contracts – ACHIEVED.
- Recommended for the 100% tax write-off for depreciated capital machinery for manufacturers within 5 years – ACHIEVED
- Recommended to expedite the elimination of provincial capital taxes prior to their legislated elimination in 2012 - ACHIEVED.
- And Recommended that the federal government provide targeted incentives for 'green' technology research and development in the manufacturing sector. ACHIEVED

As a Chamber, we believe manufacturing will continue to play an important role in Niagara's future.

We believe the future of Niagara is bright.

Niagara - a place of innovation, entrepreneurship and opportunity.

To the members of the Toyota Canada's team joining us today, and to Mr. Tomihara – welcome to Niagara.

Thank you and enjoy your lunch.