

August 12, 2011

Dr. Colin Carrie
MP Oshawa
Lord Simcoe Place
57 Simcoe Street South, Suite 2B
Oshawa ON L1H 4G4

Dear MP Carrie,

Please accept this document as Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology's formal written submission to the 2012 federal budget consultation process for sharing with federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty. Durham College would like to submit its Whitby Phase 3 project for consideration of funding support, as it offers significant new opportunities for post-secondary students and the economic well-being of our communities, and will create a number of jobs during the construction phase and long-term.

Although this project is shovel-ready, the last step before construction can begin is to finalize our funding model. Rather than asking the provincial and federal governments to fund the entire cost, Durham College is asking both to partner with it on this important \$20-million project. We are seeking an equal portion of approximately \$7 million from the provincial and federal governments, with Durham College contributing the same.

It is expected the construction phase will create 100 direct jobs, along with a further 140 indirect jobs. Post-construction, the centre will be home to 32 full-time staff, all of whom will be in high-paying, long-term knowledge positions that directly benefit the local economy. Additionally, by further expanding our campus and offering new innovative programs, we can jointly help to remove some of the financial risk endured by post-secondary students and ultimately reduce post-graduation debt load.

The project:

Phase 3 is a visionary plan to construct a standalone, state-of-the-art learning centre and greenhouses at our Whitby campus that will further studies, research and expertise in the areas of agriculture, culinary and hospitality, three very important disciplines for meeting growing workforce needs. This shovel-ready project incorporates unique agricultural programming and research into the college's current portfolio, and will represent a complete field-to-fork cycle – from soil (field) and science, to cultivation and process (and science), and preparation and service (fork). Through a 'green-certified' teaching restaurant, greenhouses and new programs under development, Phase 3 will serve as a living lab for students and be a true celebration of locally grown and produced foods. Phase 3 is a natural extension to Phase 2 of our expansion, which was a Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP) project that was completed on-time and on-budget. Phase 3 will include:

- A full-service green-certified teaching restaurant open to the public;
- Fully equipped kitchen areas with the latest in technology, all of which will be in public view through the use of glass walls;
- Room to house 32 full-time staff, all employed in high-paying, long-term knowledge jobs;
- Nine-hundred new post-secondary spaces;
- Cutting-edge labs and other teaching space;
- Two biomass-heated greenhouses;
- Vegetable and rooftop gardens and the incorporation of green roofs onto buildings;
- Fruit-bearing trees;
- Consideration of a beekeeping operation for honey production; and
- Other learning, labs, research and meeting areas.

To date, we have had overwhelming support for Phase 3-designated programs that have already begun operations. For instance, our Culinary Skills and Hospitality Management – Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism programs have both just completed very successful first years, and applications for Fall 2011 are at 197 and 196 respectively. However, due to having to rent space until construction of Phase 3, we can only accommodate 40 seats at this point and have had to waitlist both programs.

The college's Board of Governors has also recently approved a number of other new programs for delivery in Phase 3, including Biofuels and Bioprocesses Technician, Horticulture Technician and Artisan Agriculture. In the latter case, graduates will be capable of producing high-quality food products for niche markets, including local markets, regional consumers, upscale restaurants and specialty food stores. The program will also focus on agriculture tourism, an important part of the strategic development of a sustainable regional agricultural economy.

Demand and financial impact for students:

Application data shows that hundreds of students leave Durham Region each year to study in agriculture, hospitality and culinary programs. Travelling outside the region for studies increases the financial burden for students, and in some cases may hinder access to education for some segments of the population, including those that are traditionally underserved.

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario states in its March 2011 report, Tuition Fee Policy Options for Ontario, that higher education can be a risky investment given debt is incurred and must be repaid regardless of outcome. Given this obligation, HEQCO notes risk-averse individuals may choose not to pursue post-secondary studies and "if risk aversion particularly characterizes persons in under-represented groups, as is commonly believed, PSE participation rates will vary systematically among demographic and socioeconomic groups."

By offering these popular programs in fast-growing areas of the marketplace close to home for those in Durham Region and surrounding areas, Durham College is helping to remove some of that risk for students and ultimately reduce post-graduation debt load.

Economic stimulus:

Phase 3 represents a truly unique opportunity to quickly develop new post-secondary spaces and help address capacity growth in this high-demand area of the country. It is expected that construction of Phase 3 will create 100 direct jobs, along with a further 140 indirect jobs. Post-construction, the centre will be home to 32 full-time staff, all of whom will be in high-paying, long-term knowledge positions that directly benefit the local economy.

Additionally:

- There are significant cost-efficiencies in that Durham College owns the land needed for Phase 3 and servicing is already available;
- Durham College is a vast economic driver for Whitby and the rest of Durham Region, one of the fastest growing areas of the country;
- The campus is located next to Hwy. 401, is just minutes from the Whitby GO Station and a short drive from where the Hwy. 407 expansion will follow, making it easily accessible from anywhere else in the GTA;
- This project will further the conversion from being primarily a skilled trades centre to a full-service campus that integrates both post-secondary and apprenticeship students;
- It will utilize sustainable technologies and embrace the principles of sustainable communities through its field-to-fork agricultural approach and use of green technologies across all sectors;
- The project has received endorsement from the college's Board of Governors;
- Planning has progressed to the point where the project is shovel-ready;
- Public fundraising is already underway, with a number of commitments tied to construction beginning in 2011; and
- It supports the diversification of the Durham Region economy, while also supporting the overall Ontario and Canadian economies.

Project cost:

Although this project is shovel-ready, the last step before construction can begin is to finalize the funding model. Rather than asking the provincial and federal governments to fund the entire cost, Durham College is asking both to partner with it on this important \$20-million project. The college is committed to fundraising a significant portion and has in fact already secured millions of dollars in public gifts. However, because a number of these commitments are contingent on work starting in 2011 and the significant economic impact this project represents, we anticipate construction will begin later this year. We expect that we will continue to seek partnerships and funding opportunities well into 2012, which is why we are making this 2012 federal budget funding request.

In summary:

People will be inspired by experiencing the foods of Durham as they come to life through Phase 3, from planting to serving. They will be stimulated by classes, discussions, tastings, tours, excursions of plantings and demonstrations. A shovel-ready project, Phase 3 completes the circle of sustainability with an overall expansion that has been undertaken at the Durham College Whitby campus over the past three years. This learning centre, which will be visible from the neighbouring Hwy. 401, will demonstrate better use of energy, water and nutrients. There are practices that will economically reduce greenhouse gas emissions; minimize waste and pollution while simultaneously reducing the consumption of over-processed foods; and reduce the reliance on food imports.

Whitby Phase 3 will allow us to grow our campus strategically and responsibly; create much needed new post-secondary spaces that will help further our country's skills and knowledge base; introduce new programs in areas of study in high demand by today's employers; and provide a significant assist in furthering the diversification of the Durham Region economy, which until the past few years has been primarily reliant on the automotive manufacturing industry.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,



Don Lovisa
President
Durham College

cc Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty
Chris Alexander, MP Ajax-Pickering
Corneliu Chisu, MP Pickering-Scarborough East
Bev Oda, MP Durham Riding and Minister of International Cooperation