

**TO:** Councillor B. Young, Chair and Members of the Administration and Finance Committee

**FROM:** Clerk, L. McDonald  
Director of Economic Development, C. Kelley  
BIA Coordinator, T. Larkman

**SUBJECT:** BIA Webcam Project

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Staff Report AF005-08 dated February 4, 2008 regarding the BIA Webcam Project be received for information purposes.

## **ORIGIN**

### General Information Pertaining to BIAs

2. Business Improvement Areas (BIA) allow local business people and property owners to join together and with the support of the municipality, organize, finance and carry out physical improvements and promote economic development in their district. The local municipality is responsible for approving the budget of the BIA.
3. The main purposes of a BIA are to revitalize and maintain a dynamic local neighbourhood and to promote the area as a business or shopping destination. While a major goal of revitalization and retention is to encourage both local residents and others to spend their shopping dollars within the local commercial district, all businesses and residents in the area may benefit as well.
4. Revitalization and maintenance create a cleaner, safer and more congenial atmosphere that benefits all local businesses. It also benefits professional service firms, whose clientele can enjoy the local atmosphere as part of their trip to the doctor, dentist, lawyer or accountant. The same is true for entertainment and dining establishments which benefit from the increase in local traffic and the improved atmosphere that results from the presence of a BIA.
5. Revitalization and maintenance often includes defining an identity for the local community. This identity is then used as a means to further promote the local community as an interesting and unique business area. In some cases, leaders of the BIA (the board of management) become a line of communication between the community and the local municipal council. The BIA forum can be used as a vehicle for conveying community concerns to council and, for prompting council to pursue policies and activities that will promote and strengthen the community and its unique identity.
6. The BIA has a two fold mandate:
  - 6.1. To oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned Land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided by the municipality generally, and
  - 6.2. To promote the area as a business and shopping district.

7. In carrying out these responsibilities, BIAs have become involved in numerous activities, which often include:
  - 7.1. Marketing: Understanding who area customers are, and creating effective promotions to retain and expand the customer base.
  - 7.2. Business Recruitment: Working with property owners to help ensure that available space is occupied, and that an optimum business and service mix is achieved and maintained.
  - 7.3. Streetscape Improvement and Other Amenities: Providing for more customer-friendly lighting, signage, street furniture, planters, banners and sidewalk treatment.
  - 7.4. Seasonal Decorations: Creating a unique and pleasant environment for customers and staff of all businesses, retail and non-retail, through the use of decorations that are appropriate to the season and holiday.
  - 7.5. Special Events: Organizing and partnering in special events that highlight unique attributes of the area and increase customer visits.
8. The Municipal Act, 2001 (as amended) sets out roles and responsibilities for the board. The board can submit requests to council for funding but has no authority to spend money unless it is included in the estimates, or in a reserve fund. In addition, the board cannot borrow money, and cannot incur debts extending beyond the current year without prior council approval.
9. The Bracebridge BIA has been in place since 1981, with its current Board appointed by Council on December 20, 2006. A map showing the BIA boundaries is attached as Schedule "A". The Town and the BIA have fostered a cooperative relationship throughout the BIA's existence and have worked closely on numerous projects and initiatives as Bracebridge continues to grow.
10. In mid 2005, the Bracebridge BIA explored options to provide live music on the street to enhance their downtown special events and holiday shopping. Early discussions with vendors indicated the potential to use web-based technologies as a means to link and provide control to speaker systems. As explorations continued into the best way to deploy a speaker system in the downtown core, the project evolved to one that could also include the development of a wireless network in the downtown core that would be create one of very few "entire downtown" hot-spots for members and visitors to access high-speed internet and also include webcam technologies.

#### Webcam Project

11. In 2007 after discussions with a number of vendors, the BIA issued an RFP to explore various options for deploying the technological capabilities to better serve all of its members. The possibility of installing webcams was viewed as an opportunity to showcase and market the BIA through broadcasting real-time images of the area using the World Wide Web. In reviewing the numerous opportunities available through the use of this technology, the security aspect was contemplated as a means to assist law enforcement in investigating damage to both private and public assets (e.g. light standard damage, parking meter vandalism, broken windows, etc.).
12. As the Council representative on the BIA Board, Councillor Giaschi-Pacini provides regular updates on BIA initiatives. As more detailed information on the webcams became available through reporting of the results of the RFP, Council expressed its interest in the project.

13. On November 12, 2007, the Administration and Finance Committee passed motion 07-AF-156 directing staff to report back to the Administration and Finance Committee with details regarding the proposed installation of cameras with monitoring and/or surveillance capabilities in the downtown area. Council ratified the motion on November 21, 2007. Specifically the report is to include:
  - 13.1. Information regarding the proposed locations for the installation of the cameras;
  - 13.2. The ability to store/file images/recordings made from the cameras;
  - 13.3. The procedure for managing any images/recordings made from the cameras;
  - 13.4. The costs associated with installation of the cameras, the anticipated benefits from the installation;
  - 13.5. The experience of other small municipalities with installation of cameras;
  - 13.6. The impact of cameras on crime prevention;
  - 13.7. The requirements of the municipality and the BIA under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA);
  - 13.8. Any comments and recommendations from the OPP related to the installation of cameras in the downtown area;
  - 13.9. Other related topics as deemed appropriate by staff and the BIA.
14. A memorandum from the BIA President to Council dated November 21, 2007 (Appendix "B") outlined the BIA's commitment to work cooperatively with the Town ensure that all questions from Council are fully answered.

## **ANALYSIS**

15. Each of the areas have been explored below as outlined in Motion 07-AF-156. For Committee's purposes each section is outlined below.

### Information regarding the proposed locations for the installation of the cameras

16. The BIA has proposed the installation of six to eight cameras that will capture the activities of the area from a number of different perspectives. Initially, it is proposed that cameras will be installed on the north-east and north-west corners of Manitoba Street at Ontario Street/Entrance Drive, and at the Manitoba Street/Taylor Road intersection, and if necessary half-way between due to the topography. Additional cameras could be installed at various northerly sections of Manitoba Street as part of future phases. The actual number and locations of the cameras is difficult to determine without a trial. The resolution required, the quality of image and the distance that each camera will carry is difficult to assess primarily because of the topography of the lower part of Manitoba Street. The BIA has not completed a contract with a vendor and therefore the work has not begun.
17. The BIA is prepared if necessary, to undertake a trial for 2008 limiting the number of cameras to four (4) that would be owned and operated by the BIA.

The ability to store/file images/recordings made from the cameras

18. The procedure for collection and storage of images captured from the webcams can be tailored to satisfy the requirements of the BIA and the municipality in order to ensure the protection of personal information. Staff have recommended password protected access to the images which would be stored in a secure off-site server room where only authorized persons would be permitted access. The stored data would be written over after a specified period of retention.
19. Although the images saved for security purposes would be of high resolution in order to assist law enforcement, the direct streaming of images on a website should be of much lower quality so as not to enable the identification of individuals or to intrude on the privacy of upper level tenants. This is accomplished through the web viewer and should an individual attempt to expand the video stream and enlarge it, it would become pixelated so as to eliminate any detail. Sufficient safeguards would be necessary to ensure that real-time streamed images cannot be recorded/saved by members of the public visiting Bracebridge online.

The procedure for managing any images/recordings made from the cameras

20. The BIA is currently preparing policies to manage the images and recordings and will continue to work with the Town to ensure that all parties are satisfied with the content. The general framework for these policies would be that access to any recorded information/images would be limited to policing officials.

The costs associated with installation of the cameras

21. The BIA issued an RFP in July and met with two vendor groups in August. Both vendors provided an overall costing and plan for technology deployment. The actual costs of the cameras themselves have been estimated at \$2,000-\$2,500 each plus the technology backbone. The vendor of choice from that RFP process has estimated the cost of the backbone to be \$15,000 for Phase I (lower Manitoba Street). The BIA has been allocating dollars for this project over the past two years.

The anticipated benefits from the installation

22. The benefits to the BIA for the overall "technology background" is one that could provide great financial benefit for individual members given that the vendors have suggested that members should be able to eliminate the number of service providers required to operate their systems (e.g. phone, fax, point of sale, internet, etc.).
23. The development of an overall network for the BIA could provide some intangible benefits to both internal and external visitors/clients through the development of an "internet hot-spot" as the area will be seen as "one" (similar to a mall). It is expected that the BIA will use the "hot spot" technology as a way to promote their members, activities and special events. Having the entire downtown as an area where visitors/cottagers can access their email, would position Bracebridge uniquely in Muskoka and provide a compelling reason for a visit to downtown Bracebridge.

24. The live streaming of main streets on the World Wide Web is commonplace on the internet. Communities use webcams as a method to promote their areas and showcase their "lifestyle and community spirit" on the web. The success of online communities such as Youtube and Facebook and the embracing by large entities such as Towns and Cities, political parties, news outlets clearly demonstrate their purpose as a "new means" of distributing messages for the purpose of marketing and sales. This technology could provide an excellent opportunity for Bracebridge to showcase itself to the world. Specific links to certain webcams that have been placed strategically can demonstrate the historical and architectural beauty of the Downtown. These links could be placed on the Town's website, the community portal, [www.theheartofmuskoka.com](http://www.theheartofmuskoka.com) and the Chamber of Commerce website.
25. As well, many businesses use webcams/virtual tours as a means to introduce a product/service to individuals who are purchasing from afar. This has been a successful tool for businesses/communities, particularly those involved in tourism. Locally, a number of businesses have used virtual tours as a method to promote those businesses.
26. Several BIA member businesses have expressed a desire individually to install, using the technology background set up by the BIA, their own webcams on their own buildings for their own crime prevention purposes.
27. If the project proceeds, the Town might consider installing webcams to view the Silver Bridge, Bracebridge Falls, etc.

#### The experience of other small municipalities with installation of cameras

28. The Bracebridge BIA has reviewed the experiences of other communities in Ontario that have implemented closed circuit television (CCTV) and/or webcams. In all cases, communities turned to this type of technology to promote their area and to use it as a crime prevention tool. Over 100 BIAs were contacted in search of like-communities. It was determined that very few BIAs to-date have initiated implementing this technology however many municipalities are currently using cameras and many more are in the process of implementing them. Below is a list of communities that have implemented the technology:

##### 28.1. Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area (DIA) - CCTV:

The Owen Sound BIA has had video surveillance cameras for over two years. In 2006 they installed four cameras and an additional two cameras in 2007. Property and business owners within the DIA were in favor of adding additional security and felt it was a viable solution. The cameras installed are not currently being used on the web however there are plans to do so in the future. The DIA Director indicates the program has been very helpful in police investigations and has assisted in reducing occurrences of vandalism. The police regularly use the video for investigating graffiti, vandalism and other undesirable behaviour. Owen Sound DIA plans to install two new cameras per year until the maximum of sixteen are met. The DIA has worked closely with the City to establish policies and procedures that are consistent with the Information and Privacy Commission of Ontario guidelines.

##### 28.2. City of London, Ontario – CCTV:

The City of London implemented CCTV in early 2004, with its goal to improve community safety, prevent crime and promote a safer environment in the City. Currently, these cameras are CCTV only and not broadcast over the web. The cameras are monitored 24/7 by a controller who dispatches police when the need arises.

28.3. Toronto Yonge Street BIA – CCTV:

The Toronto Yonge Street BIA has had CCTV cameras within their boundaries for over a year. The initiative was brought forward by the BIA, however has been executed by the Toronto Police Services. The cameras are roaming, which, based on police needs they can be moved to alternative locations. It is the goal of the Yonge Street BIA to have additional cameras installed in key locations of the BIA as they have proven to lower the number of incidents in their area. The Toronto police have care and control of the cameras and no policies and procedures are currently in place.

28.4. Brampton Ontario – Webcams ([www.brampton.ca](http://www.brampton.ca)):

The Brampton webcams were set up in the center of Brampton in order for visitors to view the special events and day-to-day activity that take place within the city core. Since the cameras became live the number of viewers that visit the Brampton Website has increased. It has not been determined if the cameras have increased tourism but there has been a positive impact to the website. Images have been used to assist police in investigating crimes.

28.5. Collingwood – Webcam ([www.collingwoodnow.com](http://www.collingwoodnow.com)):

This is a privately owned camera however is set to view the Welcome Centre in Collingwood.

28.6. City Of Sault Ste Marie – Webcam ([www.city.sault-ste-marie.on.ca](http://www.city.sault-ste-marie.on.ca)):

The City has one webcam (river cam), which is located at the civic center. The camera is programmed to move to sixteen locations of the city. Details and policies are unavailable.

28.7. Hamilton – CCTV:

Downtown Hamilton BIA had requested the City to install CCTV cameras in their downtown core due occurrences of crime (e.g. drugs and vandalism). In response a two-year pilot project was initiated with six cameras located in high crime areas. The project was run by the Hamilton Police Department in partnership with the BIA and was successful in improving safety in the camera areas. Additional cameras are currently added as it is deemed necessary.

28.8. City of Niagara Falls – Webcam ([www.niagarafalls.ca/about\\_niagara\\_falls/weather.asp](http://www.niagarafalls.ca/about_niagara_falls/weather.asp)).

The Falls cam has been in place for over five years. The camera takes still photos and is refreshed every ten seconds. Its main use has been for visitors to view the weather at the falls. No policies are in place for this camera as it is hosted by a private company.

28.9. City of Timmins – webcam ([www.portal.timmins.ca](http://www.portal.timmins.ca))

28.10. City of Barrie – Webcam ([www.barrie.ca](http://www.barrie.ca))

28.11. North Bay- Webcam ([www.north-bay.on.ca](http://www.north-bay.on.ca))

The impact of cameras on crime prevention

29. Staff of the BIA and the Town along with the BIA President met recently with Inspector Ed Medved, Commander of the Bracebridge Detachment of the OPP. Inspector Medved has provided a letter to the BIA in support of the initiative, which has been included as Appendix "C" to this report.

The requirements of the municipality and the BIA under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)

30. In October 2001, the Information and Privacy Commissioner for the Province of Ontario issued Guidelines for the Use of Video Surveillance Cameras in Public Places. This document was updated in September 2007. Within this document, the Information and Privacy Commissioner states that "in limited and defined circumstances, video surveillance cameras may be appropriate to protect public safety, detect or deter, and assist in the investigation of criminal activity".
31. Organizations that are governed by MFIPPA (of which the BIA is one due to its relationship with the Town) and that are considering implementation of a video surveillance program must balance the benefits of video surveillance to the public against an individual's right to be free of unwarranted intrusion into his or her life. The Privacy Commissioner has stated that pervasive, routine and random surveillance of ordinary, lawful, public activities interferes with an individual's right to privacy.
32. Before deciding to use video surveillance, the Privacy Commissioner recommends that institutions consider the following:
- 32.1. A video surveillance system should only be considered after other measures of deterrence or detection have been considered and rejected as unworkable.
  - 32.2. Video surveillance should only be used where conventional means (e.g. foot patrols) for achieving the same law enforcement or public safety objectives are substantially less effective than surveillance or are not feasible, and the benefits of surveillance substantially outweigh the reduction of privacy inherent in collecting personal information using a video surveillance system.
  - 32.3. The use of each video surveillance camera should be justified on the basis of verifiable, specific reports of incidents of crime or significant safety concerns.
  - 32.4. An assessment should be conducted of the effects that the proposed video surveillance system may have on personal privacy, and the ways in which any adverse effects can be mitigated.
  - 32.5. Consultations should be conducted with relevant stakeholders as to the necessity of the proposed video surveillance program and its acceptability to the public. Extensive public consultation should take place.
  - 32.6. Institutions should ensure that the proposed design and operation of the video surveillance system minimizes privacy intrusion to that which is absolutely necessary to achieve its required, lawful goals.

33. Staff has suggested that the BIA establish a policy for the operation of the webcams. Preliminary discussions with the BIA indicate that the policy would include:
- 33.1. Rationale and objectives.
  - 33.2. Location of equipment and restrictions on adjustability (e.g. cameras locked so they cannot be zoomed or adjusted to overlook areas not intended to be viewed).
  - 33.3. Persons authorized to operate/access.
  - 33.4. Times of surveillance.
  - 33.5. Obligations regarding notice (e.g. signage, identification of cameras), access, use, disclosure, retention, security and disposal of records.
  - 33.6. The designated person responsible for privacy obligations under MFIPPA.
  - 33.7. A requirement that agreements between the BIA and the service providers clearly state the authority under which the care and control of the images is maintained.
  - 33.8. A requirement that BIA and service providers review and comply with all policies and relevant legislation.

Any comments and recommendations from the OPP related to the installation of cameras in the downtown area;

34. Inspector Medved has offered assistance in an advisory capacity to the BIA in the implementation of this technology.

Other related topics as deemed appropriate by staff and the BIA.

35. The project initially originated around explorations for opportunities to provide live music in the downtown core during special events and during holiday shopping. The actual number of speakers and their placement have not yet been determined nor has a deployment schedule or costing been identified. A trial period would enable the determination of locations and distances between each speaker. Exemption to the Town's Noise Control By-law would continue to be required and facilitated through the Special Event Permit process.

Conclusion/Summary

36. As an independent organization, the BIA does not need Council's specific approval to undertake this initiative. As a result, this staff report is presented for information purposes.
37. Town staff and the BIA have extensively considered the privacy implications together with the expected benefits of this project. Both parties are committed to ensuring the obligations under MFIPPA are met and will work cooperatively to this end.
38. Through discussions with the OPP it is apparent that the use of this technology for law enforcement purposes would be a measure that could assist in crime prevention and investigation efforts, and is supported by the local detachment.
39. Staff supports the project and would recommend it proceed subject to the establishment of policies that are satisfactory to the Town prior to live implementation of cameras or speakers under any contracts with the BIA.



### ALTERNATIVE(S)

40. The following alternative is available for Committee consideration:

**Alternative #1**

Committee could recommend that the BIA initiative to install cameras with monitoring and/or surveillance capabilities in the downtown area not proceed.

This alternative is not recommended as it does not support the BIA in revitalizing and maintaining a dynamic local neighbourhood and to promote the area as a business or shopping destination

### EXISTING POLICY

41. The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

42. None, at this time.

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Clerk, L. McDonald

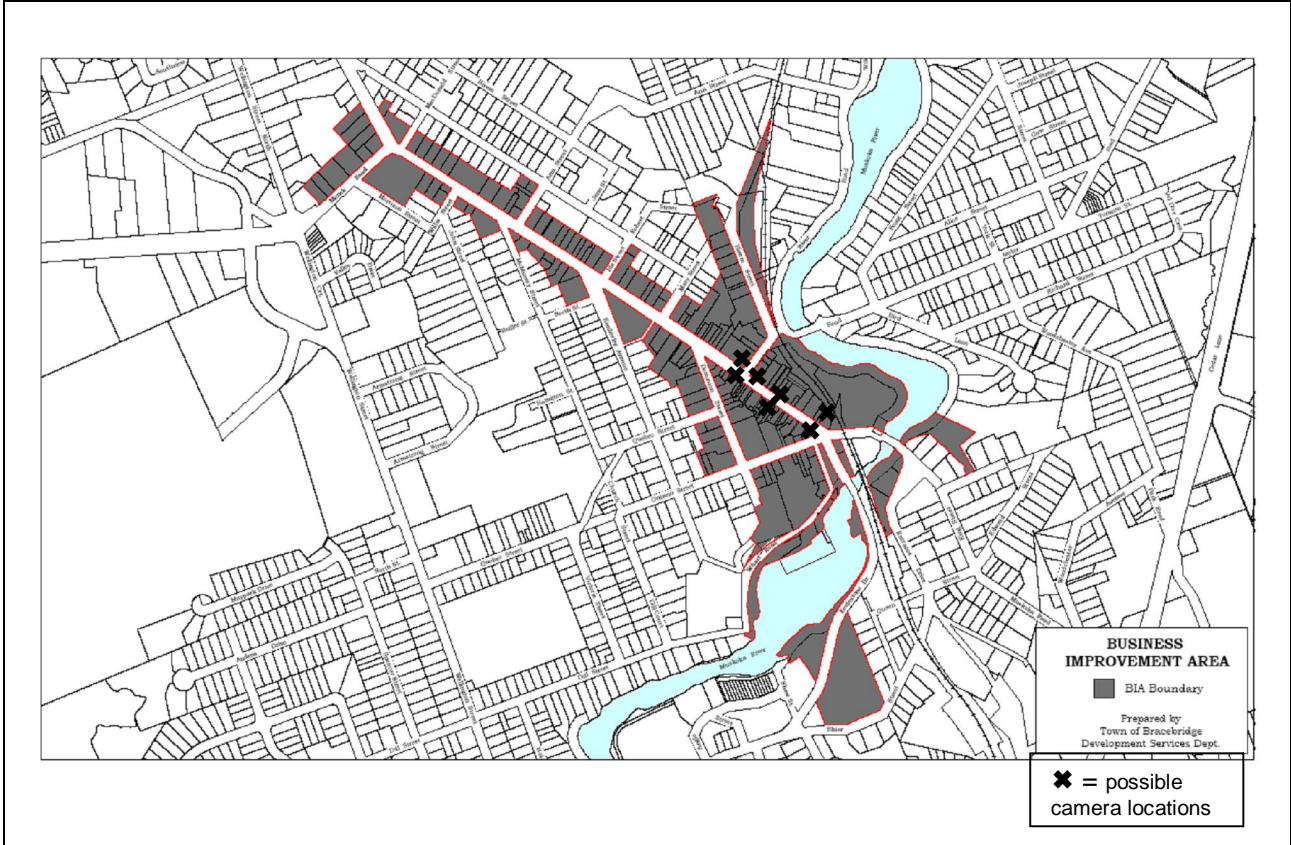
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Director of Economic Development, C. Kelley

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BIA Coordinator, T. Larkman

**APPENDIX "A"**



**APPENDIX "B"**



**MEMORANDUM**  
**Downtown Bracebridge Business Improvement Area**

**TO:** Mayor D. Coates and Members of Council  
**FROM:** M. Brazier, President, Bracebridge BIA  
**DATE:** November 21, 2007  
**SUBJECT:** DOWNTOWN BRACEBRIDGE BIA – "WI-FI" PROJECT

This will confirm that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Administration and Finance Committee requesting a report from the BIA and Town staff regarding the BIA's plans for the installation of "Wi-Fi" technology, including webcams, in downtown Bracebridge, representatives from the BIA have met with staff for the Town to review this matter. To facilitate the review requested, the following initiatives are being undertaken:

1. The BIA has met with Town staff and will be working co-operatively to prepare a comprehensive report for Administration and Finance Committee in January 2008.
2. Town staff will assist with the BIA's communications with its members to outline the questions posed by Council and to explain the Town's relationship to the BIA.
3. The BIA has decided not to proceed with any agreements related to the overall "Wi-Fi" project (i.e. wireless internet, speakers and webcams) until Committee and Council have reviewed the requested report.
4. The BIA will be working cooperatively with Town staff to answer the questions posed in the Administration and Finance Committee recommendation. In addition, the BIA will ensure that any initiative proposed by the BIA is in full compliance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).
5. The BIA will be working on developing policies for the recording, retention and retrieval of webcam data as required based on the technology to be installed.
6. The BIA will provide assistance in identifying like communities in the province that currently use webcams and provide to staff details on policies and procedures in those communities.
7. The BIA will request written comments from the local OPP detachment regarding the BIA's plans for the installation of webcams in the downtown area.
8. The BIA report will include information on plans for signage and notification to the public regarding installation of webcams.
9. The report from the BIA and Town staff will also include recommendations for policies in relation to the proposed wireless speakers (for amplified music during special events).

The BIA is pleased to be able to report to Committee regarding this project and to ensure that any questions from members of Council are fully answered. The BIA is committed to working with Town Council and staff to promote a safe and vibrant downtown that offers a variety of shopping and entertainment opportunities for the community. The BIA appreciates the Town's on-going support and the assistance provided by staff. The BIA looks forward to reporting to Committee in the new year.

  
Mae Brazier, President

**APPENDIX "C"**

**Ontario  
Provincial  
Police**      **Police  
provinciale  
de l'Ontario**



January 23, 2008

Administration & Finance Committee,  
Town of Bracebridge  
1000 Taylor Court  
Bracebridge, ON  
P1L 1R6

Councillor-Barry Young (Committee Chair), Mayor-Don Coates, Councillor, Lori-Lynn Giaschi-Pacini, Councillor-Graydon Smith, Councillor-Patti Thompson, Councillor-Scott Young, Chief Administrative Officer-John Sisson, Treasurer-Andy Nelan, Clerk-Lori McDonald, Chief By-law Officer- S. Stakiw, Assistant to Municipal Clerk-Matt Gower

Attention Administrative & Finance Committee Members,

On January 22, 2008 I had the opportunity to meet with representatives from the Town of Bracebridge and the Bracebridge Business Improvement Area ("BIA") to discuss the BIA's plans for the installation of Closed Circuit Television ("CCTV") within the downtown area. Based on the details provided at this meeting I would like to indicate that the Bracebridge Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police ("OPP") is in full support this proposal.

There are many ways that communities can combat crime and I feel that the use of CCTV is an effective tool from both a crime prevention perspective as well as an investigative tool after the fact. Several communities within Ontario have started to use CCTV and they have found it to be extremely useful in that very way. Statistically, crime prevention initiatives have always been difficult to measure in terms of outcomes; however, based on my experience, CCTV has become a helpful resource in providing evidence when crimes occur, reducing vandalism, graffiti and other unlawful behavior which occurs regularly within the BIA boundaries. It can also give communities an increased feeling of safety and security which is know to be a very important issue to both residence and visitors alike.

This proposal would also allow for more efficient and effective deployment of exiting police resources. CCTV systems in other jurisdictions have allowed for quicker resolution of issues which ultimately puts Officers back on the street sooner then they would be otherwise be to engage in other proactive activities. This would be a positive outcome for other matters needing attention within community of Bracebridge and the rest of the jurisdiction that we police.

There are many ways that the community can assist the Police in the prevention and detection of crime. This initiative is certainly one of many that the OPP would endorse and support as a viable option for the Town of Bracebridge.

Sincerely,



Inspector Ed Medved  
Commander  
Bracebridge Detachment