

## A political point of view

# Some ideas for fixing Ontario's budding economic crisis



MPP Julia Munro

By Julia Munro  
MPP, York-Simcoe

With job losses over the past few months, continued high taxes, continued free spending, and bigger energy price shocks to come from electricity and natural gas, the Ontario government has ignored the makings of an

economic wreck.

Sadly, no one in government seems ready to acknowledge what is happening.

It wasn't so long ago that Ontario was Canada's economic engine. We paved the way for prosperity in the country with our strong economy. Regrettably, the numbers show we have lost that status. We are now becoming a 'have-not' province. Our private sector job creation is the lowest in the country and our economic growth rate this year is also expected to be at the bottom.

Now that the summer is upon us, Ontario's tourism industry, which employs tens of thousands of people,

is reporting declines. Tourism is a vital part of the economy in Innisfil and throughout my riding. During March, United States border crossings had fallen by over 16 per cent from the previous year, and Ontario's hotels and resorts are reporting declines.

We need to see short-term relief which will have financial benefits for families and businesses — hardworking families deserve to be able to go on a family vacation without having to scrimp and scrape. The Ontario PC Caucus has recommended the sales tax be removed from hotel rooms and tourist attractions for the summer. Industry leaders welcome the

proposal but Premier Dalton McGuinty hasn't given it a second thought.

Ontario is losing some of its best and brightest people to other provinces and it will be tough to woo them back once we get our economy on track.

I feel five steps would turn the Ontario economy around.

- We must have competitive taxes. Ontario is no longer the place to do business when existing or would-be investors realize that we have the highest rate of taxation on new business investment in all of Canada.

- We need a real skills and training strategy. Right now we have a grab bag of programs that are

inadequate, not properly coordinated and that don't take full advantage of one of our greatest assets — our college system. Further, many of our rules and regulations are eliminating opportunities for young people in apprenticeships.

- We need regulatory sanity. I hear from businesses who are bombarded by inspectors and auditors who show up for no reason, stay far too long, leave behind piles of paperwork and demonstrate an attitude which says they're here to dance to our tune, and exist to keep us busy.

- We need public sector restraint. Earlier this year, the McGuinty government

reported that the number of people earning \$100,000 or more in the Ontario public sector had grown by 27 per cent — these are jobs being funded by you, the taxpayer. Ontario is the only province in Canada where the rate of public sector job creation exceeds the rate of private sector job creation.

- Finally, we need short term relief which will help families and businesses, as well as provide a bit of good news in these trying times.

The status quo cannot continue. The current policy mix which consists largely of big taxing, spending, hiring, raises, regulations and cheques being written without results, is not working.

## Sandy Cove settlement gets council's support

By Chris Simon

Sandy Cove needs to be a part of Innisfil's future development plans, say councillors.

Town council passed a recommendation to support an Ontario Municipal Board appeal by Sandycove Acres Limited, during a meeting last week. The appeal asks

the Ontario government to acknowledge Sandy Cove as a designated settlement area, something that could have significant impacts on for future development within the municipality, said planning manager Ross Cotton in a report to council.

"The designation of

Sandy Cove as a settlement area in the county's Official Plan is consistent with the town's approved Official Plan," he said. "The designation is also consistent with the town's request to have the Sandy Cove area shown as an undelineated settlement area in the Ontario Places to

Grow plan. The province did not agree with (the Sandy Cove settlement area).

"The designation (is) important to the town's future planning and growth, since most is to occur in settlement areas."

The appeal stems from 1997, when the County of

Simcoe passed its last Official Plan.

At that time, the county included Sandy Cove as a settlement area.

However, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing refused to designate the area for settlement.

Sandycove Acres Limited

began the appeal process last year, and has an OMB pre-hearing scheduled for July 28.

"I think the province is a little behind on the times," said deputy mayor Gord Wauchope.

"We've had settlement in the Sandy Cove area (for decades)."

## Museum offering family activities every Sunday

Looking for something to do on a summer Sunday?

Visit the Simcoe County Museum and take a step back in time. Included in the regular price of admission, costumed interpreters will be on site with special demonstrations every Sunday in July and August.

Enjoy fresh baked goods from the pioneer bread oven Aug. 3, and watch vintage construction equipment in action Aug. 10.

There will also be an ice cream social, July 20th and Aug. 17th. Sample hand churned, freshly made ice cream.

Explore daily pioneer life during Hearth and Home, July 27th and Aug. 24th.

The Simcoe County Museum is located at 1151 Highway 26, north of Barrie.

For more information, call 728-3721. Regular admission rates are \$4 for adults, \$3.50 for students and seniors, and \$2.50 for children. Preschoolers enter for free.

## Church Directory

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Christ Church – St. Jude Anglican, Ily..	458-9631
Church of God Worship Centre, Thornton	
.....	705-730-1738
Churchill United.....	456-4692
Cookstown United .....	458-9701
Gilford United .....	456-4692
Holland Marsh Christian Reformed.....	775-7291
Exaltation of the Holy Cross .....	705-730-7999
Ukrainian Church	www.holocrossbarrie.ca
Holy Martyrs Roman Catholic.....	775-2065
Holy Trinity Lutheran .....	775-3412
Innisfil Community .....	436-1611
Lefroy United .....	456-2098
	www.lefroyunited.ca
Living Faith Presbyterian Church.....	705-424-0779
New Life Fellowship Baptist .....	436-5413
St. George's Anglican, Utopia.....	458-9631
St. James United, Stroud .....	436-5225
St. John Vianney .....	726-8007
St. John's Anglican, Cookstown.....	458-1801
	www.stjohnscookstown.org
St. Paul's Anglican, Coulsen's Hill.....	775-3648
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