

# HALTON ADVISORY COUNCIL TO DELVE INTO LOCAL ISSUES

COMMUNITY LEADERS GATHER IN VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE, WRITES KAREN MICELI



KAREN MICELI  
Column

*It's about trust. Our relationship with our readers is built on transparency, honesty and integrity. As such, we have launched a trust initiative to tell you who we are and how and why we do what we do. This article is part of that project.*

Halton is an increasingly diverse and complex municipality with changing needs.

In recognition of that ongoing evolution, Metroland's Halton Division newspapers — the Burlington Post, Oakville Beaver, Milton Canadian Champion and Georgetown/Acton Independent and Free Press — have formed a community advisory council to help us better understand the issues facing our residents, readers and business partners.

Earlier this month, we invited a group of community leaders from across the region, asked them to talk about what issues were most pressing in Halton, and brought them together to share those thoughts with us.

The first meeting of the Halton Advisory Council was held May 13 in a virtual roundtable.

We asked three questions:

1. Beyond the pandemic, what is the issue facing Halton Region that concerns you most?

2. What role would you like Metroland to play in addressing that issue?

3. What is the role you would like the Metroland to play in Halton Region overall?

Members of the committee were frank with their thoughts, and what we heard was eye-opening.

The wide-ranging conversation hit on several touchstones — trust and transparency in local media, diversity and Inclusion, development and Infrastructure, post-COVID health issues including mental health and surgery backlog, and violence against women including domestic abuse and human trafficking.

The council will branch off into subcommittees to delve into these topics.

We expect editorial initiatives will offshoot from these subcommittees, and you will hear about them in future instalments of this monthly column. Stay tuned.

*Karen Miceli is managing editor of Metroland's Halton community newspapers. We welcome your questions and value your comments. Email our trust committee at [trust@metroland.com](mailto:trust@metroland.com).*

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## SNAPSHOT



Tony Fortunato photo

A female cardinal visits a backyard in rural Georgetown. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to [sleblanc@metroland.com](mailto:sleblanc@metroland.com), along with a brief description.

## IT'S TIME TO EXTEND FREE EDUCATION PAST HIGH SCHOOL



PETER WATSON  
Column

It's time to rethink post-secondary education in Ontario.

This has been accelerated by the pandemic, but before that there was a definite need for an upgrade.

Doug Ford's government acknowledged that our long-term-care facilities are not able to hire the sufficient number of qualified staff to care for our elderly.

His solution is free education for those wanting to

train for that occupation.

That raises the question of other skills that are needed in our society.

There is a demand for workers with advanced training in science and technology. Many other skill sets are required as well.

Education is our foundation.

Our province needs to reprioritize educational funding.

Ontario should provide free post-secondary education for the four years following high school. That would be extended to six years depending on our needs and opportunities.

We pay the cost of high school. That is not even close to meeting current day needs.

Will the cost of extend-

ing the length of free education be staggering? Yes.

Will the cost of not extending the length of free education be staggering? Absolutely yes.

Enhanced education makes economic sense.

Ontario will be able to offer the goods and services to those who live in our province. Plus, we will be able to compete internationally.

Business revenue will increase and so will government taxes. A well-qualified workforce will have higher earning power and they too will pay more taxes.

Prioritize education. Make Ontario "A Place to Grow."

*Peter Watson, of Watson Investments MBA, CFP®, R.F.P., CIM®, FCSI offers a weekly financial planning column, Dollars & Sense. He can be contacted through [www.watsoninvestments.com](http://www.watsoninvestments.com).*

## ABOUT US

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