

Protecting Ontario's environment

It takes a lot of effort to break promises, bring back deficits and hike taxes, so it shouldn't be too surprising that the Liberals couldn't find the time to replace the Ecological Land Acquisition Program (ELAP) which expired on March 31, 2004.

Hey, it takes hard work to irritate taxpayers so how could the Liberals be expected to enact necessary environmental programs?

Well, between tax hikes, they at least managed to extend the ELAP to cover projects already under way. It's a bit like extending health care funding to cover the operation you've already been scheduled for.

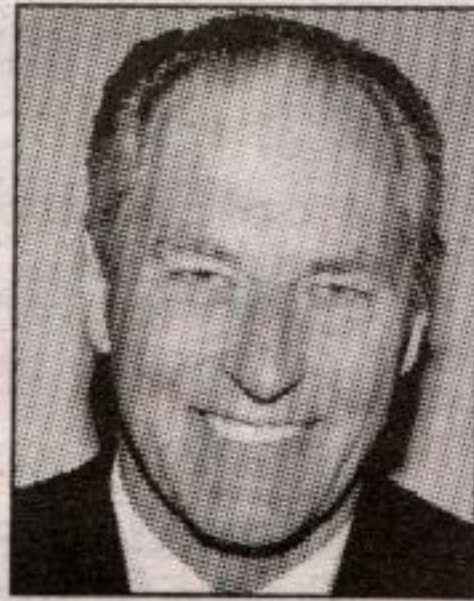
However, I'm concerned with the future. So, in lieu of the Liberals doing anything, I introduced a motion to the Legislature last week calling for a program to provide permanent funding for environmental land purchases in Ontario.

My call to MPPs of every political stripe to support this motion was successful as the motion passed by a vote of 52-3. I asked MPPs to reach out to the future. I asked them to help ensure environmentally sensitive and significant lands are purchased now, for public use by generations of Ontarians yet to be born.

As MPPs, our service to future Ontarians will be judged by the legacy that we leave them. I suggest we leave them a commitment to environmental protection. I suggest we leave them public access to Ontario's finest and most beautiful open spaces.

In the last several years there has been a patchwork of programs used to finance purchases of environmentally significant land. These programs include: The Natural Areas Protection Program (NAPP), the Ontario Parks Legacy Program (OPL), the Community Conservancy Program (CCP) and the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV).

QUEEN'S PARK REPORT



Ted Chudleigh

The current Ecological Land Acquisition Program (ELAP) was conceived as an enhancement to existing land acquisition programs in keeping with the goals of Ontario's Living Legacy, a comprehensive natural heritage program announced in November, 2000, which doubled Ontario's provincial park and protected lands. ELAP has been used in those areas where approved provincial plans already exist.

The Government of Ontario needs to demonstrate a commitment to public ownership of these important spaces. By making these purchases through partner organizations we can ensure the land is managed properly, acquisition plans are in place for future purchases, and roles and responsibilities of those involved are clearly spelled out.

I expect that while I'm calling for this program to be made permanent, it should be reviewed at various intervals at several levels, including funding, partnership arrangements, and property acquisition plans and priorities. It is irresponsible to leave government programs to run forever without review.

My motion is not binding on the government, however, with such an overwhelming majority it is a powerful suggestion that legislation should be forthcoming to deal with the expressed wish of the legislature.

—Ted Chudleigh is the MPP for Halton



Food bank friend

CIBC Wood Gundy in Toronto recently made a \$1,000 donation to Georgetown Bread Basket. Receiving the cheque from (left) CIBC Wood Gundy Vice-President Brokerage Technology Rob Mayer is chair of the food bank Ed Cox.

Funding announcement applauded

The provincial government's commitment to help fund the hiring of 1,000 new police officers across Ontario is welcome news to both Halton's police chief and the chair of the police services board.

"I don't see a downside," said Halton police chief Ean Algar reacting to the recent announcement made by Premier Dalton McGuinty at the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police that the province would commit \$30 million over three years toward the hiring of 1,000 new recruits to "ensure our police forces are strong and equipped."

McGuinty offered little in the way of details, saying they were still being worked out with municipalities that will share the cost.

"We think there is an advantage for us because we're a growing community," said Algar Thursday.

He added he had no idea how much money would be coming Halton's way but since the service is anticipating hiring nine new officers in January any funding from the province is welcomed.

"I think its an excellent initiative for the province to take," said Halton Regional Police Services Board chairman Don Robinson.



Public Meetings on the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt

A Greenbelt is key to permanently protecting greenspace and containing urban sprawl in the Golden Horseshoe.

Building on the advice of the Greenbelt Task Force and guided by the input of hundreds of individuals, municipalities, more than a thousand written submissions and the advice of more than 60 stakeholder groups, the Government of Ontario has developed draft Greenbelt legislation and a draft plan.

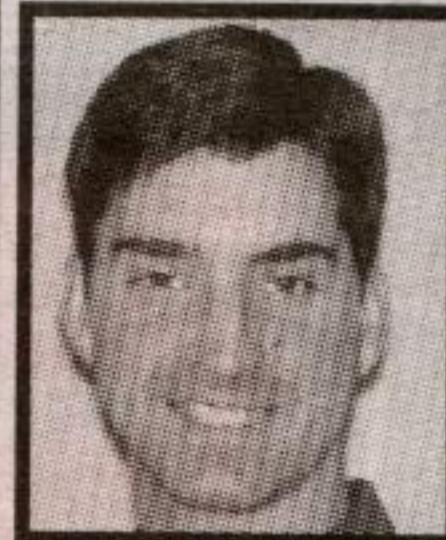
We want to hear what you think.

Oakville Convention Centre
Banquet Room C
2515 Wycroft Road
Oakville, Ontario
L6L 6P8
Wednesday, November 10 – 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

If you require special accommodation related to disability, please notify us a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the meeting by calling 416-645-8082 or toll-free 1-866-751-8082 (TTY 1-866-220-2290).

If you are unable to attend a public meeting, visit www.greenbelt.ontario.ca and share your views online.

Building strong communities



By Cory Soal
R.H.A.D.

... Lend Me Your Ears

LIVING WITH A LOSS OF HEARING

Some voices are easier to understand than others. The clearly speaking person pronounces words that are more precisely formed, or articulated. The rate of speed of words spoken also effects our ability to understand.

If one can see the speaker as he/she is talking, this makes it easier to understand. The environment also has an affect on speech understanding – bare walls and floors in a room causes sound to "bounce" around. Keep in mind that it is much easier to converse in a quiet carpeted room.

Make sure that there is good lighting and try to maintain a speaking distance of less than nine feet. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how much easier conversation is.

Hearing loss can dampen enjoyment of movies, music, church services, watching TV, eating out, and talking on the telephone. Even a mild hearing loss can reduce your quality of life.

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Low Back Pain?

Georgetown, Ont. - Back pain is on the rise, and according to recently released reports you don't need to keep suffering. The problem is most people don't know which way to go. Some continue to receive the same old ineffective treatment. Thanks to a free report, local back pain sufferers can know what to do. For your free copy, call the Back Pain Associates toll-free, 24-hour recorded message at 1-866-335-3189.

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