

OPINION

All for one, one for all approach

The Greater Toronto Region Economic Summit released its report last week on how to ensure a swift economic recovery for the region that stretches beyond Toronto and the 905 municipalities to much of southern Ontario.

The report, *Choosing Our Future: An Action Plan for Economic Recovery*, emphasizes the need to think regionally. The ideas emerged from a summit held in May, co-chaired by Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion and Torstar Corp. board chair John Honderich, which brought together 250 of the region's leaders.

Key recommendations called for "a war cabinet", made up of politicians and economic development officers to promote the area, and a financial services task force to come up with new strategies to focus on Canada's banking strength.

The "war cabinet" would include regional chairs, mayors, economic development officers and the provincial government and McCallion is intending to convene a meeting this fall to focus on the economic health of the entire region.

Honderich called the summit a good first step, but acknowledged changing a Toronto-centric mindset to one that views the GTA as what it is — a diverse region — will be difficult.

"We are one economic region. We have to start thinking and acting like it," he correctly said.

While it's unlikely that any "war cabinet" dominated by politicians and bureaucrats will easily win over the public's confidence, the idea of such a collective think-tank is a sound strategy provided all of the GTA is represented and given a voice.

Since the region includes outlying areas like our neighbour, Halton Hills, as well as Waterloo, Peterborough and Niagara Falls, it's hoped that the smaller centres and their unique aspects won't be ignored by the larger municipalities. For example, farmers should be well represented and included in all future discussions.

Only time will tell if Toronto, the GTA and municipalities outside the 905 area are able to adopt an "all for one, one for all" approach to battling the economic downturn, but it's an attempt worth making.



MAKING TRACKS: Caroline Buckley stands in front of the Sydney Opera House during her trip to Sydney, Australia. Take your community newspaper on your next vacation and send your 'Champion Tracks' photos to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com. Be sure to include destination information and everyone's names.

ReadersWrite

E-mail letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com. Letters, which may be edited, must include the writer's name, address and phone number.

Let's decide if CEO is worth his salary

DEAR EDITOR:

Recently some respected Miltonians have expressed their concerns about the salary of Halton Healthcare Services' (HHS) CEO.

Some of us have the sour feeling that he's representative of the highly-paid executives who triggered the current recession. This should not be allowed to fester. The next step, as I see it, is to mobilize the wisdom of the people in Milton.

Even as I write this, someone suggested I check the Sunshine List.

There are history teachers, economists, journalists, church leaders and many others who, collectively, could shed enough light on this matter that we can decide if we need to take action or smile that we're getting a bargain.

Milton District Hospital deserves nothing less. It's a good hospital that, on occasion, has gone beyond its mandate as a health-care facility to reach out and help the community resolve some of its issues.

**RICHARD EDWARDS
MILTON**

Upfront

Lang Moffat's Senior of the Year award much deserved

Lang Moffat may not be too comfortable with recognition, but he certainly deserves it.

As many of you read in Wednesday's *Champion*, the 81-year-old Miltonian was recently honoured by the Region with the Ontario Senior of the Year award.

That comes after two decades (and counting) of tireless work with a wide variety of groups, including the Elder Services Advisory Committee. While still a long way from benefiting from such an organization, I have a particularly strong appreciation for it.

Earlier this month I visited my grandparents in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia for their 65th anniversary. Much like during previous trips, I left feeling grateful that these two very

special people (both 92 years old) live in a small, close-knit community where everyone — and I do mean everyone — looks out for one another.

Sadly enough, that's simply not possible in a town the size of Milton. And without such an all-encompassing support system, some people can simply fall through the cracks.

Thankfully here in Halton, there's plenty of people — like Moffat — determined to make sure that doesn't happen for our eldest residents.

Among the issues he's most concerned

about is a lack of available housing, which forces some seniors to leave the region in their 'golden' years.

"People should be able to age in their community rather than being uprooted," he said.

While my grandparents live thousands of miles away in a community that makes Milton look like a metropolis, it's nice to think that if they lived here they'd have people like our newly-named Ontario Senior of the Year recipient looking out for their best interests.

So kudos to you, Mr. Moffat. And keep up the great work.



Steve LeBlanc

The Canadian Champion

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