

Golden plan would see Stouffville pay \$5 million more

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in Whitchurch-Stouffville, valued at \$1 million, would get a \$7,922 annual tax bill.

Overall, York Region would pay an additional \$170 million. Whitchurch-Stouffville tax rolls would be hefted by an extra \$5 million. Under the new scheme, Metro Toronto taxpayers, meanwhile, would pay about \$500 million less.

If the province agrees with Golden to get rid of all regional governments, to create a 30-member super council and cut the number of GTA municipalities from 30 to 15, Whitchurch-Stouffville would likely make a trip to the alter.

"We'd be better suited to marry Uxbridge than be swallowed up by Markham," said Johnson.

It's unrealistic to think that Whitchurch-Stouffville, with a population of under 20,000, could stand on its own. Amalgamation would be take place many, including Johnson, agree.

"Personally, I'd prefer a marriage with Uxbridge," said Johnson. "We're got much more in common with Uxbridge. The rural (sector) is a common thread."

On Friday, Johnson attended a meeting held to review the Golden Report complete with its 51 recommendations.

Business representatives from across York Region are "putting their heads together" to come up with a response to the (Golden) report, said Johnson.

"We're studying the impact on us. We couldn't digest it all in one day so we're meeting again," said Johnson.

The meetings are hosted by the Markham Board of Trade. When dealing with the Golden report, local business groups want to "sing

from the same song sheet," stressed Johnson.

The proposed super city will cover an area from Burlington to Clarington and north to Lake Simcoe including Whitchurch-Stouffville. In justifying a tax system overhaul, Golden said the status quo doesn't work any longer. "The assessment system in the GTA is broken," said Golden. She said that many homeowners are over-assessed; apartments and commercial and industrial properties are over assessed compared to single family homes and assessments on similar properties are different in different parts of the GTA.

The present tax system puts Metro businesses at "a serious disadvantage" in comparison to businesses in other parts of the region," said Golden.

"Non-residential property taxes on Metro businesses are cited as one reason that businesses are moving to the suburban municipalities of the GTA - leaving a so-called 'hole in the donut.'"

The government can't sit back and let downtown Toronto slide into a total decay, Johnson agreed.

But, people in areas like Whitchurch-Stouffville must make sure that Toronto's recovery is not at the expense of municipalities outside of the city, Johnson stressed.

Some politicians are banking on Premier Mike Harris and his Tory government to shelve the entire Golden Report. Johnson is not of this mind set. Instead, the local Cham-

ber official wants Whitchurch-Stouffville to play a part in its own destiny.

"We'd be wise to get ready for change," said Johnson. "I want to know what our options are; how our community is going to be set up. We need to be part of the process instead of sitting back waiting for the province to do it for us."

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Woman says she's discriminated against as a single mom

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"I'm a good person."

Brown has tripped over the down side of reality of late. "People are telling me I have too many children. I've even had landlords hang up on me when they find out I have three. People do discriminate. In this case, it's against children."

While most of us can turn to family in times of need, Brown doesn't have that option. Her mother died when she was seven; her dad passed away when she was 19 and her only sister lives out of the country.

"A two-bedroom apartment would be suitable," said Brown. "I have a set of bunk beds and the baby can sleep in my room," said Brown.

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