

OPINION
& EDITORIALS



The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER

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Canada’s next housing and affordability crisis...

Under the federal Liberal Party, too many of us have been forced to sacrifice our futures just to cover the cost of necessities like rent and food. Food prices have risen almost 40%, and since Mark Carney took office, they have only continued to go up. Meanwhile, rents have continued to increase over the last year, with costs increasing 5% from July 2024 to 2025. As we continue to get squeezed on purchasing basic necessities, the dream of homeownership has been pushed out of reach for too many. To carry a mortgage and pay the bills for a home now costs just over 55% of the median pre-tax income; 93% in Vancouver and 68% in Toronto. The benchmark price of a home in Canada has soared 54% from \$446,600 in October 2015 to \$688,700 in July 2025. In Vancouver, the price of an average home is now 13.5 times the median income, while in Toronto it's 10.4 times. The minimum income needed to buy an average home is now \$235,700 in Vancouver and \$200,800 in Toronto. Gregor Robertson – who hiked homebuilding taxes as Vancouver mayor while home prices soared by 149% – said the Liberals “are building at a pace and scale that has not been seen in generations.” Yet, in reality we’re now building less and paying more. Since 2024, housing construction in the Greater Toronto Area has fallen by half. Just in the City of Toronto alone it has decreased by an astonishing 65%. Across the country, housing starts are projected to collapse an additional 13% by 2027 to just 212,500 new homes per year. It’s also less than half of the 500,000 homes Mark Carney promised to build on an annual basis, and it’s only projected to get worse. Meanwhile, the trades we need to ensure future construction of homes are being laid off. The Canadian Homebuilders Association reports 35% of builders surveyed have already begun such layoffs, and the CEO of the Residential Construction Council of Ontario said, “We’re in the process of laying off thousands of people right now.” It’s all driven by Liberal policies. As much as 50% of housing prices can be attributed to land use regulations – municipal red tape. Taxes account for a further third of the cost of a home, while massive immigration accounted for 21% of the increase in house prices. Our families have been paying the price of the Liberals’ disastrous housing policies and inflationary spending with exorbitant rents and unaffordable groceries. This newspaper believes it is time to fight to restore the promise we used to have in this country: with stronger take-home pay, affordable food, and homes that families can finally call their own.

It's time for jail, not bail, for violent repeat offenders...

The Official Opposition in the House of Commons recently announced they will introduce what they call the 'Jail Not Bail' Act to end the current crime wave and put public safety first. Under the Trudeau-Carney Liberals, our cities have been taken over by criminals released time and time again by way of easy bail laws. The consequences of a decade of reckless policies are real: violent crime is up 55%, firearms crime is up 130% and extortion has skyrocketed by 330% across Canada. “Canadians deserve to be safe in all places and at all times in this country,” said Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre. “If Mark Carney is serious about restoring peace to our communities, he will back this bill and reverse his party’s disastrous bail laws.” In 2019, David Lametti – now Prime Minister Mark Carney’s right-hand man – passed Bill C-75, forcing judges to release offenders “at the earliest possible opportunity, under the least onerous conditions.” The predictable result has been violent, repeat offenders allowed back on the streets. Recent tragedies show the cost: Bailey McCourt, a young mother, was murdered by her ex-husband just hours after he was released on bail for assault and threats. Tyrone Simard, released on bail for assault with a weapon, went on a mass stabbing spree that killed his sister and injured seven others. Daniel Senecal, convicted of sexual assault, was released again, then accused of sexually assaulting a three-year-old child. It’s why Premiers and Attorneys General from Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, along with Police Associations from across this country, have been calling for an end to this easy bail policy. The Prime Minister should listen to the Provincial governments and the police who are dealing with this crime crisis. This newspaper demands the federal government seize the opportunity to do what is right and tip the scales of justice back in favour of innocent Canadians. We need to see the repeal and replacement of the Liberal “Principle of Restraint” with a directive for the primary consideration to be the protection and safety of the public. We need to see the introduction of a new “Major Offences” category with reverse onus bail conditions for firearm, sexual, kidnapping, human trafficking, home invasion, robbery, extortion, arson, and assault charges. We need to see an overall strengthening of bail laws by mandating that judges consider an accused’s full criminal history. Anyone convicted of a major offence in the last 10 years while also on bail who is then charged with a major offence should not be released again. We also need to prohibit anyone with an indictable conviction from acting as a guarantor (who ensures bail conditions are followed). Canadians deserve a justice system that protects law-abiding citizens, not one that prioritizes repeat violent offenders. We need to clean up the mess the Liberals have created.

45 years after Marathon of Hope, the legacy of Terry Fox continues...

Terry Fox embarked on a one-man mission to raise money for cancer research in his cross-country Marathon of Hope which took place in 1980. We’ve all seen the photos that have truly become part of the Canadian fabric. For 145 days he ran until the unthinkable happened and lung cancer was detected, forcing him to end his courageous journey across Canada. Now, 45 years later, communities across the nation are gathering together on September 14th to keep the marathon alive and to share their own memories of Terry Fox, or their own stories of how they have been touched by cancer. It’s a fitting testament that so many Canadians still remember and continue to honour such a courageous man. As to the terrible disease that is cancer, and the ongoing research to find a cure, the medical profession has certainly made great strides since Terry’s run. Research such as genome-targeted therapies have come a long way in that time. Nowadays, kids are learning about Terry Fox in schools, and as long as the young know who he was and what he represented - and how important his legacy still is - it will undoubtedly carry forward. Multiple generations continue to pay tribute and to keep alive all that he was dreaming about. Across this country, local events have continued to raise funds in support of Canadian cancer research through the Terry Fox Foundation. That is something we can all be proud of.

The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER welcomes your submissions and letters
As The CENTRAL works to provide an interesting and accurate reflection of the communities that make up Durham Region through our weekly news pages, we invite local citizens to participate in the conversation through submissions and letters to the editor.
We truly appreciate and support your efforts to make The CENTRAL your own.
Letters and submissions are welcome at newspaper@ocentral.com

Letters To The Editor:

WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND? Send letters to newspaper@ocentral.com

Dear Editor:
Yesterday, a true giant of the conservative movement was viciously assassinated while on a college campus for an event.
A movement lost one of its leaders. And we all lost whatever last trace of innocence we had left. Most importantly, a wife lost her husband. A one-year-old and three-year-old lost their father. We do not yet know the motive of the person behind the despicable murder of Charlie Kirk. But we do know it was evil.
There can never be true justice in this world. For as long as this kind of evil dwells among us, it is a reminder that we are not of this place. But for Charlie, the suffering of this world is over, and he rests safely in the arms of the Lord. “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” — Revelation 21:4 Today we pray for Charlie Kirk, and we pray for his family.
God bless you, Charlie Kirk. You were taken from us far too soon.
Jim & Belinda Karahalios

Dear Editor:
Open Letter to Scugog Council and Community
Township administration has decided to hire a consultant to do a “visioning exercise” for the Port Perry fairgrounds park. This decision, reached behind closed doors, will, if carried out, cost tens of thousands of dollars that need not be spent. Open town hall meetings to work with residents and businesses, and especially the Port Perry Agricultural Society (which leases and maintains the park at their cost) would be an appropriate way to determine the community’s needs and wishes for this treasured open space. We need not use expensive consultants when we have qualified staff, talented volunteers and an engaged public in Scugog. Our township administration could and should listen to and work directly with residents on initiatives such as this. Not only would this be more economical, it would be more transparent and community-focused, and less subject to fragmented input from disparate stakeholder groups. This approach would also align exactly with the values and all five strategic directions of the current Council’s Strategic Plan.
Our council and administration must hold public open house meetings to gauge the residents’ needs and desires prior to engaging consultants to compile options, if indeed the consultants’ input is even needed at that point. The inhabitants of this municipality, who collectively constitute the Corporation of the Township of Scugog as per the Municipal Act, are, in effect, paying shareholders of the township, and should be given full access to the information and decision-making process as it affects their community—their home.
In Scugog, we have paid for consultants, only to see some of their recommendations overridden at council table, reducing the return on investment and eroding public trust in the process. (Examples include the placement of 4-way stop signs within Port Perry and the inclusion of an out-of-town site for a hotel in a Community Improvement Plan. Even the Heritage Advisory Committee’s recommendation that the Fairgrounds park be designated a heritage property was rejected despite solid arguments in favour of doing so.) We have recently seen increasing disillusionment—if not outrage—at the rising cost of governments at all levels resorting to the use of expensive consultants for all manner of advice and decision-making, such as the federal government’s profligate use of McKinsey & Company.
Proposing to hire a consultant based on criteria established in closed meetings is not transparent. Characterizing as misinformation the public concerns that then arise over the future of our park is not helpful. And it must be understood that the Fairgrounds is, first and foremost, a major township park, a category of parkland which the 2018 Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan identified as being provided at less than the standard of 4.0 hectares per 1000 population. That plan also clearly indicated that improved amenities at the site were needed, and that community engagement was essential. To be clear, there is no suggestion in that Township plan that the site be used for anything other than recreational and cultural activities. It is important to note as well that the almost 400 homes to the west of the Fairgrounds were built with the understanding that the allocation of parkland in the subdivision was reduced due to the proximity of the Fairgrounds park. Recent comments that the Fairgrounds land is valuable and should not be ‘encumbered’ by, for instance, heritage designation or a long-term lease to the Port Perry Agricultural Society (PPAS), suggests our administration is indeed considering some other form of development of the site.
At least two approved housing developments in the south of Port Perry, constituting over 320 medium or higher density units, have stalled. Any suggestion that the Fairgrounds park be developed for residential or commercial use is totally uncalled-for in light of these existing, un-realized opportunities, which have water and sewage allocation approved by the Region of Durham. The Fairgrounds, often touted as serviced land, does not have such allocation from the Region. Stanley Park in Vancouver, High Park in Toronto and Lakeview Park in Oshawa are some examples of serviced lands, with water for drinking fountains and concessions, sewage for toilet facilities and electricity for lighting and venues. They all remain cherished parks, providing essential accessible green space and recreational opportunities within their urban communities.
The Port Perry Agricultural Society has acted as steward of the Fairgrounds park since it contributed half of the purchase price to the Township (taxpayers) in 1910, and indeed since 1886, when the Fair was first held there. They have recognized the need to enhance the park for more recreational and cultural uses, and have reached out to stakeholders to develop a vision for the site. They have asked the Township administration—their landlord—for help planting trees, and endorsed the proposed heritage designation of the land, which would have enhanced grant opportunities to upgrade the facilities. As a volunteer-operated registered charity, the PPAS does not have access to public funds. The Township, acting as the landlord, could have provided more support in the form of leasehold improvements over the years.
The community not only clearly loves the annual Fair, but wants to retain and improve the parkland on which it is held. The PPAS and our residents boast the talents and energy to facilitate that without the need of additional, expensive consultants. For total transparency, Scugog Council must work directly with the community as a whole to make a better park, keep our successful Fair, and celebrate our agricultural heritage with an enhanced community recreation facility, built to its residents’ needs.
Sincerely, Ray and Sharon Smith
Port Perry

Dear Editor:
Sadly I am currently homeless I had to go to get food and left my dog at my tent while I went for a half hour that I would have been gone my dog ripped my tent and my emotional service dog got out I contacted team Chelsea asap as soon as I could and instead of bringing her too me they took her too animal welfare in Whitby who now want over 800.00
I need help this is unjust! And i am getting denined funds its like my one worker contacts my trusty to keep my fund away from me to get my dog this is the 3rd week without my service dog i want this in the paper.
Timothy James Butler.