

**Scugog Fire and Emergency Services successfully receives funding through the Province of Ontario's Fire Protection Grant**

Scugog Fire and safety and effectiveness of Scugog Fire & Emergency Services is extremely grateful to the Province of Ontario for the support provided through the Ontario Fire Protection Grant. This funding will make a meaningful difference in enhancing both the

as possible. "With the grant, we will be able to complete critical building upgrades to our facilities and invest in specialized firefighting equipment designed to manage lithium battery-related incidents safely and effectively.

As the prevalence of lithium-ion batteries continues to grow in our homes and workplaces, so too does the potential risk they pose when involved in fire emergencies. Having the right tools and training ensures our crews can respond with

confidence and protect our community to the highest standard. This investment is a direct benefit to the residents and businesses of Scugog, and it reflects our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, firefighter

safety, and community resilience. We thank the provincial government for their partnership and look forward to putting these resources to work."

- Mike Matthews, Fire Chief

**Visioning Exercise Could See Costs Balloon by 50%**

**PORT PERRY** — The Port Perry Agricultural Society (PPAS) is raising concerns about conflicting information and reports that the cost of the "Visioning Exercise" may have increased to \$150,000, according to the township's capital projects status report released this week.

The project, carried out by Toronto-based consulting firm Darwin Pivot, was originally advertised as staying just under \$100,000. The possibility of a budget increase has caused confusion and concern among Port Perry residents.

"At a time when everything

is getting more expensive, people are sensitive to growing costs," said Paul Puckrin, President of the PPAS. "Especially when the purpose of the project has been unclear from the outset."

In addition to uncertainty over project expenditures, there is a lack of clarity about the exercise's scope and objectives. While the

Mayor has recently stated that no decision on the Fairgrounds has been made, her comments appear to contradict statements made previously to a PPAS member.

Furthermore, in early discussions with PPAS, a member of the Darwin Pivot team indicated that the consultant's expertise would be used to turn community

feedback into feasible design options — a role that seems to align with the original RFP. At the same time, reports now suggest that Council may not continue with the project after Phase 2 is complete.

"Scugog Council pursued this exercise despite strong public sentiment," added Puckrin. "So far, it hasn't produced any information

we didn't already know: that the Fairgrounds park should be protected. Instead, residents are left with vagueness and unanswered questions. Was this done intentionally, to preserve flexibility for a predetermined outcome? Or because the project hasn't been fully thought through? Either way, it could cost the public up to \$150,000."

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**1,200 GM JOBS GONE****WHERE IS KIRKLAND PC MP AND FRENCH NDP MPP?**

**OSHAWA** — Ontario NDP Leader Marit Stiles, and Oshawa MPP Jennifer French are calling for an action plan to deliver certainty for Oshawa auto workers, as GM announces massive layoffs starting Friday:

"Doug Ford is a jobs disaster," said Stiles. "How many more workers need to lose their livelihood before we have a serious auto strategy? His made-for-tv quips are cold comfort for the workers and their families who are losing their paychecks.

People are tired of empty promises as Oshawa's auto industry has been left for dead and the people of Oshawa are having to pay for the environmental left over. The many dump sites that are still active. Where is Rhonda Kirkland? She should be out with pitch forks in Ottawa demanding

those jobs be re-instated. According to a worker at GM. We have no political support and no real leadership. This same individual has put many calls to MP Kirkpatrick's office and not one returned call.

"General Motors made \$10 billion in North American profits off the backs of Oshawa's auto workers, and now they're abandoning these same workers without a second thought. General Motors received hundreds of millions of dollars from the province in subsidies. Where are the results of these investments?"

"This is the time to build in Canada, for Canada. While GM bends the knee to Trump, we need our leaders to stand up for Canadian jobs with a strategy to protect our auto sector," said MPP French. "GM continues to take Oshawa for granted — if

they're planning to sell GM cars here, they need to build them here. Unifor and autoworkers at GM and the feeder plants have been working to build a strong automotive future. Detroit shouldn't forget that.

"Oshawa's auto workers will outlast Trump. GM, Doug Ford, and Mark Carney need to be planning a future that takes us further down that road. The fight for Oshawa's auto future is not over." The current announcement has been seen by many as the last nail in the GM empire.

The people of Oshawa are being left without jobs, in a state of economic chaos. Not to mention having to deal with the environmental hazards including many of the former GM dumps scattered all over the city. Prominent local business person Joe Ingino stated, "Our

MP and MPP should be putting pressure at the top to get GM to pay for the mess they have created out of corporate greed.

It is time to take action before they leave and leave us in a dump.

This so called American Tariff threat is nothing short of a clever business tactic in order to leverage power.

We as Canadians have two choices. Become a state of the Union or stand up and hit them where it hurts.

You want to leave our City, it will cost you 100 million in damages to our people, our economy and our eco-system."

The current political climate in Oshawa lacks true leadership and vision. It lacks guts, sweat and tears to demand accountability from GM. If they can make billions off our sweat. They should be held accountable.

**Appointment of****Mr. John Ecker to the Police Service Board**

The Durham Regional Police Service Board announced that Mr. John Ecker has been appointed to the Board by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario for a two-year term.

"I welcome the honour to serve the community as a member of the Police Service Board," said Mr. Ecker. "I look forward to supporting the Board's responsibility to ensure that policing in our community earns the trust and confidence of the citizens of Durham Region."

"Mr. Ecker has strong connections to our community and extensive leadership and governance experience that will enable him to make an impactful contribution to the Board's deliberations and decisions," said Board Chair Shaun Collier. "His presence will assist the Board in achieving its objectives for a safe community."

The Durham Regional Police Service Board is the civilian governing body of the Police Service. Its responsibilities include establishing objectives for policing in consultation with the Chief of the Police, setting policies for adequate and effective policing and the administration of the Police Service, and hiring and monitoring the performance of the Chief of Police. The Board consists of seven members, three appointed by the Province of Ontario and four chosen by Regional Council.

John Ecker is a semi-retired communication, marketing, branding, and fundraising executive. Most recently, he served in successive senior roles at the Archdiocese of Toronto. He oversaw brand development and marketing for the archdiocese's highly successful Family of Faith Campaign, and led the strategic re-positioning of the archdiocese's Office for Refugees. He also led the archdiocese's Indigenous healing and reconciliation activities. In 2022 he was the Program and Production Lead for the Pope's visit to Iqaluit, Nunavut, and received a Papal Medal from Pope Francis for his work. Previously, he was a Vice President at Indspire (the former National Aboriginal

Achievement Foundation) and he has held director-level positions at the Ontario Trillium Foundation, ECHO: Improving Women's Health in Ontario, and Toronto Board of Trade.

He also serves as Chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust, the province's heritage agency.

He is a Governor on the Board of Durham College and a Board member of the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund. Ecker previously served as Chair of the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Awards for Voluntarism, Chair of the Whitby Public Library Board, Chair of Waterview Child Care Centre, Chair of the Lynde Marsh Alliance, Chair of Heritage Whitby, and served on the Board of Credit Canada. Internationally, he established Bimini Bound, which sent over 10,000 books and learning resources to schools on the island of Bimini, Bahamas.

In 2025, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario recognized Ecker's service to his community, Ontario, and Canada when she presented him with the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

He received his Photography Diploma from Fanshawe College in London and his BA in Political Science from the University of Waterloo.

