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PARBUCKLING THE HMS METROLAND

From The Bottom Of The Corporate Sea

By Joe Ingino BA, Psychology
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I have been stating this for months: internet posting is dead. First, too many people are posting and calling themselves media. Second, there is no sustainable revenue in online advertising. The internet operates on statistics designed to deceive the average business, and this is evident in the lack of advertising revenue among many online outlets. Without revenue, maintaining a viable online presence becomes nearly impossible—despite the fact that many simply copy and paste news releases. I have known for months that Metroland's online operations were struggling. I have spoken with members of the small staff maintaining their online presence, and they indicated that conditions were deteriorating. In what appears to be corporate greed or desperation, Metroland eliminated a significant portion—if not all—of its print publications. This decision left workers, communities, and advertisers in a state of uncertainty. It sent a troubling message across the industry. The move was, in many respects, morally questionable and executed without adequate consideration for the communities affected. Now, there appears to be an attempt to "parbuckle" the sunken HMS Metroland—from the depths of the bankruptcy protection sea in an effort to revive the brand for what may be one final attempt at advertising revenue in two of their most lucrative former markets.

Parbuckling: A specialized technique used to roll a capsized or sunken ship upright. Namely bring back the METROLAND brand for one final dig in the pockets of nostalgia?

Can a sunken ship be raised? Yes, a sunken ship can be raised, but it depends on the vessel's depth, structural integrity, and the cost of the salvage operation. Here is where the HMS METROLAND may find itself in dangerous waters. Do they believe former advertisers will return after previously disengaging due to poor performance metrics? Is the structural integrity of the brand still buoyant? **One hopes advertisers are not so naive.** Metroland has lost its distribution networks and now proposes a monthly publication schedule. This risks becoming another Corporate "Titanic"—an avoidable failure. Recently, a letter circulated stating: **As a 25-year veteran of community news, I have been witness to and at the forefront of changes large and small. In 2023, one of those changes was to stop printing and delivering Whitby This Week and Oshawa This Week, focusing solely on digital news and information at durhamregion.com. A complete failure in some industry critics eyes.**

This move put them under bankruptcy protection and destroyed their distribution networks... leaving them with NO READERSHIP. THIS TRANSLATED TO THEIR ONLINE... AS PEOPLE LOST CONFIDENCE.

What didn't change was our priority to provide you the local information you've told us you need and the community journalism you can't find anywhere else. But, in the past two-plus years, we've heard from many of our readers that you missed the ritual of reading a physical newspaper. We missed that connection too.

This move to online only had a huge cut back on people they employed. Affecting the livelihood of many. **They did not care.**

And so, I am thrilled to share with you the return of Whitby This Week and Oshawa This Week as monthly publications. This exciting change is rooted in our commitment to Whitby and Oshawa and the knowledge that local journalism is essential to a democracy and a healthy community. Or could it be that it is an election year and think they can negotiate advertising revenue through campaign advertising. This failing to recognize that both of those municipalities have opted to go electronic and that they have allotted no money in their budgets for newsprint advertising. Maybe they are counting on the many department heads with their hands out to re-ignite old kick backs schemes for advertising?

It is also about the future. We are investing in the next generation by hiring 20 new editorial interns in newsrooms across Ontario. These fresh voices will work alongside our veteran reporters to cover the stories that matter most to you. It is not about the future as they claim. It is about their bottom line. A line that is at the bottom of reality sea.

20 interns... Why don't they hire all the one's they let go. Instead they still disrespect the community by hiring cheaper interns.. What an insult to the community. We are also proud to relaunch "Metroland Gives Back." Every issue will provide free advertising space to a local charity. It is our way of supporting the organizations that make our neighborhoods a better place to live. We hope you enjoy this return to print, and that it gives you a stronger connection to us and our community. Sincerely, Lee Ann Waterman Group Publisher and Vice-President, Editorial. Advertisers... be aware of the past. Learn from our history and don't waste your dollars on a Parbuckled vessel that has left port and previous left you behind. No distribution = No readership. Free publications by their own admission have no readership. Are you prepare to waste good advertising dollars on nostalgia of proven to fail? Think about it.

JOE INGINO
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Canada's Housing Crisis Is Now a Test of Leadership

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Canada's housing crisis is no longer a market fluctuation. It is a structural failure, one that now tests the country's economic credibility, social cohesion, and political leadership.

For too long, housing was treated as a local issue, shaped by municipal zoning and market forces. That approach has collapsed under the weight of reality. Population growth has surged, supply has lagged, and affordability has deteriorated to the point where even middle-class Canadians are under strain.

What we face today is not simply high prices. It is a system that no longer delivers fairness. Recent signals from policymakers suggest that governments are beginning to understand the scale of the challenge. The economic framing associated with Mark Carney and the more assertive supply-side actions of Doug Ford point in the right direction. However, direction alone is not enough. Execution is what will matter.

Canada's housing shortage is the result of years of underbuilding relative to population growth. Immigration—vital to our economic future—has increased demand, but without a matching expansion in supply.

The consequences are visible across the country. Homeownership is increasingly out of reach for younger Canadians. Rent consumes a growing share of income. Skilled workers are priced out of the very cities that depend on them. This is no longer just an affordability issue. It is a question of whether Canada still offers a viable path to stability and upward mobility.

Mark Carney's recent interventions have helped reframe the debate. Housing is not merely a private asset; it is core economic infrastructure.

Canada has been highly effective at attracting capital. But too much of that capital has flowed into existing real estate, inflating prices, rather than into new housing supply.

The policy implication is straightforward: we must redirect incentives. Governments should prioritize purpose-built rental construction, support long-term institutional investment, and reduce the distortions that reward speculation over building.

If we treat housing as infrastructure—like transportation or energy—we begin to understand the scale and urgency of what is required.

At the provincial level, Doug Ford's approach has targeted a long-standing obstacle: municipal gatekeeping.

Zoning restrictions, slow approvals, and local opposition have limited density in precisely the areas where it is most needed. Ontario's efforts to mandate housing targets and streamline approvals reflect an uncomfortable truth. Left to their own devices, many municipalities will not approve enough housing. These measures are not without controversy. But the alternative is continued paralysis.

Canada cannot solve a national housing crisis if local constraints consistently override national priorities.

The central weakness in Canada's response remains a lack of coordination. The federal government sets immigration levels and provides funding. Provinces control planning frameworks. Municipalities regulate land use. Each operates within its mandate, but the system as a whole lacks alignment.

This fragmentation produces predictable outcomes: delays, inefficiencies, and missed targets. A credible strategy would link these elements. Immigration levels should be aligned with housing capacity. Federal funding should be conditional on municipal performance. Provinces must enforce timelines and accountability. Without coordination, even the right policies will fail.

Housing is not just an economic issue. It is the foundation of social stability. When working Canadians cannot afford to live where they work, the consequences are far-reaching. Healthcare systems struggle to recruit. Businesses cannot find employees. Commutes lengthen, productivity declines, and inequality deepens.

More fundamentally, public confidence erodes. A country where effort no longer leads to security risks losing the trust that underpins its institutions.

Canada has faced national challenges before. Each required leadership willing to move beyond incrementalism.

We need to build at scale, not at the margins. We need to rebalance incentives toward supply, not speculation. More importantly, we need governments prepared to confront local resistance when it conflicts with national interest.

The early signals from leaders like Mark Carney and Premier Doug Ford suggest that the diagnosis is improving. However, diagnosis is not delivery.

The real test is whether Canada can translate intent into action which is coordinated, sustained, and ambitious.

Because in the end, this is not just about housing.

It is about whether Canada remains a country where opportunity is attainable—or becomes one where it is quietly out of reach. What do you think?

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