



# This Is Why The Central Is Number One Across The Region Our Top Notch Local Columnist Keeping You Informed



## FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS

By Theresa Grant - Real Estate Columnist

Ah, the first-time home buyer. A special breed. Joyful, optimistic, eager yet hesitant at the same time. Given the price of real estate these days, first time home buyers come in all different age ranges. Years ago, your typical first timer would be in their late twenties to mid thirties. Now it's not uncommon to find first timers in their forties and fifties. There is also a situation that qualifies some as first-time home buyers even if they have owned a home

previously. If you have owned a home previously but have not owned a home in the last five years, you qualify as a first-time home buyer. Younger first timers need a little more guidance than their older counterparts to know the right questions to ask and what should be top concerns when walking through a potential contender for their first home purchase. That may be simply that older home buyers may have lived in newer and older houses and know what they may contend with a homeowner. We think back to the houses we grew up in and remember certain characteristics of that house and can compare and ask questions based on that. Some however, grew up in apartments and that gives them a different set of questions and concerns. It is always recommended regardless of how many times you've purchased a home that you have a home inspection from a qualified home inspector. That can provide you with peace of mind when it comes to anything that may be hidden from plain view. Problems with moisture or foundation are good examples of something that may be hidden or somewhat hidden for the average person just taking a walk through the property. Some things that a first-time home buyer may overlook can seem common and others may wonder how that could not be addressed or overlooked however, when you are out looking at homes certain things can just escape you. This can be due to excitement or being completely enamoured with a property. I find that some of my first time homebuyers will get into a property and be completely taken aback at the fact that they have qualified for such a nice place and may overlook some pretty important facts. On the whole, house hunting can be somewhat overwhelming, and it doesn't hurt to bring a detached person with you to point out things that you may be overlooking or that simply didn't occur to you. I remember going through a property with home buyers and the houses were so close together there was really no where to put the snow. When I asked the potential home buyer where they would put the snow, they responded with shock and dismay because it was mid June with no thought to where one might put the shovelled snow. First time homebuyers are gearing up for a busy 2025 and will make up a huge percentage of home buyers next year. With this in mind, if you are planning on buying a home next year as rates are expected to continue to drop, it may be a good idea to have a list of questions with you. As well, make a list of things that are important to you like electrical outlets in certain rooms so you can remember to check them.

A friend, parent or sibling is always a welcome addition on tours and can prove very beneficial. How ever you want to approach it, a little preparation can go a long way in the house hunt.

Questions? Column ideas? You can email me at [newspaper@ocentral.com](mailto:newspaper@ocentral.com)

## YOU COULDN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP:

Authoritarian and woke leftist Mayor, Kevin Ashe is now looking to have Councillor Lisa Robinson criminally charged by the OPP for her 'Alt-Right' views, full news report below....

Pickering councillor faces new penalty, probe amid escalating conflict with city  
The mayor for a southern Ontario city says a councillor is facing a second consecutive 90-day pay suspension and allegations against her have been referred to police, after he announced the municipal council would move its meetings online over alleged threats from her supporters. The conflict in Pickering began more than a year ago over complaints about Coun. Lisa Robinson's social media posts, which the integrity commissioner described as "unacceptable" and potentially harmful to marginalized communities.

The escalating back-and-forth that has followed — including Robinson's repeated appearances on right-wing media platforms and the city's own lengthy video posted online earlier this week — has come to engulf local politics in the city east of Toronto. Mayor Kevin Ashe said in an interview Friday that the integrity commissioner brought police a complaint that Robinson may be aiding and abetting criminal harassment with her participation in "far-right" media.

The commissioner's office said in an email that it has suspended its own inquiry into the complaint "until any resulting police investigation, and if laid any resulting charge, has been finally disposed of."

The Durham Regional Police Service said it is "aware of these issues" and the investigation has been turned over to Ontario Provincial Police. OPP did not immediately respond to questions. Robinson, who was elected in 2022, has previously denied allegations against her. She could not be reached for comment on Friday. Ashe alleged that Robinson's supporters have been trespassing and piping up with "overblown rhetoric" at city council meetings. He said the city has had to double the police presence at the council chamber and pay for private security at recent in-person meetings, from which council members have had to be escorted to their cars.

Council meetings were already due to be held online later this year because of renovations in the chamber, he said, but city officials decided to move online sooner. "When people don't feel safe coming to their council chamber ... and when people don't follow the code of conduct, that diminishes democracy," he said. "I never thought we'd be here, but we are." In a video posted by the city this week, Ashe said the decision to stop holding council meetings in person was "not made lightly."

The heavily produced video is 13 minutes long. It features clips from Robinson's appearance on a right-wing podcast in which host Kevin J. Johnson calls Pickering city councillors "pedophiles" and "Nazis," saying they "deserve a baseball bat to the face." Robinson has previously denounced the host's comments and apologized to her colleagues. To a backdrop of dramatic music, the video also includes threatening voicemails council members received from unidentified callers, and its unnamed narrator alleges that Robinson held an unsanctioned town hall meeting in September that banned city staff, featured "alt-right materials" and was run by "outsiders with unknown intentions."

Ashe said the video was created in-house by the city's communications department, at no extra cost to taxpayers. He added they decided to produce it after the last in-person meeting on Dec. 16, at which Robinson's five fellow councillors approved her latest pay suspension over public comments accusing the city's chief administrative officer of corruption. "We made a determination that we wanted to respond to the false allegations of corruption," said Ashe.

In a social media post on Thursday, Robinson accused the mayor and the city of "resorting to bullying tactics," calling the video "absolutely pathetic" and "laughable propaganda." Robinson's December pay suspension marked the fourth time Robinson has been handed a penalty for breaching the code of conduct, including for comments criticizing Black History Month, LGBTQ+ advocacy and city officials. She received 30-day and 60-day pay suspensions on separate occasions in 2023, reacting to the first by calling herself a "modern day slave." Her first 90-day pay suspension — the harshest possible penalty under current rules — came in September. Ashe said the city has spent more than \$100,000 on integrity commissioner fees, added security and legal costs related to Robinson. He said he and other council members have been petitioning the provincial government to pass a bill that would allow the removal of a councillor from office under the Municipal Act.

The bill Municipal Affairs Minister Paul Calandra introduced last month would allow for the creation of a standard code of conduct for all municipalities, and penalties of removing and disqualifying a member of office if they are in serious violation of the code. The government has said that removal and disqualification could only happen if the municipal integrity commissioner recommends it, if Ontario's integrity commissioner agrees and if councillors except for the member in question unanimously agree to it in a vote.

Ashe said he's "thankful" that the government is taking action. But even if the bill passes and becomes law, it wouldn't come into effect in Pickering until the city's next election in October 2026, the mayor said. Robinson told The Canadian Press last September that "if the constituents don't like what I have to say or how I'm representing them, then the decision will be up to them during the next election."

Ashe nicknamed her "Double Down Lisa" on Friday. "Never in my wildest dreams would I think the councillor who would be sanctioned on four different occasions for 15 breaches of code would not show any level of remorse, regret, or even some looking in the mirror and saying, 'Maybe I'm the problem.'" This report by The Canadian Press was first published Jan. 3, 2025. Rianna Lim, The Canadian Press

## Leahy moves motion to cancel contract

# \$875 per hour is too expensive for taxpayers



In 2008 the Town of Whitby signed a contract that has automatically renewed every year since. The contract pays investigators at a large Bay Street law firm between \$495 & \$875 per hour on an as-needed basis.

That same service can be provided to Whitby for free. It's time for change.

My motion to cancel the contract will be debated at the January 15, 2025 meeting of town council.

Chris Leahy  
Regional Councillor

# KEEPING TAXES DOWN