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April 2024

MEET WITH YOUR MPPS

It's especially convenient for your MPP(s) to meet with representatives from your construction association at times when the legislature is not in session such as during a constituency week or a seasonal break. That's when MPPs plan on being in their ridings and meeting with constituents and attending community events.

In addition to one or two local issues you might raise with them, you could also add the following provincial issues to the meeting agenda"

1. The need for the Duncan Glaholt review of the Construction Act to proceed apace and conclude with the introduction of a Bill introduced in the legislature in the fall of 2024 that is consistent with the Glenn Ackerley Report.
2. Get the not so new anymore government agency Skilled Trades Ontario (STO) fully operational as quickly as possible in order to:
 - modernize curricula for all apprenticeable trades,
 - attract more young people apprentices into apprenticeships and skilled trades careers
 - provide the necessary supports to apprentices, sponsors and training delivery agencies to ensure improved completion rates.
3. Ensure that the provisions in Bill 149 that give the government the authority to super-index WSIB benefits (in addition to the automatic annual inflation adjustments, which incents workers to get on benefits and stay on benefits) are repealed or at a minimum are never used. Instead, conduct a benefits adequacy study of the WSIB's program of benefits to identify gaps and shortcomings to make sure injured workers are treated fairly.

Here are some dates to keep in mind:

- Constituency Week - April 1 to 4
- Constituency Week - April 29 to May 2
- Constituency Week - May 20 to 23
- Summer Break - June 17 to September 5

CAMPAIGNING IN HIGH GEAR FOR UPCOMING BY-ELECTIONS

Overview

Provincial by elections will be held in two ridings, Milton and Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, on Thursday, May 2, 2024 April.

Current Party Standings on the Ontario's 124 Seat Legislature:

- PC – 78 seats
- NDP – 28 seats
- Liberals – 9 seats
- Greens – 2 seats
- Independents – 5 seats (former constituency staffer for PC MPP Toby Barrett, Bobbi Anne Brady; former PC MPPs Vincent Ke and Kaleef Rasheed; former NDP MPPs Michael Mantha and Sarah Jama)
- Vacancies – 2 (Milton, Lambton-Kent-Middlesex)

Both ridings were previously held by the Tories (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex by Monte McNaughton and Milton by Parm Gill. Both McNaughton and Gill resigned to pursue other interests.)

The Doug Ford Tories will continue to form government even if they lose both by elections.

In situations like this, by elections can serve as an opportunity for voters to express their collective opinion on the performance of the government without risking throwing that government out of power.

Milton

- The latest Mainstreet poll on the race in Milton has the PC and Liberal candidates running neck and neck
- One of the main local issues is the impact of a

proposed gravel quarry

- Because of Milton's significant Muslim population, another issue making its way into the campaign conversation is the ban made by Speaker of the Ontario Legislature, Ted Arnott (this should not be interpreted as any kind of a political statement or taking sides with Israel or Palestine and Gaza, but Arnott is arguably the most thoughtful, principled and well-intentioned individual in the Legislature), on the wearing of the keffiyeh in the chamber. (The keffiyeh is a traditional headdress worn by people in the Middle East. The black and white patterned kaffiyeh has become a pro-Palestinian symbol. Premier Ford wants Arnott's ban overturned but members of his caucus don't agree, which doesn't help the Tory cause in Milton.)
- All parties have had their heavy weights door knocking in the riding

Lambton-Kent-Middlesex

- A Tory victory in this riding appears to be a "slam dunk" with the latest Mainstreet poll giving the PC candidate a massive lead
- The riding was held by PC MPP Monte McNaughton for 11 years but was in the Liberal column for 8 years prior
- In the 2022 Ontario general election the NDP placed second but some 40 points back
- Because of the closure of the obstetrics department at a local hospital, the NDP are pressing the healthcare button in their campaigning in the L-K-M riding
- Anything but a PC victory would be a BIG surprise

SUPPORT FOR GRITS WANES UNDER TORY ATTACK ADS – ABACUS POLL

Here are the results of an Abacus Data survey of 998 Ontario adults taken between April 11 and April 16, 2024 (after the provincial budget):

- If an election was held at the time the survey was taken, 41% of decided voters would vote PC, 25% Liberal, 21% NDP and 7% Green
- Support for the PCs which has consistently remained in the 38% to 42% range, stood at 41%, unchanged from the February 22, 2024 and March 22, 2024 surveys
- Support for the Liberals which has been in the 24% to 28% band for some time now, stood at 25%, down from 27% in the previous five surveys
- NDP support which has been as low as 19% (February 22, 2024) and as high as 28% (September 4, 2023) was unchanged from the previous month at 21%
- Support for the Greens is consistently rock solid in the 5% - 7% range
- Some Queen's Park pundits have suggested that the decline in Liberal popularity is the result of Tory advertising attacking Grit leader, Bonnie Crombie.

For the full story, click on the following link: https://abacusdata.ca/ontario_politics_abacus_april2024/

RURAL COMMUNITY IN THE DARK ABOUT PROJECT

According to Premier Ford, about a year ago the province asked municipalities across the province to assemble lands for industrial use.

In response to this request, the Region of Waterloo made plans to expropriate 770 acres of farmland in the Town of Wilmot, outside of Kitchener.

According to NDP leader, Marit Stiles, Bill 162 gives the province the authority to expropriate the lands for a new project before an environmental assessment is done.

Councillors in the Town of Wilmot have signed non-disclosure agreements that forbid them from disclosing any information about the project that might be planned for the lands.

There has been no consultation about development on the lands in question and the public has been left in the dark.

This has created quite a stir in the Region.

NEW CONDO MARKET TANKS IN GTHA

According to a report published by Urbanation Inc. on April 22, 2024:

- The Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) new condominium market reported 1,461 sales in Q1-2024, the lowest quarterly total since the Global Financial Crisis in Q1-2009 (884 sales).
- Only four projects totaling 958 units were brought to market in the first quarter of 2024.
- Unsold inventory across all stages of development dipped 2% quarterly from the record high in Q4-2023 to 23,815 units in Q1-2024, equal to a high of 22.8 months of supply.
- In the past year, unsold new condominium supply increased 30%, rising 124% over the past two years.
- For the full story, click on [GTHA New Condo Sales Fall 71% Below 10-Year Average | Urbanation](#)

CONSIDER WOODBINE FOR YOUR NEXT ASSOCIATION EVENT

On Wednesday, April 17th Martin Benson and I had a full tour of all the facilities that are now available at Woodbine. As you know, COCA has hosted events at Woodbine several times in the past. But since the time of our last get-together there, the property has been subject to a massive expansion and total make-over. I hardly recognized the place starting at the huge parking garage (free parking), to the brand new 500 room hotel with rates that are comparable to those on the airport strip and with rooms that have spectacular views of the track, 400,000 sq ft of gaming space and an expansive VIP Room for the high rollers, and an impressive array of meeting and eating spaces for your association's meetings and events with all kinds of options. Martin and I visited every corner of the place from the jockeys' locker rooms to the expansive outdoor terrace and the Jockey Club.

[Woodbine Entertainment](#) can tailor an event to fit the requirements of your association. So consider hosting an event there. Your members will love it! They won't be disappointed.

For your Woodbine tour, contact Jorge Soares, Vice President, Stakeholder Relations, Woodbine Entertainment, jsoares@woodbine.com



RESOLVE DISPUTES FASTER!

Payment delays and disputes can cost your business a LOT of time and money.
Ontario has added Prompt payment and Adjudication to the Construction Act.