

Plenty to thank for CCKT's forum

On behalf of the board of Concerned Citizens of King Township (CCKT), I want to thank not only our own community for making this first-of-its-kind event such a resounding success, but also our broader communities for attending. We clearly recognize and champion our key environmental areas in southern Ontario.

Despite the success of the legislated protections covering the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine and Niagara Escarpment, our green spaces are at risk. With GTA development rates the highest in Canada, we struggle to find the balance between conservation and development. This event focused expert presentation, dialogue and insight into the future of these treasured assets, in light of the upcoming legislated 2015 reviews of these plans.

This special forum was only possible on this scale and scope with the support and engagement of a number of organizations we wish to thank:

The London Publishing Corp. (publishers of the King Weekly Sentinel) for being our Exclusive Media Partner. With your generous donation of half-page colour advertisements across your family of papers, we reached 95,000 households across the very regions these areas cover. Thank you for supporting our goals.

The Kingbridge Centre and Institute for donating their spectacular auditorium, reception area and staff embrace. Your facility is state-of-the-art and a gem in King Township. We could never have been so effective in accommodating our audience, and you never wavered when asked to accommodate our live taping. Thank you for embracing our community.

Ontario Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller. His non-partisan and learned perspectives on the reviews were very enlightening and informative. We know to challenge the relevant ministries for proper data with which to conduct them, as currently there is little to none. Thank you.

Our event partners and panel participants: Bob Patrick of Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment, Erin Shapero of Ontario Greenbelt Alliance, Debbe Crandell of Save the Oak Ridges Moraine, and environment lawyer David Donnelly. Your on-the-street knowledge and perspectives on these plans, and guidance on how to engage the critical issues raised, was invaluable. Thank you.

Schomberg graphic artist Jen Bedford for tirelessly and expertly crafting our event ads, posters and materials. Your word speaks for itself. Thank you.

Lastly, our attendees. You showed up, took the time to come and engage with us and learn how to support your communities. You are environmental stewards and we acknowledge you for helping us champion the issues raised with our local and provincial governments, ministries, political candidates and other support groups. Thank you.

For anyone who missed the event, it will air for the first time on Rogers Community TV (Newmarket) on Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m.

Greg Locke

Chair - CCKT