

## Dear Santa, All I Want For Christmas?

by SHERALYN ROMAN

For those who believe in Santa, you might agree that this year, he has a pretty tall order ahead of him. Anyone asking for something other than a pink Barbie sweatshirt (malls and online shopping sites are swarming with them) is in for a bit of a shock and miracle worker though he might sometimes be, I'm not sure even Santa would be able to conjure up ANY of the items on my list. Despite this, I'm posting my 'All I want to Christmas List' here in the vain hopes that if Santa won't come through, perhaps the Town of Caledon or even Doug Ford might. I'm doubtful.

I would hope it goes without saying that peace on earth, food for every belly and a commitment to clean, responsible and climate friendly energy are all top of the list. More locally, however, and perhaps just a smidge more achievable, the themes are similar. I'd love some peace amongst the forces seeking to divide Peel Region into three distinct entities. Peace for the many employees who have had their lives and careers thrown into upheaval and peace of mind for Caledon residents in particular who frankly have the most to lose in a dissolution scenario. It would be nice to think we might still have prompt paramedic services and not have to worry about huge, double-digit tax increases. Even better would be to have the sure and certain knowledge that dissolution was not just an empty deathbed promise to one politician and an attempt to stave off the election of another to certain leadership of the provincial Liberals, but we can't have everything.

Consistency on minor issues like the greenbelt, trees and highways would also be awesome. It would be wonderful to know that once Ford has stated, publicly and on the record, that he 'won't touch the greenbelt,' that he actually won't touch the greenbelt. Conversely I'd love to believe him when he says he's reversing his position on the greenbelt and returning ALL the land he removed but 'Flip-Flop Ford' has a pretty reliable track record of changing his mind. The trees at Ontario Place? At least we know there will be no flip-flopping in this particular scenario 'as quickly as Olivia Chow gave her 'blessing' those trees were torn down faster than a pack of hungry teenage boys taking down a bag of Frito-Lays.

By the way Santa, I don't need a highway. Could you perhaps relay that message to Mr. Ford because while thousands of Ontario taxpayers have spoken vehemently against it, Ford's ears appear to be failing him. Perhaps a round or two of your very loud 'HO, HO, HO! Hold off on building a highway,' would do the trick? The added bonus is that if no extra highway is built, perhaps too there will be no need for another gravel pit! Think of the dangers you'll avoid in the future as your reindeer won't have to deke any blasted fly rock!

Here's what some Caledon residents actually do want for Christmas Santa, a SAFE way to cross the road! Please oh pretty please Santa will you install a proper, overhead pedestrian crosswalk with lights, a signal and pavement markings in Southfields? If one were ageist, one might assume with your white beard and hair that you might be a senior and Santa, this crosswalk would help your fellow senior citizens. It's much needed, and located right outside the seniors building on one of the busiest residential roads in Caledon. Heck, your target audience - children - could use it too! If you can't do it Santa, drop a message down Mr. Sheen's chimney - maybe he can help.

Stability and consistency while you're at it for the folks at the Town of Caledon would also be nice. By last count, admittedly unofficial, there have been a total of 18+ people either 'shown the door' or who have seen themselves out due to all the upheaval. Noticing that some of those staffers have now made their way over to our nearest northern neighbour and are working for the Town of Orangeville is certainly Orangeville's gain and Caledon's loss. Santa, I'm guessing you agree with me that Mayor Post has been very, very good this year and since she's on the nice list, deserves to be surrounded by nice employees too.

Anyway, Santa, thanks for reading my Christmas list and to be clear I have far more faith in you and your abilities than I ever would in those of Mr. Ford. As for the Town of Caledon? I have hope, I'm just not sure for how much longer.