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VIEW FROM QUEEN'S PARK: Amazon Bid

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Fall in Ontario is one of the most beautiful times of the year
I hope you've been out enjoying the beautiful weather and gorgeous trees. It has been a busy time here in Newmarket-Aurora and at Queen's Park as well.
Exciting news came when Premier Kathleen Wynne made an announcement about the province's support for Ontario cities bidding for Amazon's second headquarters (HQ2).
In a statement last week, Premier Wynne made it clear that Ontario is a strong contender for Amazons second global headquarters. Premier Wynne said, ?We have one of the world's most talented, diverse workforces ? and an open commitment to immigration that guarantees this lasting advantage. At a time when others are becoming more insular, unable or unwilling to attract the world's best and brightest, we are unwavering in our commitment to building a place for the whole world to call home. Our communities are welcoming, inclusive places ? places where people want to live. Our government's commitment to public infrastructure, roads and transit is historic in scale, setting us up for an even more mobile, dynamic future. And we have several attractive sites for HQ2 available, at a highly competitive cost.?
For the past two years, Ontario has won Site Selection Magazine's Canadian Competitiveness Award for being the best place in Canada to make a new business investment.

Small Business
Through better access to government support services and procurement opportunities, Ontario is helping small businesses grow. By 2020, the province will designate 33 per cent of its procurement spending to small and medium-sized businesses.
In addition to this, the province is making it easier for small business to receive necessary resources both online and over the phone through the new Small Business Access program.
Ontario is partnering with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce to promote awareness of this new service.Supporting small businesses is part of our plan to create jobs, grow the economy and help people in their everyday lives.

Budget Talks
For the fourth year in a row the provincial government has launched Budget Talks, an online consultation that allows the public to help shape policies and programs that will be part of Ontario's future. The government will provide funding for up to five proposals identified and voted on by the public as part of the 2018 Budget, this is the second year that funding will be allocated directly to citizen-led proposals.
Residents of Newmarket-Aurora and all across the province can share their ideas on the website Ontario.ca/budgettalks. Residents are invited to share ideas on five focus areas including child care, seniors, small business, students and healthy living.
Eligible proposals must be submitted online by midnight November 3, 2017. Proposal must be for a new fund, pilot project, study, event or digital service and fall within the scope of the Ontario government to deliver. Proposals must help support one of the five focus areas outlined on Budget Talks, require a one-time investment of no more than $1 million and show progress or completion by spring 2019.

York Region Funding
Our government is funding over $17 million in repairs and retrofits for social housing here in York Region. The repairs and retrofits are funded through of Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan and proceeds from the carbon market.
During the first year of this program Trinity Glen Housing Corporation received over $558,000 for improvements, upgrades and retrofits to new and existing buildings. Not only does the retrofit and installation of new heating systems help residents by making them more comfortable and reducing their electricity bills, it helps us all reduce our carbon footprint. The investment is part of a provincial five-year, up to $657 million investment to upgrade social housing apartment buildings in communities across the province.
We're channelling proceeds from the carbon market into programs that help households and businesses reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save money on energy costs.These investments also make sure that our social housing is modern and energy efficient.

Decent housing is more than just shelter; it provides stability, security and dignity and it is the foundation for secure employment, for raising a family, and for building strong communities.
I'm proud of the steps our government is taking to transform our housing system, modernize social housing and reduce greenhouse gas pollution.

Local Events
Newmarket and Aurora have been the host of some great events over the past couple weeks. The Hillary House held their sixth annual ball to support the Hillary House National Historic Site. The ball is always a night of fun and culture.
The Newmarket Hurricane's and Aurora Tigers played their annual Pink in the Rink ? Battle of York charity game. The game is played in memory of Kevin Lord, KJ Ramolla and Josh Sedore and all proceeds are donated to The Cancer Centre at Southlake.
I was delighted to attend. The Hurricanes won 2-1, for the sixth year in a row. It was a great night with good hockey.
I was honoured to recently attend the opening of Cadence Health and Wellness in Newmarket. The mental health service provider is geared toward first responders and members of the military, their families and the general population. Many of the staff have first responderor military service, or a family member who has served.It is important that our first responders and military members, and their families, have someone to talk to who have walked the proverbial mile in their shoes.

As always, I invite you to contact me on any issue. Please call my community office at 905-750-0019, or visit my website at www.ChrisBallardMPP.ca. My email is: cballard.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org. I look forward to hearing from you.