



6th Annual Ontario Economic Summit

**November 2-4, 2009
White Oaks Conference
Resort and Spa**

About the OES

The Ontario Economic Summit (OES), now in its sixth year, is a well-known event bringing together leaders in business, academia, labour and government to discuss and strategize on issues facing the Ontario economy. In times of economic uncertainty, there is enormous value in providing a forum where all participants in the economy can meet and collaborate.

In 2008 the OES welcomed Quebec Premier Jean Charest in a conversation with Premier Dalton McGuinty. The opening night reception featured two of Canada's leading public intellectuals, Stephen Lewis and Thomas Homer-Dixon. And, while markets worldwide tumbled, financial bubble expert Robert Shiller offered much-needed context to the crisis unfolding. Respondents to the evaluation survey noted the timeliness of the programming and almost 90% said they were guaranteed or probably would attend the OES again. Previous Summits have included presentations from other global thinkers such as former U.S. President Bill Clinton, former Irish Finance Minister Alan Dukes and the Hon. Jim Flaherty, Canadian Minister of Finance.

OES delegates are drawn from large public institutions, some of the province's largest private corporations, with limited participation from labour groups and SMEs. For the last three years, more than 22 Ontario Cabinet ministers have hosted tables at the annual OES Breakfast with the Cabinet Ministers, giving delegates a unique opportunity to speak to lawmakers in a casual and intimate setting.

2009 Economic Conditions

This year's summit will take place in one of the most difficult years Ontario has faced in decades. Industries that have been the mainstays of the Ontario economy for years, such as manufacturing and forestry, have continued to contract, while weak demand from trading partners and domestic consumers have led to falling profits and unemployment across the economy.

The Ontario economy is expected to contract further in 2009, with the average private sector forecast of GDP at an annual rate of -1.5% (at time of writing). A staggering 129,000 jobs were lost in Canada this past January alone.

Ontario will post an estimated 18 billion dollar deficit for the two fiscal years ending March 31, 2009 and March 31, 2010. Ontario is not just experiencing a temporary downturn, but is also undergoing a long-term structural transition. While many will readily acknowledge that such a transition is underway, there are still many questions – and many ideas – about what the province is transitioning to: innovative, high tech powerhouse? Green economy leader? Dynamic destination for tourism and investment?

This year's Ontario Economic Summit is an opportunity to address these questions and bring our leaders together to determine the best direction that will result in an optimum level of prosperity for the future.

2009 Ontario Economic Summit Draft Program Outline (Subject to Revision)

READY. SET. GROW.

How we get there from here.

Track 1: Green Economy and the Great Lakes Region

With manufacturing jobs disappearing on both sides of the Great Lakes, leaders are looking to the green economy as a key piece of the sector's transformation. Michigan has committed to generating 25% of its energy needs through renewable electric energy and bio-fuels by 2025, while Ontario is consolidating its development of renewable energy and a climate change regime through the proposed Green Energy Act.

This panel is an opportunity to hear ideas from political and business leaders from the Great Lakes Region on how we can work together to make the region the core of the new green economy by building a "green corridor" throughout the Great Lakes region.

Potential keynote speakers for the session include Michigan governor Jennifer Granholm among others.

Track 2: Destination Ontario

Echoing the Ontario Chamber of Commerce's emerging vision of "Ontario as a Magnet for the World", this session will discuss how to bring tourism and investment dollars to the province. The development of better tourism infrastructure and marketing is a key way to revive ailing one-industry towns and rural

Ontario, and following the release of the Sorbara report and the announcement of tourism sector funding in the federal budget, now is the time for this important component of the economy to be discussed at the OES.

Renewing investment in Ontario is another key priority. While last year's summit featured a panel on Ontario businesses expanding international trade, attracting international investment is equally important in making Ontario a truly international economy.

Track 3: A Knowledge-Driven, Creative Economy: Our Pathway to Prosperity?

This session will debate the potential of knowledge-intensive, creative industries and their role as a source of innovation and wealth generation for the Ontario economy.

Many companies use the design expertise of Ontario's workforce to develop new goods and services that are marketed around the world. Canada's gaming industry has a growing employment base and is now ranked third in the world behind only Japan and the United States. Additionally, it is important to explore the convergence of our creative industries with many of our "traditional players" from manufacturing, healthcare delivery (e-health), resource sectors and others. Speakers will examine and debate how a strategy of innovation, entrepreneurialism, and creativity can help position Ontario for growth in a new, post-recession economy.

Spotlight Session: Is Maintenance Enough?

Canada and Ontario will spend billions on repairing and enhancing existing infrastructure this year. But is the status quo enough to keep the province competitive with other jurisdictions? Our panel will discuss what key projects could be considered to ensure Ontario emerges from the downturn stronger than ever. Additional ideas for this infrastructure-focused session are welcome.

The Bear Pit

This interactive session is where delegates express their thoughts on key OES themes in an open, moderated forum. Participants voiced their overwhelming approval of the Bear Pit session in our 2008 evaluation survey, and this year's version will incorporate the suggestions for enhancing participation and overall outcomes generated.