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# There's plenty of slot revenues to go around

When it comes to Georgian Downs revenues, the Town of Innisfil is thinking small-scale.

Yesterday, the County of Simcoe passed a recommendation to seek Casino Rama revenues from the province. The Township of Ramara is doing the same, after years of failing to receive a stake in Casino Rama revenues. Both of those municipalities have spent millions in capital project costs, upgrading road and emergency services that directly affect the casino and its patrons. Meanwhile, the province received \$105 million from Rama revenues last year.

Innisfil's municipal leaders have been watching the situation closely, with the mayor and deputy mayor even voting against the proposal at county council. They worry the county may eventually seek revenues from Georgian Downs.

Since the site opened in 2001, Innisfil has received over \$23 million in revenues.

The town has also spent significant money upgrading roads and other infrastructure for the increased traffic generated by Georgian Downs. Obviously, their concerns are warranted. But this could be the perfect time to toss the county some money. Georgian Downs is scheduled to undergo a major expansion, which will see its number of slot machines increase from about 450 to 1,000. Presumably, more slot machines will generate greater revenues at the site.

## Comment

by Chris Simon

While the town claims the money will help pay for community projects, it forgets that the county provides essential services that directly affect the Georgian Downs area. The county maintains several roads that run through the Innisfil area. County Road 27 is a major commuter road, located only a few kilometres from Georgian Downs.

The list of roads that could directly affect Georgian Downs patrons is long. George Johnston Road, and county roads 89, 88, 90 and 26 are among only a few roads that help bring patrons from the northern and western ends of the county to Innisfil and Georgian Downs. Both the county and Innisfil could greatly benefit from the economic impact created if those roads were properly maintained and repaired.

The county is also justifying a stake of Rama revenues based on the other essentials it provides to patrons, like ambulance services. The same argument could thus be made towards Georgian Downs.

Innisfil council needs to start thinking outside

the box. It's easy to fall into a trap, and suggest Georgian Downs is only for Innisfil's profit. But by that single-minded logic, Innisfil should be paying for its own ambulance, garbage and Ontario Works services. Things don't work that way though, it would cost too much. Instead, municipal representatives are given the task of doing what is best for the people of our communities.

An investment in county roads, infrastructure and social services will benefit everyone, including town residents. Well maintained and repaired roads, along with a greater investment in the county's tourism association could attract people to every area of the county, including Innisfil.

Casino revenues could also be reinvested in county garbage and paramedic services, to improve the lives of town residents.

The county is currently undergoing its growth management process, something that will determine how several hundred thousand people will be serviced over the next 25 years. Innisfil has chosen to be a part of the process, and will likely benefit from the stability provided by a long-term growth plan. Town council is willing to work for the benefit of all county residents in some aspects, but not in others.

It seems like this give and take relationship is a little one-sided.

# GO letter written in bad taste

## Letters From Our Readers

I believe that it's important for there to exist a dialogue between newspaper editors and their readers. I also believe that the purpose of forums like editorials and reader mail is for the free and open exchange of opinions and ideas.

Normally I applaud those who feel strongly enough about an issue to take the time to write a letter that has the potential to be seen by thousands of people. However, I do not applaud Wendy Szmik who wrote in regarding the previous week's editorial (GOing the distance for train travel). Frankly, I was dismayed by the content and tone of Szmik's letter, and felt someone should speak up in support of the editor, Chris Simon.

Least of my concerns was the poor construction of her argument, though I do feel it's worth mentioning. Among many things, she claims that anyone who commutes to Toronto through a winter will "never do it again" simply because that is a choice that she has made. Yet many people commute from Innisfil to Toronto and they have done so for years. Why do you think the highways are so busy?

Szmik expresses anger over the suggestion that a GO station in Innisfil could serve those wishing to shop in Barrie because, "GO is a commuter service, not a shopping service". The last time I checked, the definition of "commuter" is any person who regularly travels from one place to another, as from suburb to city.

I do believe that would include those wishing to go

from Innisfil into Barrie to do shopping.

Szmik also complains about the suggestion that the reintroduction of the GO train to the area could become a safety issue. The editorial suggested that rail crossings remaining unused for so many years has caused motorists to no longer exercise any caution when crossing. Szmik cites the fact that GO has introduced an "advertising safety blitz" as evidence for this being insulting to residents.

I am wondering why she thinks GO would waste their advertising dollars on a campaign promoting safety if they didn't think that safety might be an issue. I highly doubt they threw together such a campaign without doing a little research and so perhaps the existence of the ads only serves to support the assertion of the editor.

Szmik goes on to discredit herself further by finishing her letter about why we don't need a GO station here in Innisfil with a complaint about how town money has been misspent and should have instead been invested in a GO station. Excuse my ignorance, but I can't seem to wrap my mind around that one.

The faulty logic of the letter was bad, but it wasn't enough to compel me to write this letter.

What angered me most about Szmik's letter was the fact that she turned it into a personal attack on a man who was simply fulfilling his end of the dialogue between editor and reader, a man who she presumably has never met (I presume this only because I believe very few people would have the gall to say to someone's face the majority of the insults written in her letter).

She refers to Simon's "supposed intellect", "foolish comments" and "absolute craziness". Apparently a fan of the melodramatic, she mentions her "complete and utter bewilderment" and the necessity of Valium to calm herself down.

Szmik claims that Simon is insulting and injuring his readers, not making any sense, and even claims that he has no right to comment on the subject because he doesn't "have a clue" about it.

She apparently doesn't have a clue about decency, or how to properly express oneself without resorting to hyperbole and mud slinging. By her own logic then, she probably should avoid writing any letters to the editor in the future.

Personally, I'll be happy not to read them.

Sarah McCarthy,  
Innisfil

## Mayor's letter laughable

I read with amusement how quickly mayor Brian Jackson was to jump to both his and fellow elected officials' defence for comments made by a private citizen regarding attendance to growth meetings in a previous letter to the editor.

Barb Baguley made no reference to herself as a former elected official, but the bearing that this fact has on her comments are obviously something that

Jackson takes very seriously, if he must so carefully point it out repeatedly.

In my opinion, some of his excuses were lackluster and perhaps should have resulted in the adjustment to his busy schedule. This is the future of Innisfil in the County of Simcoe, he, if admittedly not myself, should be as fully informed and up to date as is possible, as should all elected officials that I helped, or

didn't help, into office with my votes. Thank you to Baguley for bringing to our attention the attendance record and habits of our elected officials at the growth meetings that she attended, and to Jackson for carefully pointing out who is the elected member and who is the former, perhaps that will be a consideration for public voting in the future.

Robert Tulli,  
Innisfil

## Without an Innisfil station, we'll lose the GO service

I agree with Susan and Ken Grace's letter last week (No GO station, no Innisfil patrons).

What is the point of extending the train service if the train is not stopping to pick anybody up? As the younger generation says "duh!"

Was this just a make work project with no serious commitment to the end result?

We all know what is going to happen next. As the expression goes: You don't use it, you lose it.

June Sheppard,  
Innisfil