

What a waste

With the cost of hosting the G8 and G20 summits reaching the \$1 billion-plus mark, we can't help but wonder how Prime Minister Stephen Harper will be able to lecture Canadians on his party's wise spending practices when the next federal election rolls around?

Rightfully, the government is under attack on the cost of this world leader gabfest from all Opposition parties, not to mention Joe Public, who would likely laugh at the sheer stupidity involved if it wasn't for the fact he/she was paying for it.

From building fake lakes in Toronto to appease visiting media, to spending thousands on public works projects in Northern Ontario towns where dignitaries won't even visit, these summits—and their astronomical pricetags—are more likely to make Canada an international laughing-stock than impress outsiders.

Compounding the problem is that these three days of meetings—and let's be honest, these summits are more about show than substance—will play havoc with the lives of millions in Canada's busiest city.

Traffic chaos is already being predicted by Toronto Police, entertainment venues have promised to shut down, businesses by the dozens will be affected as well as hospitals and other services. Hundreds of thousands of people will be inconvenienced all for the sake of what?

Will global leaders solve the world hunger problem? Will climate change cease to be a concern after the June 25-27 meetings? Will we have global peace, an end to the economic crisis, stability in the worldwide financial markets?

Every one of the participating countries is preaching financial restraint and austerity and yet to host these meetings we are witnessing the epitome of reckless, out of control wasteful spending.

Sadly, when the leaders leave town that will be the legacy of these talks.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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WEB POLL RESULTS

- The world's biggest sporting event—soccer's World Cup—kicked off last week. How would you rate your interest in the month-long tournament?
- I am very interested and will watch as many games as I can (29%)
 - I am somewhat interested and will watch some matches (21%)
 - Watch soccer? You must be kidding! (50%)

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Letters to the editor

Crash course for speeding drivers?

Dear editor,
What's the rush?

Why is it that we are in such a hurry these days? I have lived in Georgetown for 12 years and noticed more and more people driving erratically than ever before.

A month ago I witnessed a young teen get hit by a car, which is still haunting me. Then there were the multiple accidents that were published in *The Independent & Free Press* on June 1 as well as others that we hear about.

Drivers use our streets as race tracks or don't pay attention because they are too busy texting, talking on the phone, etc. What's the rush I ask myself?

We all need to go places and hopefully avoid being late, but at what cost? Do we need to witness or experience an accident ourselves in order to change our behaviour? A car is a wonderful thing to have but it is also a dangerous weapon. I believe we must go back to the basics we were taught in driver's education and model good driving behaviour to our children/teens.

Our police department is doing their job but can't always be there to hold our hands and reinforce the law. It is up to us to be more aware of our speed, respect the posted speed limits as well as other drivers on the road.

Think about the consequences it can bring. Isn't that enough? Do we need to start campaigns like the ones that have already been implemented such as MADD, DARE and many others? I am convinced we need to implement another campaign to bring awareness to people with risky driving behaviours with hopes that it will have an impact.

So, for you speeders out there who think you are invincible, think again, you are risking not only the lives of others but your own. Is it worth it?

Francine C. Gilmour, Georgetown

Better plan needed

Dear editor,
I'd like to add another letter to the series asking for a serious transportation strategy in this town.

The tone with which the suggestion of a possible transit offering by 2031 was made implies that there is concern in the town about having transit at all. A more important question is: what will the price of oil be in 2031? As the price of oil goes up, one of the first dominoes to fall

will be personal transportation—an endeavor which sees thousands of pounds of glass and steel transported around town just to move a single person from A to B. It is one of the most wasteful uses of energy in our society and relatively-isolated towns like ours will suffer first.

Further, while transit can help deal with the damage that has been done, in future, how about considering town plans that are more walkable or more friendly to bicyclists? We seem to have decided that walkable towns can only have existed in the past—sprucing up downtown, for example—and that new development will inevitably consist of asphalt-padded strip malls. Even ideas such as putting parking at the rear rather than up front would help to better connect the sidewalks to what lies beyond them.

I do agree with another recent letter writer saying that there seems to be little visible demand for things like bike lanes in town. But with the way the town is organized—it is optimized for cars and looks far nicer from the window of a car than it does from the vantage point of someone on foot or bike—can anyone really be surprised about that?

Matthew Buckley-Golder, Georgetown