

OPINION

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No-go for GO

While we support increased funding for GO Transit to make it more efficient and affordable, we do not think property taxpayers in the GTA municipalities should be asked to foot the bill.

There's no denying the GTA property taxpayers use GO Transit, but the property tax system is not the best way to finance the necessary improvements.

One of the best ways to reduce gridlock on the GTA's highways is to encourage people to get out of their cars and into public transit alternatives.

And in the GTA, GO Transit represents the best possible alternative currently available.

What we need is a massive transfusion of money into GO Transit to make it one of the best rapid transit systems in North America.

GO Transit is trying to meet the demand and has increased its 10-year growth capital budget created in 2001 from \$1 billion to \$2 billion.

But the Province expects the GTA municipalities to fund one-third of this, and local politicians are balking at this amount. And so they should.

If Halton is forced to contribute, regional taxpayers would see their share jump from \$37 million to \$75 million. And that's only a start. What about the future? Halton could recoup \$45 million of that amount through development charges, but would still be \$30 million short.

Relying on property taxpayers to help fund GO Transit improvements is shortsighted. It discourages rather than encourages investment.

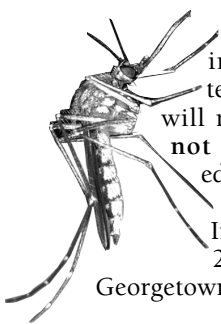
Instead of relying on municipal governments to further burden property taxpayers, the Province should be looking at going it alone, or, better yet, forming a partnership with the federal government and putting some of those gasoline taxes to good use.

It's high time the federal and provincial governments realized the more money they contribute to rapid transit systems like GO Transit, the less money they need to spend in other areas such as road improvements.

Someday, we would like to see a rapid transit system shuttling trainloads of people along the lakeshore from Niagara Falls to Kingston. But that won't happen unless some leadership is shown in changing the existing flawed funding system.

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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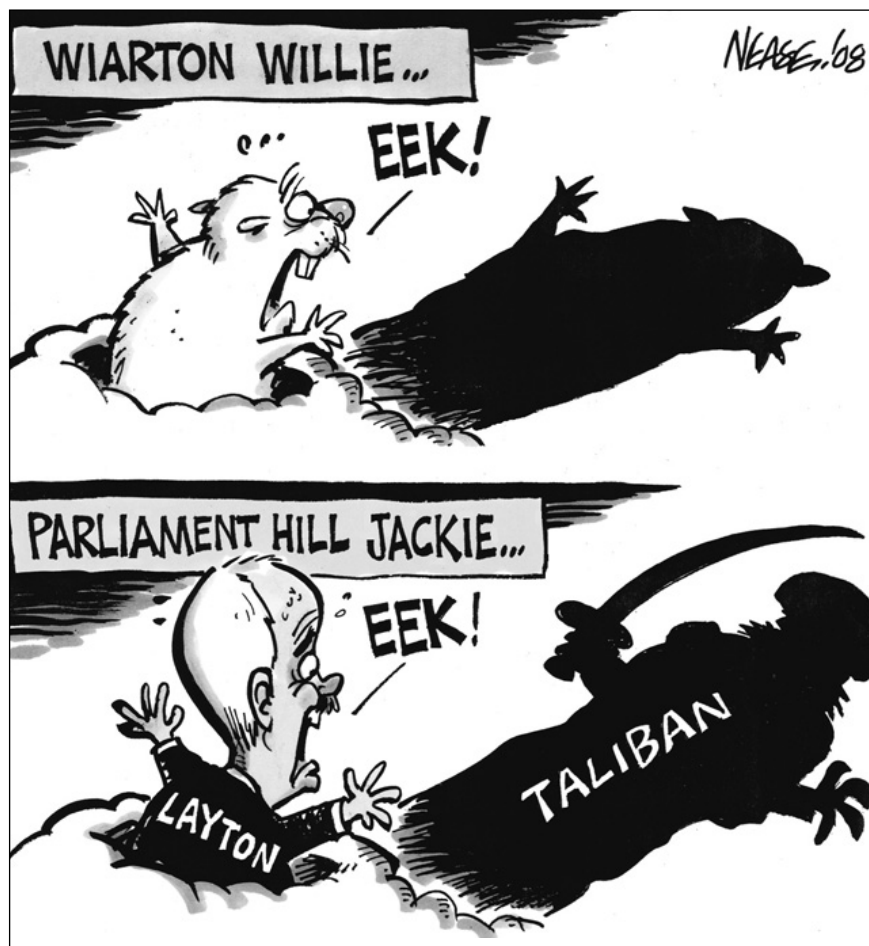
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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sharing views on growth a waste of time

Dear editor,

Here we go again! How many times have we, the citizens of Georgetown, been asked to give our opinions on growth?

As a resident of Georgetown Southeast (Argyll Rd. and 10th Line) we signed petitions years ago to stop the re-zoning of the 10th Line/10 Sideroad lands from light industrial to residential. This petition went to the Ontario Municipal Board and all of our concerns fell on deaf ears as the Town didn't put a stop to the request of the re-zoning in the first place. Our town council gets bullied at every turn.

I'm sure that the majority of you reading this letter either remained in Georgetown or relocated here for two reasons— small town and safe community. However, each time I read *The Independent & Free Press* I'm reading more and more articles of possible future housing and expansion of our great "little" community (i.e. hydro expansion, new developments.)

I know you're probably thinking— "She's just moved here from Mississauga or Brampton and doesn't want urban sprawl"— well, you're wrong. I was born here and I used to love to venture out in our great town. Now I'm met with rude people (drivers and shoppers) whose only concern is to get their business done with no regard for others. This change has happened overnight.

So now "they" (Town council) want OUR input on the growth of OUR town? Folks, don't waste your evenings going to their meetings, when

you could be spending your precious time with your families and friends. Believe me, you'll only receive "lip service" from our Town council once again. The all-mighty tax grab that the council benefits from will win out every time.

I shudder to think what this town will look like in 10 years, even five.

Town council must show leadership

Dear editor,

Re: Traffic measures planned for Eaton Street.

In 2006, Town council promised they would address the Mountainview Road residents' concerns in their 2007 budget.

In late 2007 we went to the mayor's office to follow up on that promise.

Later the next day I was contacted by Town traffic co-ordinator Bob Butrym and was told that council did not address Mountainview Road in the budget.

I have had the pleasure of speaking extensively with Bob over the past three and a half years on our traffic issues and found he is a great person. However, it is not his fault his hands are tied because our town has no direction on how to address the growth and on-going traffic concerns in Georgetown.

We will see more developers, bus lines, water pipeline and the destruction of our farmlands. There must be leadership in council or we will become known as the GBA—Greater Brampton Area.

I would like to make it clear that in

Maybe we will no longer be called Georgetown, but instead "Brampton West", "Milton East" or "Mississauga North West"? You pick what you want to have printed on your envelope labels. All I know is that what we all came here for, or stayed here for, will be lost.

Carolyn MacColl, Georgetown

no way am I putting down Bob or Mayor Rick Bonnette, just giving a heads up to voters that our town will be the GBA if council does not take the growth issue seriously— and by the horns.

Council needs to employ more innovative ways, including raising revenue, not just relying on the old way of raising property taxes. Georgetown should be a leader in innovation, not a follower.

Waldo Paquette, Georgetown

Sally Ann says thanks

Dear editor,

To all the individuals and businesses that supported the Salvation Army during the Christmas appeal we would like to thank you for your assistance.

Your contributions of time, money and toys enabled us to give families of the community a Christmas and will enable us to provide assistance for the coming year. You have made this one of the best years ever.

Thank you again from all of us at the Salvation Army.

Jack Oesch, Georgetown

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