

**Stouffville**  
**Sun-Tribune**

A Metroland community newspaper  
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# OPINION

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## LETTERS to the EDITOR

### Thanks for supporting study

Re: Council considers theatre in school, Sept. 9.

I extend heartfelt thanks to Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Sue Sherban and the rest of council for unanimously voting to move forward with a feasibility study on converting Stouffville's Old Town Hall into a performing arts centre.

Their vision, reasoned deliberations and strong commitment to our town earned them a well-deserved standing ovation.

I would also like to thank Councillors Rob Hargrave and Ken Ferdinands for the hours they devoted to working on this concept and making it real.

To those who took time out of their busy lives to write and phone in support of this wonderful project, thank you.

And to all those who made it a priority to attend the council meeting and to those who stood up to speak, your strong presence and eloquent words showed a genuine and unwavering devotion to our community and this project. For this, I give you my most heartfelt thanks.

The experience of sitting through a council meeting filled with such positive energy, genuine laughter and unbelievably strong level of commitment to our community lays a strong foundation on which we can build this project.

PAM MANDICH  
STOUFFVILLE

### Neighbourhoods need traffic help

Re: Promised improvements not done, letter to the editor by Heinz Nitschke, Sept. 4.

Mr. Nitschke referred to a letter I had written commenting on your paper's Aug. 7 interview with regional transportation commissioner Kees Schipper.

In my letter, I addressed concern only about Mr. Schipper's comment that traffic calming in residential neighbourhoods played into congestion.

I was concerned about the dismissive nature of his comment, given residents living on streets with excessive speed and infiltration from cut-through motorists see traffic calming measures — and I said nothing specifically about speed bumps — as a means to restore safety and improve the quality of life in their neighbourhoods.

I fail to see how Mr. Nitschke could extrapolate I was out to undermine every initiative Mr. Schipper is proposing to alleviate traffic congestion.

I'm sure Mr. Schipper and others in his profession are working diligently to grapple with huge transportation infrastructure challenges the region is facing as a result of explosive, unprecedented growth.

My comments were simply those of a res-



ident dealing, as are many people in Stouffville and Markham, with the impacts of excessive traffic through residential neighbourhoods. In many cases, these vehicles are travelling at excessive speed and disregarding stop signs.

Surely residents living with this level of disturbance, this diminished quality of life and erosion of property values have the right to seek solutions that will control these impacts. "Keeping traffic moving", as Mr. Nitschke puts it, should not be at the expense of taxpayers living on residential streets appropriated by impatient cut-through drivers and speeding motorists.

JILL MCWHINNIE  
STOUFFVILLE

### Whistles needed for safety

Re: Residents want train whistles silenced, Sept. 2.

I was dumbfounded and speechless after reading how Brian Roman and Iggy Natoli want to stop Markham GO trains from whistling at crossings.

I can't understand why anyone would want to champion a cause whose only purpose is to decrease safety.

If whistles were eliminated, the only warning we would have would be two flashing lights, which can be blocked by a tall vehicle or trees, and a bell that's barely audible over ambient noise.

Many tragic scenarios come to mind. Imagine a parent picking up and dropping off children from school and sports activities, all it takes is a momentary lapse of attention on that parent's part for tragedy to strike.

If Mr. Roman and Mr. Natoli are successful in their bid to silence the GO trains, what would be next? Eliminating sirens on police, fire and EMS vehicles?

GEORGE TREHELES  
UNIONVILLE

### Cameras not best traffic solution

While I welcome efforts to make our streets safer, red light cameras are not the best way to achieve this goal.

York Regional chairperson Bill Fisch and the various mayors are being disingenuous when they claim they are concerned about the safety of children and pedestrians.

According to an article by Radley Balko in the online publication Tech Central Station a study in Fairfax County, VA — where red light cameras are being used — discovered by simply extending the length of time a light stayed yellow by 1.5 seconds, red light running was reduced by 96 per cent. That's far higher than reductions by red light cameras.

More disturbing is some communities are now being investigated for shortening the length of yellow lights from four seconds

to three to increase revenues.

Rear-end collisions also increase with the installation of red light cameras.

Photo radar, the other revenue generator (Premier Dalton McGuinty's term, not mine), is another farce.

The installation of photo radar in school zones does nothing immediate to stop a driver from speeding. In fact, the driver continues to speed through the community after he is captured on film.

How does this make the community safer?

Photo radar and red light cameras also foster a two-tier system whereby someone who can afford to pay is permitted to speed to his heart's content provided he is willing to pay.

A better alternative would be to have actual police officers in school zones with laser guns on an intermittent basis to stop speeders, slow them down and enforce stop signs.

We all want safer streets, but alternatives that are not as revenue friendly are not being explored.

PAUL SPENCE  
UNIONVILLE

### Towers no place to test EMFs

Re: Higher wires could be good, letter to the editor by Percy Barber, Sept. 2.

I find it amusing Mr. Barber is baffled by Sue Fusco's letter opposing Hydro One's proposal to create a route of giant transmission towers from Markham to Aurora.

His 40 years as an electrical engineer have left a huge void in his knowledge of potentially harmful electro-magnetic fields.

Mr. Barber states "At what voltage do EMFs become harmful?" I say, let's not conduct this experiment in our neighbourhood. This should be carried out in a controlled setting, such as a laboratory.

P. DIPIETRO  
MARKHAM

### Truck traffic hurting businesses

Traffic on Main Street, Markham during the past few weeks has been a constant convoy of dump trucks, especially on Saturdays and Sundays.

Markham is always trying to enhance the shopping experience of Main Street stores and eateries and shop owners are trying their best to make the street appealing for locals and tourists.

The town has flowers and landscaping, restaurants have outside cafes and the streetscape is appealing for a walk, but the dust, diesel smoke, noise and congestion these trucks create is going to send clientele to another location.

It astounds me someone cannot force these trucks to take an alternate route.

CHARLIE LOVELAND  
MARKHAM

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#### LETTERS POLICY

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