

Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS POLICY

The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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Canadian Circulation Audit Board Member

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Red light cameras will prevent accidents

Re: Smile drivers: three red light cameras for Whitchurch-Stouffville, Feb. 9.

I have been saying for years we need to have these cameras.

How many times do we see people going through red lights, which cause problems for motorists who actually have the right of way?

And how many times do you find yourself in the middle of an intersection, trying to turn left, but having to wait as cars continue to drive straight through on reds?

The situation is often worse at stop signs, where some motorists hardly even slow down.

These signs are in place to prevent injuries.

Cameras would stop a lot of the accidents that happen due to people running red lights.

WENDY SNOW
NEWMARKET

HAVE YOUR SAY, WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

► What do you think of these issues or others? E-mail letters to the editor to jmason@yrmg.com

Lights a good thing

Re: Smile drivers: three red light cameras for Whitchurch-Stouffville, Feb. 9.

We think the red light cameras proposed for York Region, including Whitchurch-Stouffville, are a good thing.

ELDON & FREDAZ
STOUFFVILLE

You can read letters, columns and stories from *The Sun-Tribune* on yorkregion.com

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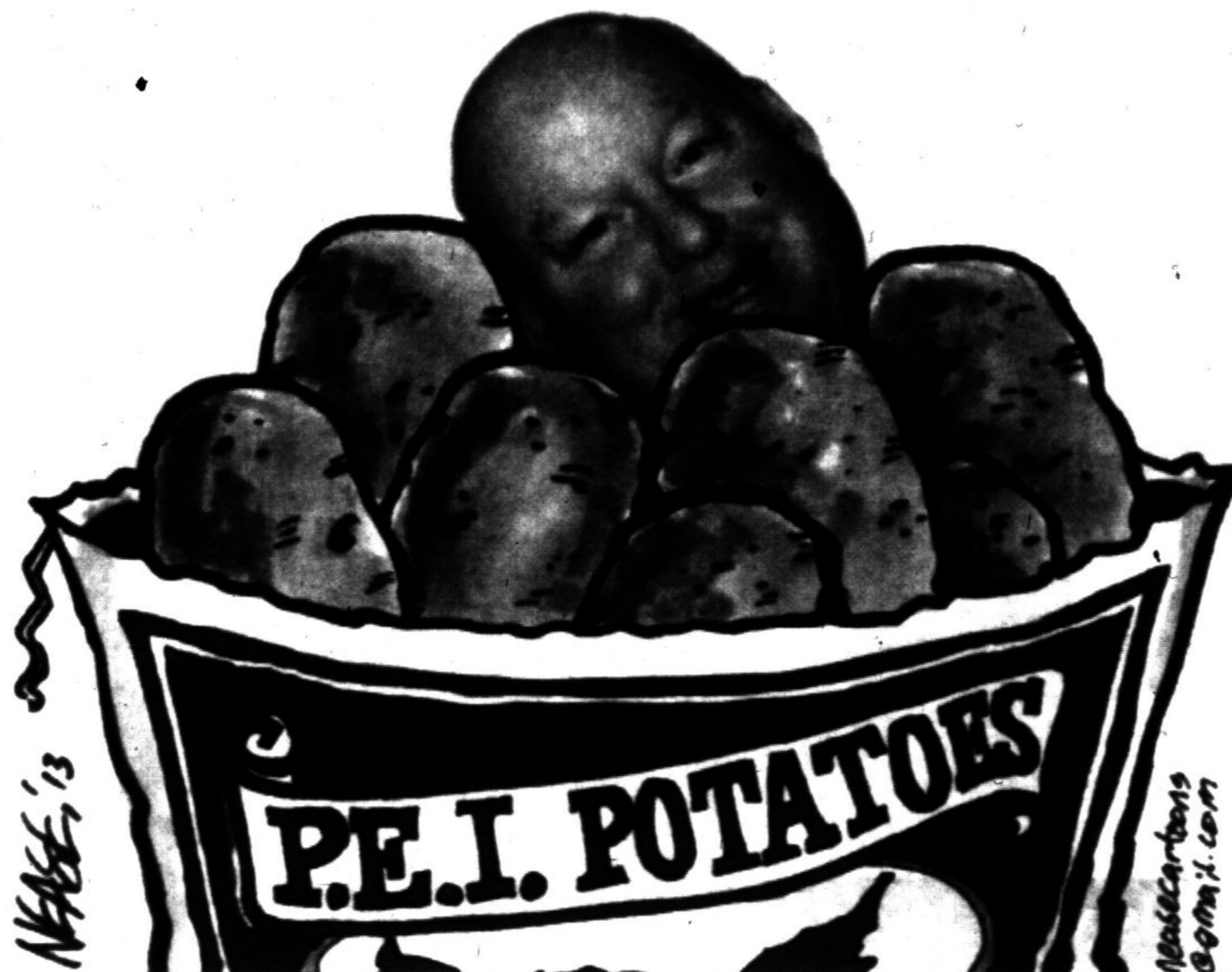
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SPOT THE PHONY ISLANDER!



Don't miss chance to have say on traffic

I consider myself fairly level-headed most times. But if there is one place I'm likely to lose my patience, it would be driving around the region.

The simple task of getting somewhere on time can be an exercise in itself, between construction and the sheer volume of traffic during the morning and evening commutes.

I've found you have two options: either plan a ridiculously large amount of time to get from place to place, or grin and bear it when you're late and stuck in traffic.

Either way is a waste of your time.

We're fortunate in York Region, as we still only face major congestion during peaks, compared with Toronto's day-long congestion.

But it will get worse.

It doesn't matter what you call it — congestion, traffic or gridlock — it translates to the same thing: We're wasting too much of our lives sitting in traffic.

We have accepted a daily routine that sees many of us get in our cars to drive an hour or more just to get to work under optimal conditions.

When the conversation turns to funding areas that impact our every-



Caroline Grech

Guest columnist

day lives, transportation is eclipsed by education and health care.

GTHA residents are left with little in the way of funding for an out-of-date transportation system.

While health and education are important priorities for the province, congestion impacts our health in ways don't even realize. One study shows every additional hour you spend in your car per day is associated with a 6 per cent increase in the likelihood of obesity.

Civic Action, a non-partisan group, in part committed to accelerating

regional transportation, wants you to step back and think about what you would do if you had an extra 32 minutes a day.

Half an hour a day to do something you like doing. Try to picture it.

Despite some significant transit projects under way, given York's growth projections of more than 500,000 additional residents by 2031, these projects alone won't be enough.

Among projects still needed are a subway extension from Finch Station to Richmond Hill Centre and all-day GO Train service.

There are solutions, but with it comes a hefty price tag of \$2 billion a year, to complete priority projects such as all-day GO train.

When you ask residents what their number 1 issue is, congestion ranks first or very close to the top. You should not sit idly by and watch the discussion happen without you.

Many times I've watched consultation sessions on planning issues go unattended until residents don't like what is being proposed. They show up in droves then, when it is too late.

Metrolinx, an Ontario government

agency aiming to improve transportation in the GTHA, will make recommendations on how to fund transit improvements by June. Ahead of that, it's holding roundtable discussions all over the GTHA.

The second roundtable in York Region is Tuesday, Feb. 19 at the Performance Arts Centre in Richmond Hill from 6 to 8 p.m.

It is your opportunity to talk about solutions and have your comments directly heard by those making recommendations. Taking the two hours out of your day to attend may save you hours down the road.

York Region residents are a powerful voice in the 905 with more than 1 million residents and counting. Don't be the quietest voice in the discussion on transit, especially when any decision on funding will impact you.

The roundtable is an opportunity to learn about the Metrolinx plan but also to share your concerns.

It would be foolish to let the opportunity slip by.

Caroline Grech works in government relations at CAA South Central Ontario and is a York Region co-captain with Civic Action.