

# OPINION

**Sun-Tribune**

**WEEKEND FORUM**

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York Region Media  
Group community  
newspapers

The Sun-Tribune  
published every  
Thursday and Saturday, is a  
division of the Metroland  
Media Group Ltd., a wholly  
owned subsidiary of Forstar  
Corporation

## LETTERS POLICY

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## We need infrastructure first, before new residents move in

When I bought my home in Richmond Hill in 1987, it was during a building boom. Home builders competed for labourers with the SkyDome and other builders. There was a shortage of materials and closing dates were postponed.

We lived in our trailer for eight weeks because we could not change the sale date of our previous home.

When we finally took possession of our new home, there was one light bulb on each level and only one washroom was connected (or so we thought).

The first time I flushed the toilet, I heard a strange sound in the basement. Sure enough, the drain simply emptied on to the concrete.

I learned two lessons that day. One was to be more patient and thorough when going through the closing process. The other was that infrastructure must come before development.

We wouldn't build subdivisions without running water, sewage and gas lines first. We even push cable and phone lines before construction. So why don't we finish the job?

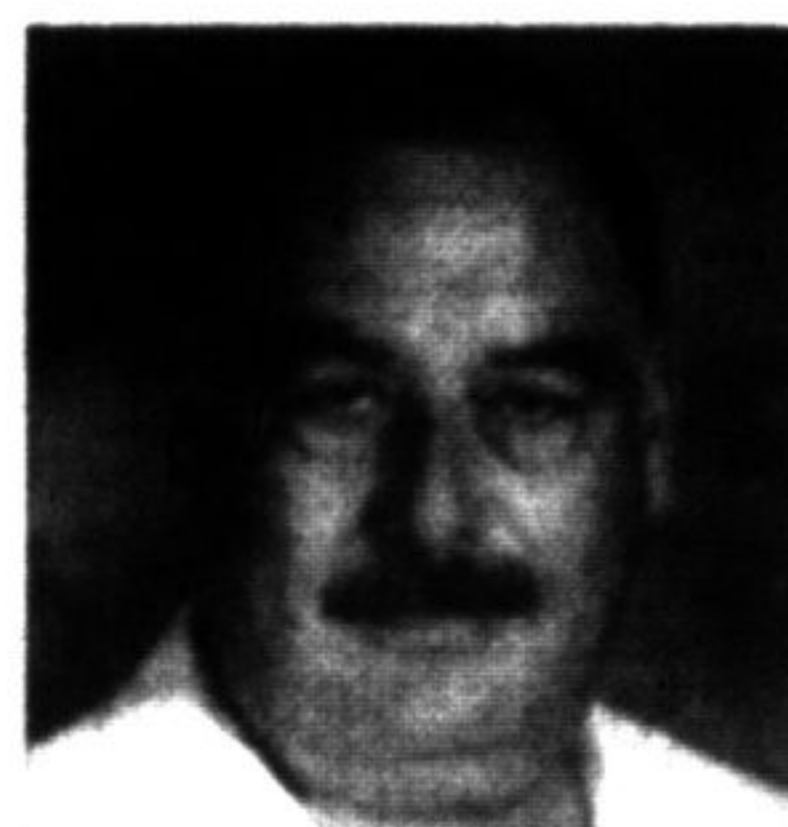
Look at Hwy. 7 today. It has looked like a war zone for two years and the end is not in sight.

A parkway belt east plan was discussed in the early 1970s. This corridor, which houses the 407 ETR today, was supposed to contain rapid transit lines such as VIVA and GO, but became nothing more than a cash cow for a foreign company, thanks to the Mike Harris government — which leased the right of way to balance the budget for one year and create the illusion of good money management.

Markham had the foresight to build bypasses around main streets of Markham and Unionville. Richmond Hill did not. In the 1970s, politicians promised the extension of the Yonge subway to Hwy. 7. I'll be buried before it is completed.

The widening of Yonge Street is taking place in dribs and drabs. Power lines get moved to the side and then we move them again two years later with no cost savings.

Condo projects get approved and thousands of new residents move in to an area already gridlocked, even on Saturdays. What



Gerald Berish

will Yonge look like when bus lanes are being built in the near future?

We must plan communities for people and not just provide the opportunity for developers to profit on partially serviced areas.

We know population projections within York Region and should be providing transit, bike lanes, schools, community centres, libraries, bypass roads and parks required by citizens moving in, at the time they arrive. Lot levies for these services have already been built in, so residents deserve services at the start.

Look at the condo at Red Maple and 16th Avenue. There is no safe way for pedestrians to get to Yonge. People cut the fence to cross railway tracks and climb the sides of the overpass because pedestrians were not considered in the design of the overpasses.

It's another case of bad planning and bad politics, but the developers got in and got out with their profits and the community is stuck with the consequence.

Let's get a council that doesn't owe developers so much. If Toronto Mayor Rob Ford was accused of conflict of interest because he used letterhead to raise a few thousand dollars for a football team, then how is it not a conflict when our town politicians receive a contributions to their election war chests directly from developers?

Remember this next time you vote. Let's not have toilets flushing into our basements after the developer has already left with the profits.

Gerald Berish has lived in York Region for 35 years and is a retired school teacher. We'd like you to write in this space. E-mail editor [jmason@yrrmg.com](mailto:jmason@yrrmg.com)

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## HOT TOPIC: Roundabouts

### Hwy. 48 roundabout would be death trap

Re: Roundabouts 'working' on Ontario highways: Mayor backs Hwy. 48 proposal, March 7.

While I believe roundabouts help in subdivisions, putting a roundabout at the intersection of Hwy. 48 and Bloomington sounds like a death trap.

So the trucks that can't slow down when they are heading east down the hill toward 48 run the red lights now. It happens quite often. They risk hitting one car, maybe two, let's say. But what happens when that truck can't stop or slow for a roundabout? Carnage.

And I'll tell you one thing, I will avoid it at all costs.

Oh, and speaking of costs, how about all that money spent on upgrading the intersection and installing new lights at 48 and Bloomington just this past year?

I can only assume if that intersection is changed, again, the traffic lights and overall design will need to be replaced, removed or changed. So was all that money spent just for fun?

If the province and town

knew they were studying the idea of a roundabout at this intersection, why did they make the upgrades before the design study was completed?

NICK HOCHER  
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

### Traffic circles great — if drivers follow rules

I think traffic circles are great.

A roundabout allows people to get home a bit earlier and shut off their engines, therefore protecting the environment.

At Hwy. 48 and Bloomington, the long waits will be greatly reduced.

But I would ask the minister how we are going to teach drivers to use roundabouts correctly.

There are two rules:

1. Yield to traffic already in the circle approaching you.

2. Signal your departure from the circle with the use of your right-turn signals. Going any direction from your entry, it's always a right turn.

A driver heading westbound on Millard Street yields before entering the

circle and signals right before continuing on Millard westbound.

A driver heading north on Tenth Line yields before entering the circle and uses the right turn signals to continue north on the Tenth.

In the past several years, I have seen one driver follow the rule.

RON BROWNSBERGER  
STOUFFVILLE

### Stop signs better

Roundabouts suck.

I live on the corner of the roundabout pictured on the front page March 7. With roundabouts, nobody slows down and everybody thinks they have the right-of-way.

At least with stop signs, if they don't come to a full stop, they slow down and you can decide who has the right of way. Roundabouts are just another reason to speed through the intersection.

The mayor does not know what he is talking about for traffic solutions. Oh, and by the way, accidents are on the increase and the honking never ends.

DOUG REID  
STOUFFVILLE

