

From: jimsmythe
Sent: Friday, February 05, 2021 11:58 AM
To: CPSC <cpsc@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] River Road Golf Course

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion on the River Road Golf Course decision.

I am a member of a group of senior golfers that I joined 15 years ago after my retirement. The originals in the group have been playing the city-owned courses for over 40 years. We play all four courses on a rotational basis and look forward to the different challenges that each course presents. In my experience, our municipal golfing community in London has been the envy of the broader golfing community outside of the city, especially as you get closer to the GTA, because of the course variety, geographic accessibility and relative economic value we have in our municipal golf course system.

Most of us have appreciated the unique differences and challenges that River Road brings to our game and we have missed this opportunity over the past season! The physical (and I'm sure expensive!) changes to the course over the past number of years, to make conditions more playable and fair for the amateur golfer, have certainly been recognized and appreciated by our group. I believe the majority of River Road naysayers who claim the course is too difficult have not played there since these improvements have been made so the course suffers from that negative first impression from years before.

I think it would be a misguided decision to close River Road, not only for today's golfing community but for the increasing population of our region and the growth of the game that we all witnessed over this past year. It seems very shortsighted to me that you would consider closing this community asset after this past season of frustration we all experienced trying to get tee-times on the other city courses. Like many other groups and individuals, there was a time last year when we were up at 5:00am trying to book a tee-time for the following week with limited success of achieving our desired time and course!

I would be exceptionally upset if part of the financial rationale for closing River Road included the high-priced help of displaced city administrative staff who acted as 'COVID greeters' this past season as well as the costs of grooming and maintaining a golf course that was not open and generating any income.

Let's continue being the envy of other communities when it comes to an accessible and affordable recreational golf system for London that is looking to the future and support the uniqueness of the River Road Golf Course as part of that model!

Sincerely,
Jim Smythe