

From: loretta loretta

Sent: Tuesday, February 9, 2021 5:29 PM

To: SPPC <sppc@london.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] CITY OF LONDON SERVICE REVIEW: REVIEW OF SERVICE DELIVERY FOR MUNICIPAL GOLF

Re: 'City of London's Service Review: Recommended Closure of River Road Golf Course' report.

Past individuals had the foresight almost 30 years ago to initiate planning and development of the River Road Golf Course (RRGC). If it was needed and a good idea then, why not now with City population having increased significantly?

The KPMG report found that London is not over serviced or under serviced with respect to golf facilities. That said, it would appear counter intuitive to eliminate an 18 hole facility.

City owned/operated golf facilities offer an affordable alternative to the golfing public. London having 3 such venues strategically located across the cityscape is something of which to be proud. It offers variety plus an opportunity to minimize travel to access a City operated golf service.

"Golf pays for golf" is ideal but an arbitrary premise. Why focus on golf services with an expectation to be totally self-funding whereas other City services i.e. public parks, pools along with baseball and soccer fields couldn't possibly exist with a "services pay for services" mandate. Based on background information provided golf system revenues have been used to support these other City services.

The KPMG report indicates that the City's golf system has been traditionally self funding. Focusing on a 2018 loss seems a bit quick to judgement suggesting a permanent shutdown of operations at RRGC.

Focus on what things can be done to move RRGC toward a financially viable enterprise:

1) According to the KPMG report Unlimited Memberships account for the majority of golf rounds played at River Road. It seems prudent to increase the cost of that membership option by \$100-\$200. In my opinion, such a modest increase would not discourage usage of that membership option.

2) According to the KPMG report, staffing contributes to a significant portion of operating expense. I believe RRGC does not require the services of an on-site head professional and that annual salary could be saved.

3) Facilitate more rounds being played at RRGC by improving course drainage consequently allowing grass cutting to expected standards hence encouraging use of RRGC to play one's round.

4) I don't foresee any looming capital expense required for RRGC it being the newest of the 3 golf venues.

Continued direct City ownership and operation of RRGC is my preference. If the City is adamant in its desire to cease golf services at RRGC an outright sale of the property to another party as a golf venue would have my support. In that way the City would receive significant funding for future capital expenditures it deems necessary for Thames Valley and Fanshawe. The sale would allow implementation of a property tax thereby providing an on-going revenue stream.

The spring of 2020 ushered in a harsh introduction to Covid-19 and its looming ramifications. Despite a host of restricted activities golf provides an excellent opportunity for exercise, fresh air and safe socialization in compliance with mandated restrictions. Now in 2021 having gained significant Covid-19 insight and the on-going

vigilance required for many months, foresight suggests having RRGC available for play during the 2021 season would be most prudent.

Thank you for considering these suggestions.

Henry Marienfeldt

I agree with everything that Henry has written. I want to add that I have enjoyed golfing at River Road over the past number of years and think it is an excellent course. It would be a shame to throw away all the manhours that have gone into making River Road the course it is today. (The added in-ground sprinkler system, widening of fairways and clearing of underbrush, revision of some holes to make more playable for all) Surely there can be some way to keep this beautiful golf course in the City golf package. River Road is to be treasured from the tranquil setting along the Thames River to the tree lined fairways and all the wildlife to be seen while playing a round. Golf is a game for all ages and we should be promoting it as a way of helping to keep the people of London active and healthy; not taking away opportunities.

Please consider all the options to keep River Road open.

Loretta Marienfeldt

February 9, 2021