

From: Paul Jackson
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 2:48 PM
To: SPPC <sppc@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] River Road Golf Course February 16 comments for agenda

To: City of London, Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee
Subject: Discontinuance operations at River Road Golf Course

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the suggested closing of River Road Golf Course in the City of London.

I have been fortunate to enjoy the game of golf at City of London operated golf courses for 30 plus years. This experience makes me proud to be a taxpayer in the City of London.

2020 was a very challenging year and golf was no exception. I would strongly suggest that 2020 not be used as part of the decision-making process on whether River Road be closed. However, one thing became obvious in 2020, demand for tee times cannot be met with only Thames Valley and Fanshawe courses. The Pandemic likely will still be with us for most of 2021 and demand should at least equal 2020.

In response to the 2020 KPMG report, I believe the following items are relevant but not clearly identified and/or should be presented differently.

- 2018 Percentage of revenue generating holes of golf (and % of total rounds played); Fanshawe 36 holes 44% (rounds played 41.8%), Thames 27 holes 33% (rounds played 42.3%), River Road 18 holes 22% (rounds played 15.9%). The spring of 2018 had high level of precipitation. River Road typically opens later in spring (due to flooding of lower valley holes) and closes sooner in the fall which should be considered when looking at these numbers.
- Membership revenue should be lumped together as most members purchase membership in the City of London golf system, rather than a specific C of L course. Golfers with Unlimited memberships were the highest at River Road. The income for "membership sales" on page 12 of KPMG report is flawed in my opinion for this reason.
- Page 13 report "**3. The City appears to be a high cost service provider**" This part of the report in my opinion comparing financial indicators provided by Industry Canada is also flawed. I believe comparisons to municipally owned recreational facilities would be more relevant.
- Page 19 report "**Question 1 – Should the City be directly involved in Golf Operations?**" My Answer- Absolutely! Just as the city is involved in other forms of recreation (parks, trails, aquatics, ice skating, etc.), golf provides opportunities for exercise, fellowship, competition, and enjoying nature which if not provided in city operated facilities, many would not participate.

I would agree that golf operations need some attention and changes to improve the financial performance to allow the current number of courses (Thames Valley, Fanshawe **and River Road**) to remain operational for many years to come.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Jackson