



Jan 10th, 2018

Open Letter To Mayor Bigger and Greater Sudbury Council,

Mr. Greg McKenzie employed by The Ontario Ministry of Finance as the OLG CEO has thanked you (Sudbury councillors) for your support for the past 18 years of hosting The Slots in Chelmsford.

He has very good reason to be thankful.

Mr. McKenzie mentions the fact that the city has received more than \$38.2 million from the facility over the past 18 years. What he did not mention, is that money is only the 5% municipal share of the \$764 million lost by patrons in the slots over the same period. Currently, \$45 million is lost per year at the slots with over \$32 million leaving to the province and the operator. This equates to 640 jobs at OLG pay rates, 500 more than the 140 jobs provided by facility. For the 500 unrealized jobs Mr. McKenzie expects us to applaud the paltry \$616 thousand his ministry spent over the same 18 years at local festivals and events to advertise their gambling "services".

You should understand that when we visit a Service Ontario office to renew our drivers license we are engaging with a "service provider" acting on behalf of the Ontario Government as this government service has been privatized. Similarly, when you enter a casino in Ontario, you are also engaging a "service provider" providing a government service. That service just happens to compete directly with local entrepreneurs and our culture.

You have boasted of the public-private partnership enabling the Kingsway development, however, I see only the municipal government partnering with the provincial government to create the "Government Entertainment District". There is no mention of a hotel operator clamoring to build the hotel depicted in the proposal, as hotel developers know a multi-story hotel beside the city dump is not an ideal location. Further, hotel developers understand the majority of casino patrons will be local residents and have no need for an overnight stay. They will venture back to their homes, past local establishments, with their pockets empty and their bellies full.

In Aug. 2012, council passed a unilateral resolution supporting the expansion of casino type gambling in Sudbury without public consultation. Following this, a public information session with no objective data was held along with an on-line poll, the results of which were never released. Further, many council public statements at the time prejudiced the discussion with promises of FREE infrastructure. "I don't think we're going to have another opportunity like this for a long time, to get some amenities and some economic growth in our city at a very minimal cost – or no cost at all," mayor Matichuk said, before passing the Feb 2013 resolution. With council members recently declaring anti-casino petitions signed by prominent local politicians as invalid because they were 5 years old, how can these questionable events of similar age, be construed to meet the public consultation requirements of O. Reg. 81/12?

Council, please consider your partner in this project, The Ontario Ministry of Finance, presiding over \$312 billion in debt, roughly \$22,000 per man woman and child making us the most indebted non-sovereign in North America. With tax season upon us, each of the 7 million workers in the province should know the first \$1657 of their provincial income tax goes to interest on this debt. Government over spending and mal-investments are responsible for most of this debt. Might this be the reason the province is forcing this casino upon our community, other than that stated by Mr. McKenzie?

I suggest you ask Mr. McKenzie why the people of Orillia, host of the largest casino in the province, are 7th lowest of 105 municipalities when it comes to household income. Windsor, with the oldest casino is even lower. Is this truly the future you wish for the residents of Greater Sudbury? Casinos in Southern Ontario all have millions of people to draw from surrounding communities, and we are to believe the people of New Liskeard, and similar sized communities, represent our economic salvation.

Since amalgamation, Sudbury has become a community of communities. Each contributing to our diversity with respect to language, culture, heritage and economics. We all desire the same thing, health, quality of life, a chance to determine our own destiny, and god willing, reasonable roads and infrastructure.

This project will divert all available discretionary funds to the initial build and further resources to subsequent maintenance and development of ancillary amenities for decades to come. Should these vast resources not be allocated to smaller dispersed projects that make each of our many communities better? The city can not come up with \$2-3 million to build a badly needed fieldhouse for soccer, baseball, football and many other sporting activities during our long winters. What are the chances of that, or any other regional improvement effort proceeding if we continue towards high debt, higher taxes, and expanded government competition.

I am writing you today on behalf of hundreds of business owners throughout our community and across all sectors. Business owners who have devoted their lives, energy and passion to making our great city what it is today. I am writing to offer a dialog on how we can move forward to encourage local entrepreneurs, our culture, our diversity, and work together to grow our economy without the impediment of a full casino. It will not be easy, but it is the only sustainable path to our future.

I am at your service.

Tom Fortin,

Director – www.casinofreesudbury.com