

From: Andrew Julie

Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2019 11:07 AM

To: Budget <budget@stcatharines.ca>; Andrew Julie; Jennifer Julie

Subject: Municipal Golf Course - 2020 Operating Budget and beyond

Hi there,

My wife and I are the owners of Brock Golf Course and also St. Catharines property owners and taxpayers. I was reviewing the 2020 budget that was recently posted and was alarmed at the 2018 results and 2020 plan for the Garden City Golf Course, and I wanted to voice my concerns as you are requesting feedback from the community.

The Garden City Golf Course is the most direct competitor to our small family-run golf course, and the continued increases in tax revenue to prop up the GCGC on top of the limited revenue it generates concerns us, as it provides an unfair competitive advantage and is a large use of city funds to compete against private businesses - including ours - in an industry that does not provide a core service to the city.

In reviewing the 2020 budget, it appears golfers are choosing other options for golf, as revenue declined more than 10% in both 2017 and 2018. This raises two concerns. First the budget does not seem accurate, as 2020 revenue would need to increase by nearly 30% over 2018 for the budgeted income of \$341,200 to be accurate. If the 2018 actual revenue numbers occur again in 2020, which would seem a best case scenario given the recent revenue declines, this means the city will spend \$461,773 in taxpayer dollars (\$77,673 debt cost, \$307,233 operating costs, and \$76,867 revenue projection shortfall) to prop up the GCGC next season. Given the increasing financial support this city asset requires and its declining usage, I am writing to encourage the city to revive its EOI-18-24 Expression of Interest process to either find another lower cost use for this land or another operator for the facility that can run it at a lower cost to the city and compete fairly against the many family-owned and operated golf courses in Niagara.

In June of 2018 my wife and I submitted an Expression of Interest and had a subsequent follow up meeting with city staff. Unfortunately, after the October 2018 municipal election all discussion stopped regarding finding a better way to operate this property or better use for the land. I strongly believe there is a better solution to managing this property and hope the city will restart the discussion to find a solution to reduce both taxpayer costs and unfair competition with local family-operated businesses.

Best regards,

Andrew Julie