

Canadian Tire head hears from resident

The following letter, addressed to Canadian Tire Chief Operating Officer Allan MacDonald, was submitted to the Citizen for publication.

Your letter, A Message To Customers, a half page in the June 1 Toronto Star, caught my attention.

Kudos on your choice of communicating directly about your new job as Chief Operating Office at Canadian Tire.

You say, 'I want you to know that we've got our priorities right and will always put our communities and your family at the center of everything we do. If you ever feel that isn't the case, send me an email at allan@cantire.com and I will make sure your feedback is heard.'

So I am taking you up on you word.

As you know, Canadian Tire plans to build a massive 1.5 million square foot Distribution Center (DC) on 180 acres of prime agricultural land in our town of Bolton.

This facility will be very disruptive to our community. It threatens our health and safety and will reduce the quality of life of thousands of people in and around Bolton.

Increased air and water pollution; cancer causing diesel engine emissions from trucks; a significant increase in traffic congestion; poorer safety conditions on our roads; noise at night; and increased damaged to our roads from heavy trucks. These are some of our concerns.

The approximately 800 or more trucks daily will result in increased air and water pollution. Our air quality will undeniably deteriorate if this DC is built. For sure it will not improve. Truck diesel engine emissions, classified as a known carcinogen by the World Health Organization, will be detrimental to our health, and be a greater threat to the health of our children. A serious concern because the DC will be located close to a residential sub-division. Diesel engine emissions will also be carried downwind into the residential areas of Bolton.

Commuters using Highway 50 are already faced with horrible traffic congestion. An additional 800 Canadian Tire trucks daily, plus the vehicles of approximately 900 DC employees, will further exacerbate traffic congestion problems and safety hazards on our roads. It will undoubtedly result in increased time stuck in traffic, increased stress levels and a longer daily commute. The end result? Less time with the family and poorer quality of life, and likely a lower opinion and loyalty to Canadian Tire for contributing to the problem.

The town of Bolton is largely in a rural setting. It is very quiet here at night and sound carries for long distances.

The noise from this 24/7 DC operation will disrupt the peace and quiet at night in Bolton and deprive many people of a good night's sleep.

It is a well-known fact that trucking operations and houses don't make good neighbours.

We've had two public meetings on the proposed DC, and as the saying goes, they tried to put lipstick on a pig.

At the meetings, more than 200 residents of Caledon stated very strongly and unequivocally that we are opposed to this DC.

Additionally we have presented Caledon Town council with a petition containing more than 1,000 signatures opposing this DC. This DC proposal has all the markings of causing on-going problems and battles between the residents of the town and Canadian Tire.

It creates many problems for our community, including health and safety issues that are surely paramount when weighed against meager commercial gain.

Your letter says we 'will always put our communities and your family at the center of everything we do.'

If family and community values are truly central in your decision making, I ask that you withdraw your application to develop this DC.

We do not want it in Bolton.

I look forward to your reply.

Thank you.

Monty Wilson,

Bolton