

Editorial ? Canadian Tire will be a benefit

Canadian Tire has big plans for Caledon, and Caledon should jump at the opportunity.

Canadian Tire is interested in placing a large distribution centre and office facility on about 180 acres at the northwest corner of Coleraine Drive and Healey Road in Bolton.

It will be a very large development, and we believe that's one of the reasons some area residents are apprehensive. It is very big, and it might spook a few people.

But there are certain realities involved here.

The lands have been slated for industrial and employment development for years, and whether the opponents like it or not, that development is coming, in one form or another.

There is one option, in which Canadian Tire develops the lands in question. This is a large and prestigious Canadian corporation with a proud history that includes considerable community involvement, and which has touched many of us. How many of you reading this had your first bicycle or first pair of skates bought at a Canadian Tire store?

The company proposes to make a massive investment in this area. Simple economics alone clearly states they are not interested in throwing their money away. Thus it stands to reason that they think this is a good place to invest, and it stands to even stronger reason that they are going to take care of that investment. The chances are strongly in favour of this being a very well-run facility. The opponents should take a moment to think of the other option; of what might go on that land if the Canadian Tire facility does not. In that event, the lands will probably be developed by smaller operators, and some of them might not have the reputation of Canadian Tire, or be as conscious of their surroundings.

One of the main concerns is the truck traffic this development will generate. There is discrepancy into the numbers, with the figure ranging from 350 to the area of 800 per day.

Development like what this area is slated for is going to attract traffic; lots of it, including trucks. Again, we can have a well-reputed company like Canadian Tire regulating the bulk of it, or some other outfit.

Besides, the consultant retained by Canadian Tire has said the diesel emissions from the facility are going to have minimal impact to the local air quality, and more than alternative land uses, such as a business park, retail development and 1,200-unit residential subdivision.

There are also economic benefits to consider, in terms of development charges, property taxes, etc. True, there will be off-setting costs, such as infrastructure and wear and tear on the roads. But a lot of this will be in the form of one-time expenditures, with the local roads being designed to handle the loads for several years.

Also keep in mind that the roads heading south out of Bolton have been carrying sand and gravel trucks for years. Canadian Tire does not specialize in aggregates, so it's likely the truck loads will be lighter than what the roads have had to carry in the past.

There is also the likelihood of local jobs. Granted there might not be many in the short-term. But this facility is going to be around for a while, and those running it will always be looking for staff; probably nearby.

There are a number of very vocal people in the community who have voiced opposition to this proposal, and they have made their views known (sometimes quite eloquently) at numerous meetings.

But the final decision here has to be based on whether the proposal meets the required standards in terms of a number of factors, including good planning and, yes, safety. That has to be determined by the experts, and approved by the authorities (like Town council) they report to.

Sorry folks, but to just say ?I don't want it? isn't going to cut it.

Besides, we think there are a lot of other people out there who do want it.