

Editorial ? Toronto doesn't need Olympics

There is nothing wrong with a big party.

Indeed, most of us enjoy attending them occasionally, and are maybe envious when we can't.

There's also nothing wrong with massive spectacles, especially on an international scale.

But such events and happenings come at a cost, and sometimes they just aren't worth it.

So while there might be some conceivable advantages to Toronto hosting the 2024 summer Olympic games, we're glad to see that the idea is not likely to get very far.

A report was sent to a committee of City council recently outlining the possible benefits and detriments, and the committee elected to take no action. Most observers seem to agree that means they have put the notion on a shelf, where it's probably going to stay.

We can see a couple of problems with mounting a bid to host the games.

For one thing, it would require the backing of a very united community. Granted, there will always be some dissent in such an effort, but we have to look at current conditions in Toronto. The people running the show to the south are having trouble determining the status of their mayor. We're having a hard time understanding how a creditable bid is going to be put together from such a starting point.

We also have to wonder if there's a realistic chance of success.

The report that was dealt with by the Toronto councillors last Monday, compiled by Ernst & Young, indicated that it would cost between \$50-and-\$60 million just to make a formal bid, with nothing guaranteed.

Toronto made a bid to hold the 2008 games, and lost to Beijing.

Some of us remember that bid. It carried a lot of unified support from people and groups in the area, and there was a lot of enthusiasm too. But the decision rested with officials of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and some of the top people in that group made it clear they wanted Beijing. We would submit that the Toronto representatives could have put forth the best case in history, and it would have done no good ? the ball game had been decided before the local team had come to bat.

Does this area need to repeat such an experience?

Besides, officials in this area already have their hands full with next year's Pan Am games, and everyone is wondering what kind of shape that effort is in, especially when it comes to finances. Granted, it's a work in progress, but there is plenty of room for concern.

Among other things, it amounts to the fact that this area is just not ready to go for the Olympics.

Besides, the IOC could look at the big spectacle that Toronto is currently working on, and decide it's some other city's turn.

We think it's a safe bet that merit won't be very high on the list of criteria.

We don't see much in the way of a mood within Toronto or the surrounding area to make a serious bid for the 2024 Games, so it might make more sense to simply not bother.

Or better still, maybe they should wait until the chances of success look more promising.

When IOC wants Toronto, they'll let the appropriate officials know.