

Well, that didn't age well

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Last week in a bit of a rambling discussion, I touched on two topics I thought might be of concern to residents. It appears, as sometimes happens with a news cycle, that neither story aged well. First, I expressed concerns about flag flying at the DPCDSB and next, speed cameras. Since then, a lot has happened. Some of it good and some of it ? well, frankly not so good in my opinion.

The Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board, as you might recall, is currently under ?supervision? by the Minister of Education. A story emerged last week concerning the Board's decision not to fly the Every Child Matters flag on National Truth and Reconciliation Day (just this past Tuesday). I believe the words I used to describe that decision were ?for shame.? Now, I'm not saying Paul Calandra agreed with me, but in the one example where my column did age well, he mandated the DPCDSB to fly the flag after all. As one of the largest and most diverse school boards in Ontario, and with what one hopes is a mandate to provide a safe, inclusive and informed education within its 150+ schools, encouraging thoughtful and insightful education opportunities around Truth and Reconciliation should be considered an important part of the learning. The Every Child Matters flag plays an important role in highlighting that learning. I'm glad the Minister changed this short-sighted ruling and dare I say it gives me hope that we may yet see a Pride flag flying next June?

As for speed cameras (otherwise known as ASEs) it's been a wild ride. Despite study, after study, after study, done both here, and around the world proving their efficacy, Premier Ford appears to have chosen to blatantly ignore the science in favour of yet another ?buck a beer? type headline. Seeming to pull his information directly from some random and overblown social media post, he joins a chorus of hundreds who call ASEs nothing but a ?cash grab.? Meanwhile a chorus of thousands upon thousands of people including; parents, families of speed related accident victims, scientists, medical doctors (like those at Sick Kids who know a thing or two about treating accident victims) and even many members of local municipal governments are all suggesting Ford is doing nothing more than buckling to the bellicose. Honestly, I would love to see proof from even one of the people loudly proclaiming they got a ticket for going ?just a few kilometres over.? As the saying goes: ?show me the money.? If such tickets exist as so many people claim they do, why has absolutely no one produced an example for our consideration?

What has been produced for our consideration, and in abundance, is proof that speed cameras reduce speeds. Locally, in announcing a recent ASE installation in Southfields (just one of several Caledon communities that seem to be a hot bed for speeding) Councillor Dave Sheen noted, ?Abolishing automated speed enforcement cameras would be a mistake. Numerous studies, including a major summer 2025 study from SickKids and Toronto Metropolitan University, confirm these cameras are very effective: they reduced speeding by 45% and lowered the speed of the fastest drivers by over 10 km/h in school zones, which means safer streets for everyone - especially kids.? At least Southfields had theirs installed before the ban came into force.

Sadly, over in Forks of the Credit, a community recognized as beautiful and scenic and which is traversed by a meandering twisting, turning road built for ambling, their ASE, due to be installed this week was abruptly canceled. This despite 14 years of resident advocacy to stop those who continue to speed recklessly and without regard through the scenic area. As resident Micheal Carter shared, ?After many years of lobbying, we finally received approval from Peel Region to install an ASE in the worst section of the Forks of the Credit roadway, only to be informed today (September 26) that they weren't moving forward due to the irresponsible actions of our Premier.?

Oh, and by the way, for those who posit the ridiculousness of imposing ?more speed bumps? and/or ?signs? (don't we already have speed signs?) Mr. Carter also addressed Forks of the Credit residents' experiences with these two traffic control methods commenting, ?I want to tell you about Speed Bumps and larger signs. We have both! And they have had zero success in reducing the average speed of intentional speeders through our beautiful but dangerous roads.? If you've driven in the area you'll know exactly what he's talking about.

Mr. Ford, these cameras are being installed throughout high traffic/problematic areas in Caledon (of which there are many) and now

we are what? Just going to cancel them? Return to sender? Ignore the science behind them? This has all the makings of another bike lane install/tear down fiasco and all for the sake of pandering to the few, at the expense of the many.

Are you willing to massively increase the budget for police officers across the province, and/or enhance the penalties for serious offenses involving speed, accidents, and repeat DUI's in order to help limit the amount of potentially dangerous and speeding drivers on the road? If you're not happy sending a ticket to a proven speeder, literally caught on camera, somehow I have little faith you'll implement any other more punitive measures to help deal with the traffic mayhem we Region of Peel residents are facing on a daily basis. As for the "other measures" you're promising, like speed bumps and roundabouts, I agree with Mr. Carter's comments. In our area, and including Hwy 10, unless you plan on installing speed bumps or roundabouts every 100 yards or so, on every local road, driver behaviour is not going to change.

This isn't rocket science and it doesn't take a genius to figure out that signs alone aren't working; heck we post signs specifically warning people about speed cameras in place and they STILL speed. But they help, and that's been proven so let's not throw out a proven tool "that we've already bought and paid for. That kind of waste might not be a "cash grab" but it sure is a waste of tax dollars.

One last thought Mr. Ford. Weren't you involved in an incident caused by a speeding driver? That same person was later involved in an accident that resulted in a fatality. In other words, speed kills. One might have hoped your own proximity to a speed related crime might have influenced your thoughts on the matter. Then again, I've always been told I'm a little too naive.

ASEs are not "cash grabs" nor even as others have asserted, "tax grabs." They are not a punishment against us average law-abiding folks at all. A tax grab implies we, as citizens, would have no choice but to pay the tax. But with ASEs we DO have a choice. Want to know how to avoid a penalty for speeding? It's easy. Just don't speed. Or, as I stated last week, (and I do think this part of my column actually did age well) slow the f**k down.