

My comments will focus on two aspects of the task force:

1. Financial analysis.
2. Procedure and Fairness.

I have a degree in economics and a 28 year career in personal financial planning. In effect I spent 28 years providing clients with Personal Economic Impact Studies. Two common elements in any financial impact study are:

1. Revenues.
2. Costs.

Both of the above have to be quantified, sources named, and rationales given.

The only financial references given by this task force for the City of Kawartha Lakes are vague statements such as, “Restaurants will sell more food” and “Gas stations will sell more gas. No sources. No quantification.

Costs? Nothing. The Heath unit supplied data on ER visits, hospitalizations etc. Yet we have no estimate of health care costs. Enforcement was discussed. Yet we have no estimate on potential enforcement costs. There are no road maintenance cost estimates. There are no cost estimates period. Nothing in life is free.

All costs have to be identified and quantified.

Now restaurant owners won't mind not having a study – they get the revenues and the tax payer gets the bill. Same for the gas station owners and the ORV manufacturers.

Industry funded studies are infamous for their blatant pursuit of profits. The classic case is the Tobacco Industry funded studies that proved smoking is harmless. The ORV Industry repeats this tactic with its 2010 York University Study that claimed ORVing improves health. This was thoroughly discredited in a peer review – Health Promotional International – March 2013.

Quoting from the Peer Review:

1. The motorized recreation industry and user groups seek maximum access to the public domain with minimal restrictions on their activities. That industry has often tried to use economic analysis to demonstrate the social

rationality of leaving motorized recreation largely unregulated. These analyses, however, are based on a **peculiar economic alchemy that seeks to transform private interests and public costs into public benefits (Power, 2009).**

2. **“...and when healthcare costs are also factored in, claims of economic benefits appear unfounded.”**

To comment on the financial impact, you need an Economic Impact Study. So to protect the tax payer Council should require that, “Before any decision is made, we need an economic impact study”. The study must thoroughly consider all costs, as well as revenues.

PROCEDURE AND FAIRNESS

It's not right that one group gets to impose its recreational preference on the entire City. It is a preference, not a necessity. Many Urban and Rural residents do not share this preference for motorized recreation.

I'm speaking up for the interests of those citizens and groups who were excluded from the task force.

We don't really have a task force. Given the citizen selections, we have a lobby group disguised as a task force.

This council has to protect the interests of rural and urban citizens and groups like Environmental Action Bobcaygeon who want:

1. Active Transportation Plans.
2. A reduction in GHG emissions.
3. This Council has to protect Urban and Rural residents who do not want their roads to become motorized recreational trails.

YOU SHOULD NOT SANCTION SUCH A FLAWED AND ONE-SIDED PROCESS.

Why isn't this part of the upcoming Trails Master Plan? It is a blatant attempt to exclude the interests of a large portion of Rural and Urban citizens.

In closing I'll remind you of two things:

1. People entrust financial advisors to invest their money using sound, data driven decision making, and your constituents expect the same sound, data driven decision making from their elected officials. I urge you to move away from the unsupported and unsubstantiated economic promises before you now. Stop. Think. Do your due diligence by getting a complete and comprehensive economic impact report before any further discussion on this matter.
2. And while you contemplate that, take the time to reflect on the Task Force you, and you alone, have created. The bias of its composition is so blatant that it would never withstand the scrutiny of an outside agency. That needs to be addressed.

William Steffler