

Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Honorable Premier Ford,

The Municipal Leadership of The Town Of Wasaga Beach has unilaterally decided to proceed with a plan to build a Twin Pad Arena and Library at a cost of upwards of 60 million dollars, in addition to potential cost over-runs and operating costs. With no provincial or federal funding immediately available, the burden will inevitably fall on us, the taxpayers.

Not only is this decision reckless and irresponsible in light of the economic impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, this plan was NOT presented clearly in the administration's October 2018 election platform, and thus, the residents of Wasaga Beach have never had the chance to weigh in on this critical decision that will have enormous impact on the tax burden of our residents, many who survive on fixed incomes. The majority of Wasaga Beach tax revenue is contributed by residential taxpayers, as our commercial/industrial tax base is comparatively small. Thus, the majority of the added tax burden will fall on individual households in our community. Many of which are already struggling to make ends meet during this Pandemic. Wasaga Beach is a relatively small community that relies heavily on tourism for its local businesses and economy, many of whom have been severely impacted by Covid-19.

This decision was undertaken unilaterally with minimal public consultation, review and feedback, and is proceeding at break-neck speed despite growing concern being expressed by residents.

These concerns have been conveyed to our Mayor, Nina Bifulchi, on behalf of the Wasaga Beach Ratepayers Association Inc. in a letter submitted by Faye Ego, President of the WBRA. Our Mayor's response was to state simply "This is to acknowledge receipt of your email. I am confident that council members are always working in the best financial interest of the residents."

Our Mayor can take the time to write your office elaborate letters to complain about car rally's, or the provincial management of the Covid-19 crisis on our beaches, but seems to have little interest in providing our ratepayers with something more than a one-sentence,

template response to our concerns relating to a 60 million dollar expenditure. The only member of town council who openly expressed concern about this decision was Councillor Joe Belanger. Unfortunately, his concerns and recommendations were unanimously pushed aside at our last council meeting.

We are urging the provincial government to step in immediately and intercede, legislate a pause on this project, and conduct a provincial review on the financial impact of this large expenditure on residents of Wasaga Beach and our town's financial well-being as we navigate through the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

Federal, Provincial and many of our surrounding Municipal governments are setting a good example by demonstrating and recommending restraint as we navigate through the uncertainties of this crisis. We are openly questioning why our Wasaga Beach Municipal Government is not doing the same, and on the contrary, embarking on what seems to be an obsessive/compulsive spending spree with our tax dollars.

Signed,

John C. Sare, Member of the Board, The Wasaga Beach Ratepayers Association Inc.