



# Cobourg Taxpayers Association

*Making Local Government Accountable*

Mayor G. Brocanier and Members of Council  
Town of Cobourg Municipal Offices  
Victoria Hall  
55 King Street West  
Cobourg, ON  
K9A 2M2

September 10, 2016

## **Parks Master Plan Implementation: Phase 1 Report by Dean Hustwick, Director of Recreation and Culture**

Dear Mr. Mayor and Councillors,

The Cobourg Taxpayers Association has done an initial review of the Parks Master Plan Implementation Phase 1 report prepared by Director Hustwick. Based on the Director's creative RBC Cup solution, we had hopes that his demonstrated leadership and out-of-the-box thinking would be in evidence again.

In his report, the Director makes three main recommendations. The Cobourg Taxpayers Association respectfully asks Council to reject these recommendations for the reasons outlined below:

### **1. Approve Implementation of the 2013 Parks Master Plan**

As has been pointed out previously, the PMP was never approved or endorsed by Council. It was simply "received", indicating, in our view, a lack of confidence in the plan. The PMP is now three years out of date and it would seem prudent to consider updating it before any consideration is given to implementation approval.

### **2. Procurement of Expert Services**

We assume his proposal means a consultant's study costing \$45,000 or more, adding to the eight prior studies in the past five years, estimated to have cost several hundred thousand dollars. We believe that most Cobourg residents would be hard pressed to find tangible benefits resulting from these studies.

There is no cost benefit analysis or business case accompanying this recommendation and no indication of the deliverables or anything that shows a benefit for Cobourg residents and taxpayers.

In the same vein, we note that Director Hustwick suggests two additional studies, no doubt requiring consultants to:

- Investigate the Feasibility of Developing a Sports Dome
- Investigate the Feasibility of Developing a Public-Private Restaurant

We think that the Director should focus on bringing the Cobourg Community Centre's million-dollar annual cost in excess of revenue under control. With regard to the restaurant, we don't understand the apparent fascination and need to compete with the Town's existing businesses.

### **3. New Hire - Recreation Coordinator**

As with the preceding recommendation, there is no cost benefit analysis, business case, job description or list of accountabilities provided and no indication as to how this new hire benefits the Cobourg community.

In summary, the Cobourg Taxpayers Association is not entirely opposed to the Director's direction and concept. We do find that the report lacks the information needed by Council to assess the proposals, support due diligence and make informed financially responsible decisions.

There is considerable expertise available locally on a volunteer basis. Perhaps these resources should be used to develop "made in Cobourg" solutions.

In this context, the Cobourg Taxpayers Association respectfully asks Council to reject these recommendations for the reasons outlined above.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Lydia Smith,  
President

Ken Strauss,  
Director

Dennis Nabieszko,  
Secretary

Bryan Lambert,  
Director

Paul Pagnuelo,  
Treasurer