



**Minutes - Final - Draft
Transportation and Economic
Development Committee**

Thursday, December 13, 2012

7:00 PM

Council Chamber

For consideration by General Committee on Monday, January 7, 2012

The meeting was called to order by Councillor Brassard at 7:00 p.m. The following were in attendance for the meeting:

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Brassard, Transportation and Economic Development Committee
Chairperson

Mayor J. Lehman, Transportation and Economic Development Committee Member
(ex-officio)

Councillor B. Jackson, Transportation and Economic Development Committee
Member

Councillor M. Prowse, Transportation and Economic Development Committee
Member

Councillor B. Ainsworth

Councillor A. Nuttall

Councillor P. Silveira

Councillor B. Ward.

STAFF:

Chief Administrative Officer, C. Ladd

City Clerk, D. McAlpine

Committee and Print Services Supervisor, L. Pearson

Communications Advisor, C. Harris

Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives, R. James-Reid

General Manager of Community Operations, R. Forward.

The Transportation and Economic Development Committee met and reports as follows:

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORPORATION PRESENTATION

Mr. Toni Bitoni, Senior Manager, Media Relations, Communications and Public Relations for the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) provided a presentation concerning the potential for a downtown Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation site in Barrie. Mr. Bitoni outlined background information concerning the OLG and the history associated with lottery and gambling entertainment in Ontario. He reviewed a map illustrating the current gaming sites in Ontario. Mr. Bitoni highlighted comments made by Ontario Mayors of municipalities that currently host a gaming site. He explained that the OLG is currently implementing a plan to modernize its lottery and gaming operations and provided information regarding the modernization plan.

Mr. Jake Pastore, Manager Government and Municipal Relations for the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation outlined the municipalities which are classified as Zone C5, including the Town of Innisfil, the City of Barrie and the Township of Oro-Medonte. Mr. Pastore explained that if a gaming site was implemented in the City of Barrie slot machines and table gaming would be permitted. He reviewed the potential revenue that could be generated for a host community. Mr. Pastore outlined the OLG's requirements for municipalities to host a gaming site. He summarized the OLG's host funding model and explained the strategic procurement process that will be utilized for the new modernization plan.

Mr. Paul Pellizzari, Executive Director Policy and Social Responsibility for the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation explained the OLG's Responsible Gambling Strategy to prevent and mitigate effects of problem gambling. He described the implementation of the OLG's Responsible Gambling Plan to support the modernization project.

The Committee members and members of City Council asked a number of questions of the representatives of the OLG regarding the information provided and received responses.

Eighteen individuals addressed the Committee regarding the potential of a casino in downtown Barrie and provided comments and concerns regarding the following:

- The negative impact of the OLG's modernization plans on the horseracing industry and the lives of those in the industry, as well as the loss of the horse racing industry locally if Barrie City Council approves a casino;

- The need to take appropriate time to make a wise decision;
- The negative impact casinos have had in Niagara Falls on pre-existing businesses and the revitalization of the downtown;
- The social impact on the community including the potential for increased suicide rates, crime and unhealthy living;
- The amount of saturation in the area related to existing gambling opportunities at Georgian Downs and Rama;
- The inappropriateness of the downtown core as a location as it provides easy access to gambling for those vulnerable individuals with the little resistance;
- The costs for taxpayers associated with social services as a result of problem gambling;
- The lack of unbiased and balanced information on the real impact of casinos, as much of the research is funded by the gambling industry;
- The moral issue of government's use of the revenues generated by gambling as both unethical and unreliable as a means of balancing budgets;
- The destruction of work ethic as a result of the "get rich quick" symbolism of gambling;
- The employment levels generated by gambling versus other business sectors and the impact on businesses as spending in a community shifts to gambling;
- The revenues raised from gambling and the impact on spending by the Provincial government as well as the dependency on the gambling revenues;
- Support for a convention centre without a casino;
- The viability of a casino with only 200 slot machines or if not feasible, the probability of entering into a battle with the Town of Innisfil;
- The estimated percentage of the population locally with a gambling problem;
- The percentage of gambling revenue generated by tourists versus existing populations;
- The impacts on Fort Erie when the OLG shut the casino down and the need to consult with municipalities that no longer have casinos;
- The ability for Barrie to benefit from revenue generated by a casino;
- The rationale for the OLG's changes to the existing sites that are profitable;
- The OLG's revenue sharing model for host municipalities and the lack of benefit to surrounding municipalities impacted by the gambling site;
- The potential for criminal elements to become involved as a result of the privatization of the operation of the casinos;
- The increased number of people the casino will bring to the downtown on the weekend and the impact on police resources, traffic and infrastructure;
- The proximity of the hotel/convention/conference centre and casino to the proposed Centre for Excellence and the impact of gambling on the student population;

- The additional parking space requirements that would be generated by a casino;
- The likelihood of Barrie residents spending their money in the casino with half of the proceeds going to the Province versus local businesses;
- The City of Barrie's role and responsibilities when the Ontario Lottery Gaming Corporation's addiction prevention strategies are exhausted and/or no longer work;
- The opinion that casinos do not attract tourists;
- The potential of a casino to negatively impact the ability to attract a university;
- Support for the casino dependent upon further details and the specific considerations related to Downtown Barrie;
- The deterioration of neighbourhoods located in close proximity to casino;
- The increased convenience of a casino resulting in greater costs to businesses and the community from gambling;
- Gambling addiction as a fast growing addition;
- The impacts of raising finances by preying on human weakness; and
- The lack of information in the OLG presentation related to the negative impacts gambling on communities in terms of social assistance costs, suicides, and addiction figures.

The Committee recessed at 9:15 p.m. and reconvened at 9:23 p.m.

The Committee members and members of City Council asked a number of additional questions of the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation representatives and received responses. (File: D00)

Attachments: [A4 121105 - Casino - Public Consutation Recommendation.pdf](#)
[C4 121126 - Impact of Casinos on Public Health.pdf](#)
[Correspondence.pdf](#)
[OLG Pres 12 12 13.pdf](#)

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

CHAIRMAN