

April 9, 2010

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RE: THE WINNIPEG SUN ARTICLE "CITY DOESN'T NEED TO RUN THE ARENAS"

I am sadly amused by the City's approach in dealing with our aging arenas. While there is no disputing that the arenas are in "crisis response" mode, we must examine how we got there and how we can avoid this happening again.

It is alarming that the City has not built a new arena since 1975. To compound matters, the City has defaulted its commitment to maintaining our arenas and other facilities. If you built a house 35 years ago, and then failed to invest money in its maintenance, you end up with a derelict house that should be demolished.

Mega complexes do have economic advantages. Having one zamboni for more than one sheet of ice makes good business sense, but at what cost? If community rinks are closed and consolidated into mega rinks, it does not truly take care of those in the affected communities. Accessibility becomes an issue for those less affluent. Strict bottom lines at the expense of accessible and affordable facilities, does a disservice to building strong communities.

City Council has an absolute obligation to provide affordable services to its citizens. By abdicating its responsibilities to govern, the Mayor and Council are failing our community.

We would not be in this position today had taxes not been frozen for the past 13 years. We need to invest in our crumbling infrastructure today. Any further delays will only add to our current infrastructure deficit for years to come.

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