

Are pit royalties the ?pits? for county?

Are the taxpayers of Dufferin County being treated fairly when it comes to the maintenance of ?arterial roads? for the haulage of aggregates in addition to regular traffic?

That question arises logically when one considers, among other things, wear and tear on the hard-topped roadway from truck traffic weighting perhaps 35-50 tonnes a load as opposed to lightweight passenger vehicles and delivery vans.

It gets worse when one considers that, according to Dufferin public works director Scott Burns, arterial roads are supposed to be built to carry whatever traffic uses them.

In Dufferin's case, there are three arterial roads about to be affected by at least three pits that are in the planning or argument stages ? and one of the three isn't within the county while another is on an especially dangerous roadway where regular traffic could be severely impeded unless there's a major expansion of the road.

The county, however, will receive royalties for the two proposed pits within its boundaries.

Are the royalties adequate?

According to Brian Zeman of MHBC Planning, who's acting for Mulmur Townshipp in the development of a proposed gravel pit at Arbour Farms on Airport Road, the county would collect 1.5 cents per tonne of gravel extracted.

In an email forwarded by Mulmur Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Kersten Shillum, Mr. Zeman says:

For every tonne that is extracted, an 11.5 cent levy is paid.

?Of the 11.5 cents, the Province receives 3.5 cents, the Township 6 cents, the County 1.5 cents and the Abandoned Pits and Quarries Rehabilitation Fund 0.5 cents.

?Over the life of the (Arbour Farms) operation, the proposed pit will generate \$977,500 in levies assuming 8.5 million tonnes of aggregate is extracted. The levies will be distributed as follows: Province - \$297,500; Township - \$510,000; County - \$127,500; and Abandoned Pits and Quarry Rehabilitation Fund - \$42,500.?

So the county gets less than half of what the province takes from royalties but maintains ?local? roadways for the trucks. The county would get nothing for the 200-million tonne Caledon pit but would maintain the South Arterial Road (Orangeville bypass) between Peel Region 136 and Highway 10.

By Wes Keller