

## LETTERS AND FP COMMENTS

## Better than nothing

Re: *Piecemeal tax policy won't work* (Sept.14)

Sorry, Mr. Lorenc, but until we have the comprehensive policy you want, piecemeal is better than no meal at all.

**BARRY CRAIG**  
Winnipeg

## Open-air fires take a heavy toll

Who has not sat by a campfire and enjoyed the sound, smell and nostalgia of burning wood? Memories just as fond as chestnuts roasting in an open fire. However, we are being misled: wood smoke is pollution and has no place in an urban environment.

Firepits are legal in Winnipeg. The city provides unregulated guidelines unless a complaint is received. It is negligent, because it fails to inform people wood smoke is pollution, causes or increases health hazards and deprives others of the enjoyment of property and life. The research and findings are undeniable.

The EPA states an hour inhaling wood smoke is equivalent to smoking 10 cigarettes. The effects last longer than 40 times that of cigarette smoke. It contains cancer-causing carcinogens: particulate matter (PM 2.5). Dust, pollen and moulds are listed as PM 10. Thus, particulate matter in wood smoke is smaller than a dust mite, reaches the furthest parts of your pulmonary system, lingers there and affects most organs in your body.

Appliance manufacturers and sales outlets want your money. Regardless of claims, an open-air fire and wood-burning fireplaces outside a controlled environment do not burn at a temperature high enough to eliminate toxic gases or particulate matter. There is no standard for wood smoke. If you can smell it, you are being poisoned.

Health Canada and Environment Canada down to the Regional Health Authority warn about wood smoke and its ill effects. The Manitoba Lung Association's website is highly recommended reading and refers to a legal precedent. If you do not stand downwind from your open-air fire because the smoke gets in your eyes, why should your neighbour? You may be and are preventing your neighbour's enjoyment of their property and life.

If they cannot enjoy their yard, garden, sun-room, home and life because of wood smoke, the effects could be felt where it hurts the most. Regardless, the city provides a vehicle, and you are ultimately responsible for the outcome. It is illegal to smoke out your neighbour.

**SERGE MASSICOTTE**  
Winnipeg

## Steamed on school zones

Well, I never thought I'd be writing this, but I am so upset I don't know what else to do.

I have always been on the side of the school-zone argument: don't speed and you won't get a ticket. Even at work when I hear others complaining they got a ticket and it's a cash grab, I was on the side of the police.

Today I got a ticket in the mail — saying I was going 43 km/h in a 30 km/h zone on Labour Day at 4:03 p.m. Seriously!

In the first place, it was Labour Day — obviously school hadn't even started yet. Secondly, I was in the process of slowing down — I had forgotten it was already school-zone time.

I can see a warning notice or even a fine of, say \$10 per kilometre over (in my case \$143) if the city is really serious about this being a deterrent not a cash grab. But \$221 is ridiculous if this is really meant as a deterrent.

I was planning to sign up for a class in the *Lei-*

*sure Guide* next week, but now the money I had saved (and then some) is going to pay this ticket.

I'm sorry, but I no longer believe the story about deterrent. It's a cash grab — plain and simple.

**EVE STARKO**  
Winnipeg

I, with an MPI safety rating of the maximum +15, was one of the "risky drivers" caught at the St. Ignatius school zone. Upon turning right from Corydon Avenue to Harrow Street, I encountered no warning sign but an immediate 30 km/h sign hidden behind a treed parking lane.

And where was the warning sign? Across Corydon on the other side of Harrow. Many, many cars make this turn from Corydon to Harrow and are trapped by the lack of warning. I'll bet that this location is a huge money-maker for the city which, no doubt, will never post the proper signage helpful to good drivers. Not all of us deliberately break the law.

**GLORIA JOHNSTON**  
Winnipeg

## Flawed logic on growth fees

It's no surprise to see big developers such as Qualico lined up with other foes of development fees, but their blind and impaired logic is painful to read. Were there no developments south of the CNR tracks along Taylor and Wilkes, there would be no need for a Waverley Street underpass at \$155 million. Were there no developments south of these same tracks along Kenaston, equally, there would be no need for that underpass either.

The same story plays out across our city. Yet not a nickle of the current development fees will go to these projects. The current fees may pay for a new police or fire station, (maybe?), but not the

costly new schools needed. They certainly don't begin to cover the costs of new water-treatment plants, bus rapid transit or new expressways such as the Chief Peguis Trail.

How can critics such as Chris Lorenc say in the same breath there is no need for development fees and then point to an urban infrastructure deficit of more than \$7.4 billion in 2009? This deficit points to the proper use of new fees, namely to finance needed infrastructure, not simply to flow to general revenues.

Fee levels for new development need to be set strategically for purposes such as increasing urban density and redeveloping older neighbourhoods.

If suburban developers find the fees are cutting into their high profit margins, then let their much-loved free market do its work.

**TIM SALE**  
Winnipeg

## Diamond mine could help north

Re: *Park will prevent diamond mining* (Jan. 10, 2014)

I recall reading an article in the *Winnipeg Free Press* by fellow Manitoba geologist William Ferreira, in which he questioned the provincial government's decision to establish a new park on open Crown land in the Churchill area, shutting off some of the most prospective ground in the entire world for new diamond mines.

Let us hope the recently elected Conservative Premier Brian Pallister leaves the Crown land open for claim-staking, as a diamond discovery would bring prosperity to a depressed area of the province.

**ROBIN GIBSON**  
Manitoba exploration geologist (retired)  
Coquitlam, B.C.