


Millroy: Look at the Fiasco They Have Allowed to Continue

By **Doug Millroy** - April 27, 2019

When I hear any discussion about the possibility that council will actually decide to cut down Bay Street from four lanes to two, I get the shivers.

dougMILLROY

Because I am afraid our elected representatives will allow it to be cocked up; just as they have other traffic adjustments in the city.

RAAM Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic	What is the RAAM Clinic? The RAAM clinic is a Rapid Access Addictions Medicine Clinic for people looking for help with their addictions. Please call for an appointment 705-759-3434 Ext. 7200	<small>A collaborative initiative of North East LHIN funded organizations.</small> 
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For instance, look at the fiasco they have allowed to continue at the intersection of East and Albert Streets. Where for 50 years we had two lanes from Albert travelling up East Street and onto Wellington, we now have only one lane doing this, sitting between one lane from Albert that is actually only a u-turn heading west and a lane from East heading north that a supposed traffic expert said could be a dedicated lane but a yield sign that still exists there says it couldn't possibly be.

We had council, when traffic lights were being taken out in places where traffic counts showed they weren't needed, elect to keep them at the intersection of Wallace Terrace and Goulais Avenue, simply because the ward councillors were getting pressure from some constituents to keep them.

A four-way stop, which was recommended by staff, would have done the job.

And now we have what I see as the botching of the block on Bruce Street between Queen and Albert Streets that was redone last year.

All parking was taken off the street by the extreme widening of the curbs with additional concrete, for whatever reason I don't know and which didn't seem to be discussed at council. In any event, it seems unnecessary.

But the loss of parking is not my main concern.

You may have noted that there is a cutout that allows for motorists to move out of the lane of traffic heading north on Bruce to make a right turn onto Albert when the light ahead is red.

There is no such cutout at Queen St. when travelling south on Bruce.

Therefore motorist wanting to make a right turn onto Queen must wait in the line of traffic heading south until the light turns green and it is their turn.

Bruce Street was fine the way it was before the construction of last year. Why was it not returned to the way it was?

It is this kind of thing that makes me wary of council doing anything with Bay Street.

We will pay big bucks for something that probably won't turn out all that well.

I AM NOT A FAN of Premier Doug Ford, seeing him as a poor imitation of the odious Donald Trump, the president of the United States.

But I have to give him credit for doing what successive Liberal, NDP, Progressive Conservative and Liberal again governments didn't do, get rid of the onerous ruling by the Ontario Labour Relations Board that declared the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie and three other centres were construction employers.

Bill 66, Restoring Ontario's Act, 2019, contained a section that changed all that and prompted the following comment from Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker.

"A 30 year struggle to ensure that local companies, paying local taxes can bid on local work has finally come to an end. I am pleased to see Sault Ste. Marie will be joining the remaining 440 municipalities in Ontario in being able to accept bids from companies regardless of whether they are bound to two specific unions, carpenters and labourers, any other union, or they're non-unionized."

Shoemaker in an earlier news release said:

"What is important to make clear to all those who are following Bill 66 is that the Sault council passed a resolution that I drafted in December 2018 to support only this change to the Ontario Labour Relations Act. City council has not pronounced on any other aspect of Bill 66 nor do any of us individually necessarily support those other changes. We have only endorsed the change to the Labour Relations Act that would open up the tendering process for the City of Sault Ste. Marie."

It was good this council did support the change.

Council in 2014 walked away from a private member's bill put forward by Progressive Conservative MPP Mike Harris that would have accomplished what Bill 66 eventually did.

Then Premier Kathleen Wynne and her Liberal government put the kibosh on the bill.

Neither Wynne nor our council of the day covered themselves with glory on that one.

But we have fairness now, thanks to Ford and his PC government.

Doug Millroy

After 61 years in the news business, 41 of them associated with The Sault Star as editor, Doug continues to share his passion for writing as a columnist since retirement.