



September 13, 2020

General Government and Licensing Committee members
City of Toronto
100 Queen St West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: GL15.14 Lease and Contract Extensions for City of Toronto Golf Courses

Dear Members of the General Government and Licensing Committee

Our city is facing huge economic and social upheaval, and I commend your effort to navigate our way through this crisis towards our goal of rebuilding a better city.

I am writing to request you vote no to extend the private contracts to manage and operate five of the City golf courses: Dentonia Park, Don Valley, Humber Valley, Scarlett Woods and Tam O'Shanter.

I urge you instead to convert these golf courses into parks during the pandemic, and then launch a public consultation to decide how our city-owned land should be best used for the public good.

Here's some reasons why the city should stop running golf courses. In this pandemic, access to public space is in short supply and many of our city's residents are struggling to make ends meet. That is why it is unfair to limit the use of city land to only those who can afford to pay up to \$75 to play an exclusive game of golf. These golf courses are expensive to maintain and do not generate revenue for the city. The popularity of these city-run golf courses is in decline. We do not have a golf course shortage in our region as there are over 100 other golf courses in the GTA that are available for use.

It's time to imagine what else we could do with these beautiful tracts of public land. They could become parks, available to all. They could be converted to urban farms and community gardens, as Ford Share is proposing. Community housing and housing coops could be built on a portion of the land to provide affordable homes to Torontonians. There are a lot of excellent possibilities.

For all or any of these ideas to come into fruition, however, the city needs to get out of the money-losing business of running these golf courses. I urge you to end these contracts so we can truly use our land for the betterment of all.

Yours,

Jessica Bell