



October 1, 2020

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Room 281
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A1

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Premier:

I am writing today to follow-up on our conversation about the recent car rally that took place in our Town.

The Town of Wasaga Beach was thankful for the efforts of the officers from the Huronia West OPP Detachment, the OPP Traffic Safety Division, as well as officers from York and Peel regions who joined forces this past weekend to address an unauthorized car rally in Wasaga Beach.

Over the weekend, officers worked around the clock to ensure the safety of residents, visitors, and businesses during extremely trying circumstances and I applaud them for their amazing work. The event disrupted people's enjoyment of their property and put people's safety at risk. This is not acceptable and it must stop. The arrogant and selfish behavior shown over the weekend is costing all Ontarians financially due to the resources required to deal with these impromptu community invasions.

Not everyone here this past weekend was inconsiderate. However, it puts a dark cloud over true car enthusiasts and events such as show and shines that can be great family entertainment and are welcomed in communities. I have heard from true car enthusiasts who do not want to be lumped in with this group.

Kudos to Police Services for implementing "Project Drift" and "Project E.R.A.S.E." which are addressing concerns regarding stunt driving and high-speed chases.

I believe mayors and councils of every municipality in Ontario must support the Premier and Provincial Government in developing tougher laws with larger financial penalties than currently exist when dealing with unauthorized car rallies and participants. Another municipality may be invaded next.

Our Provincial Government must take the lead in increasing penalties and fines. Every municipality should be reviewing their by-laws to ensure that measures are in place to allow the OPP to act on their behalf when events such as these unauthorized car rallies take over a community or parking lot. For example, Wasaga Beach authorized the OPP to enforce no trespassing laws this past weekend to ensure safety of the town's property and the community. This allows the OPP to consider damage to the town's property as mischief and is considered a criminal offence.

While common sense needs to be used by officers when dealing with every day regular people not associated with rallies or street racing, some potential infractions that could benefit from **significantly** higher fines when dealing with these situations and act as a deterrent could be:

- **Licence Plates** must be on the front and back of a vehicle - current fine for not adhering to this is \$85.00/\$110.00.

Increase in fine is suggested. In the event of rallies such as the one in Wasaga Beach, there was lots of camera footage of inappropriate behavior. It is harder to identify vehicles with only one plate. Two properly installed license plates would assist in recording the cars not adhering to the law to allow charges.

- **Loud/Unnecessary Noise/Improper Exhaust** (also missing muffler) - current fine \$85.00/\$110.00.

Increase in fine is suggested. In the event of rallies such as the one in Wasaga Beach, part of the enjoyment for participants is to have loud cars. A larger fine will be a deterrent.

- **Prohibited Nitrous Oxide Fuel Systems** are putting the driver, passenger, others on the road and emergency responders in accident situations in added danger and needs to result in a significant financial fine. Currently there is no set fine. Permanent confiscation of the vehicle followed by destruction of the vehicle would make the message clear and be a deterrent.
- **Insurance** Police require the authority to not just confirm with an insurance agency that a vehicle is insured but they need to be permitted to advise the company that modifications have occurred to a vehicle that they have insured on behalf of an owner. If insurance is hard to get for these modified vehicles or too costly, it is yet another deterrent. Tougher convictions are required for people caught attempting insurance fraud associated with these events.
- **Impoundment** Currently a vehicle can be impounded for 1 week. This needs to increase with all costs being born by the vehicle owner. Impounding it for a greater length of time (1-2 months) would be inconvenient, expensive and be a significant deterrent.
- **Border Crossing Prevention** Street racers or law breakers from other Provinces or Countries need to be banned from crossing into Ontario for a period. If breached a large fine will be a deterrent.
- **Automatic License Suspensions** for a significant period of time for those endangering the public by street racing, performing stunts or any other activity that may cause injury to a bystander.

- **Municipal Authority to Close our Borders** In the event a municipality is made aware of such an event being planned for their community, consideration needs to be given to the municipal council having the authority to close their borders with OPP assistance to turn away anyone who is not a resident or property owner.
- **Access to Hospital Information when Dealing with a Crime** We were told that at these events people "take care of their own." If someone is hurt they drop them off at the hospital for care. Under the current rules it is my understanding that officers are not permitted to know if a hospital patient is someone they are looking for in an active investigation/situation. The Police could spend hours or days looking for someone who is actually sitting in the hospital. This rule may need to change in several situations to avoid unnecessary time being spent by officers which also costs the taxpayers of Ontario.
- **Other considerations**
 - With this growing trend, should there be more access for officer training and equipment to deal with these situations.
 - This could happen to any municipality without notice and suggest that a municipal awareness program including the public may be beneficial.
 - Tougher convictions for people associated with the promotion of these events (i.e.: administrators of social media sites) as well as industries found to be associated with assisting these events such as tow companies and auto modification shops.
 - Authority provided to the OPP to do an "Air Drop" on the spot of any video footage captured by attendees' cell phones that would aid in possible investigations.

I feel that serious consideration needs to be given to deterring these types of events province-wide. We don't want to just push them out of our community so they can land in another community causing the same disruption, disrespect and cost to the tax payer. It is only through penalties that cause severe financial hardship that we can deter these unsanctioned and dangerous events from happening in our communities.

In closing, I want to again commend you for the great leadership during these difficult times and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Nina Bifolchi
Mayor
Town of Wasaga Beach

- c. Sylvia Jones, Solicitor-General
Doug Downey, Attorney General
Thomas Carrique, OPP Commissioner
Dwight Peer, OPP Chief Superintendent
Philip Browne, OPP Commander
Derek Banks, OPP Sergeant
Kevin Winiarski, OPP Sergeant
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
All Mayors of Ontario
Wasaga Beach Town Council Members